



ASP NEWS

June
2003

The Newsletter of the
Auckland Studio Potters
Society Inc.
ASP Centre
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Duncan Shearer
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Studio Opening Hours

Monday	12.30pm - 5pm
Tuesday	9am - 5pm
Wednesday	12.30pm - 5pm
Thursday	12.30pm - 5pm
Friday	12.30pm - 4pm
Saturday	10am - 4pm

Remember to pay \$2.00 per hour up to a maximum of \$6.00 per day

A few words from our Prez.

Wally Hirsh

Michael Cardew, Denis O'Connor, Barry Brickell, Flora Christeller, John Crawford, Chris Cockell, David Brokenshire, Gail Weissberg, Duncan Shearer, Warren MacKenzie, Torbjorn Kvasbo, Takeshi Yasuda, Peter Lange...et al. No not a full list by any means, but a selection of New Zealand and world potters whose works were on display at a wonderful members evening on May the 28th.

Some 30 members brought special pots from their collections, to display and share with other members at a great evening of discussion, learning, wine, coffee and food. It really was a splendid night and one which should be repeated on a regular basis. Watch this space for repeats because there really will be some. My thanks to all who brought such a wonderful collection....what a grand display it was. The diversity in style and age was remarkable and apart from having such a good time it was also an evening of learning.

Peter Lange leaves for Turkey in 10 days and will be away for two months. We wish you a safe and great trip Peter. We know that you are going to leave your mark in Turkey. If anyone was ever in any doubt about that just take a look at the big brick cone standing at ASP.

That is a trial run for one of Peter's Turkey projects. Travel well big brother.

Your newly elected Exec is up and running and there are no surprises in that Ngairie (Secretary) Trien (Treasure) and I have been returned to office. We will continue to use our Newsletter to keep you well informed of all ASP activities and plans.

Our financial position is always tight. I ask that you be quick and fulsome in paying for classes, seminars, and all the other services such as firing, confectionery, membership etc which our centre provides. Believe me there is room for improvement. This is likely to be a year of essential fund raising too. Any suggestions that you have would be very warmly received.

I was delighted last night to hear again, from a good number of members, how much they value the atmosphere and activities which surround our centre. It is a great place. I hope that even more of you will become even more involved.

Meanwhile keep on potting.

The ASP Anagama Firing

Duncan Shearer

The first firing of any kiln is experimental, no one truly knows how well it will draw, how even it will be in temperature, especially so for a totally newly designed anagama kiln. In the end it fired very well. A monstrous draft gave huge temperature gains in the early stages, but also huge flames at other times. The 10 or so stokers had an experience of controlling a beast, sometimes it was as stubborn as a mule and would lose temperature, other times it would consume wood as fast as it could be stoked. We had carbon filaments forming on the work at around 1000 degrees and the steel chimney at



Steam rising from the kiln



Unloading

some stages was 100 degrees hotter than the kiln and glowed orange. But with long woodfiring there is no need to panic, eventually you will reach temperature. The opening of the kiln was both traumatic and exhilarating, many of the pots that came out were beautiful, some were stuck together, some a little dark, but overall wildly successful. The arch will need some attention and the kiln still needs its final coat of adobe. So the Friday sessions of kiln building are still on. The next firing is scheduled for late August, contact the Centre now if interested as we have a bit of wood to cut first!

General News:

Peter Lange



Duncan is going to be running the Centre full-time over the next two months. It's a full-on task as your brain switches from molecular glaze formulae to cleaning out the drains, and in between dealing with the host of people who pop in and need a little ceramic counselling; so make sure that you look after him.

I will be back at the beginning of August after a month building a brick structure in Turkey and another month visiting potters in France, Italy and Hungary. The Turkish event is a bit of a mystery, but basically it seems that a large brickworks in a city called Eskisehir holds an annual conference based around bricks and terracotta, and they invite sculptors from around the world to spend a fortnight playing with their products – either fresh clay or fired brick. I have a couple of options up my sleeve but they're staying there until I see what facilities and materials are available. Maybe a Brick Ark is a possibility with Mt Ararat just down the road.

The second term is moving along. The big event of the month has been Duncan's Anagama kiln firing – a hard-working team got the beast well stoked. Well done to the wood gatherers and stokers.

The pizza oven has been rebuilt after the Anagama builders burgled it for arch bricks. There is a brick structure rising up next to it in the shape of a pyrometric cone just starting to bend, and maybe Turkey will benefit by one of these. What a fortunate country.

We have a computer suite! The Polytech course has sent us two computers for the use of the Diploma students and we have installed them in the Gallery space next to the kitchen. Members are welcome to come in and try them out – the Matrix glaze programme is installed and it's a great chance to get a taste of how it works. The full programme is available from Lawrence Ewing.

Tom Barter and Suze have had another child – this time a boy named Luke. They are all well - Tom's right into tile-making as well as chile-making (he's been to Mississippi he'll understand that subtle semantic play).

Robin Briant was last heard of trying to get into Palestine from Israel. She is a

formidable woman and I feel a little sorry for the border controllers, having once tried to persuade her to put a handle on a mug at a particular time when she didn't want to put a handle on a mug. Her last email had made it to the 9th floor of the Beehive and things were starting to move.

We need a new set of volunteers to do the Saturday duty roster (present volunteers are very welcome to re-apply) and this could be your chance to have your own full day working with clay, and help the ASP at the same time. We usually have about 7 on the roster, and so the day comes around only every 2 months or so. It's a relaxing day – social and productive at the same time. Get in touch with the office please.

Card arrived yesterday from Robert Compton inviting us to a Pot Luck dinner at his studio in Vermont to celebrate 30 years of making pots at his farm. Bring togs, food; leave the kids and dogs at home. Stay the night if you are travelling a long way.

Here comes a five-minute moan ... There has been a custom at ASP classes to not bother paying for classes that are booked, until the day of the class. That often leaves us in the lurch as people change their minds. Now a new and dangerous trend has started. Not enrolling but simply turning up expecting to get into a class. Lawrence Ewing's glaze class filled early, and so we started turning away new enrolments even though many who'd already booked hadn't paid a dilemma! On the day, two things happened – a couple of bookings fell through (we are used to that), but then three people turned up who hadn't booked. They'd travelled a long way, we squeezed them in out of kindness, the people who had been turned away heard about it, felt they should have had first refusal – the clay hit the fan! If there is a lesson from this that anyone will give tuppence about it is this: PLEASE, PLEASE do not book frivolously or on spec, PLEASE pay ahead of time, PLEASE ring first rather than turning up. We are essentially a soft-hearted organisation once you get past the guards - bribes in various forms and pitiful expressions do help with that, but it can be a bit of a juggling act getting the right numbers to classes.

Which reminds me ... Frank Watson is interested in taking another bronze-casting school. His last was cancelled because the last 4 students required to make up the numbers didn't ring until

the day before – by then it was too late to re-organise it. This time get your names in to us RIGHT NOW; at this stage an expression of interest is all we need. It will probably be in the last term, and probably weekend days.

And another thing (I'm off to Turkey in a week and it will be more comfortable travelling once all this is off my chest) ... what do we do about students who pay for a course and then for some reason or another (sickness, bereavement) can't do the full 10 lessons? Most of them want a refund. I'll leave that for you to think about – send in your answers and the first correct one will receive a free copy of the book "Capital Punishment – Its Place In The Ceramic Community" by Sir Ammick Cone-Bender.

We now have central Auckland's only supply of Southern Ice Porcelain - available in limited amounts and at great expense (\$48 per 10 kg) – acclaimed around the world as the most translucent available. A fantastic clay to throw, turn and fire. Also an Australian clay suitable for wood and anagama firing.

Obituary

Margaret Symes

It was sad to learn last month of the death of Margaret Symes. Margaret was involved with the ASP for many of its early years, serving on the Committee and helping during the early period of the Fletcher Award. She potted for many years around Albany and was probably best known for her ambitiously large pots, which filled her very large diesel kiln. She was always the centre of ceramic activity, with the crises, failures and successes that that brings. She was a 1975 founding member of the Albany Village Pottery Co-operative, and even when she was no longer making pots she would do her duty in the shop and those who shopped there on her duty day were made incredibly welcome – cups of coffee and home-made cakes. Her cakes were legendary. A couple of years ago she bought the Albany shop from the co-op and transformed it from an ailing pot shop into a smart craft gallery – it would be great if it were able to keep trading in the same "Margaret" style ... friendly, enthusiastic and very supportive of Auckland's craftspeople. We send our sympathy to Margot and Brent; we are happy to remember Margaret's energy, her enthusiasm for clay and her unfailing generosity.

Ignition

Duncan Shearer

10th Australian National Ceramics Conference "Ignition" held at Bendigo Pottery, Victoria from 13th to 16th April 2003

I'll start with a bit of background. The Australian's only hold their conference every 3 years, and an entire region takes on the responsibility (eg. the Victorian Ceramic Group organised this conference). In past years their attendances were much higher (eg. 800 some years), but this conference attracted about 300 participants. In that number were a mixture of people, some students, some professional potters, some keen amateurs and some were educators.

The conference was held in the historic Bendigo Pottery, which has been continuously producing pots since 1858, making it the oldest production pottery in Australia. It was a wonderful place to hold a conference as it had an excellent section devoted to their historical production including enormous bottle kilns, old wheels, clay making machinery and other pottery bits and bobs. This was interspaced with a modern production facility with slip casting, jigger/jolly, pressing and throwing all contributing to their product. Most of which was high-fired stoneware very much in the country kitchen/English tradition.

Each day the conference was started with a keynote address, followed by discussion panels and paper presentations. These covered the whole field of ceramics, some were of a general nature that strove to incite pride into potters and others were of a highly technical nature like the use of Lanthanides as colourants in glazes. A series of slide talks by a wide variety of

potters took place throughout the day, usually all the demonstrators gave a slide talk about their work. But there were others who were the guests at the pre-conference workshops. One in particular stood out was by Richard Slee, who provided a snap shot of his last 30 years of making and providing a healthy contrast to the woodfired pottery.

The afternoon was mainly taken up with the live demonstrations. These 16 potters were split up into different days, with again a wide variety of approaches. Sharon Muir from Queensland dressed in black and made assemblages from paper clay and hardly got a speck of dirt on her, in comparison Neville Assad-Salha was so vigorous in his throwing and mark making that the sponsoring clay company wanted to weigh his clothes to figure out how much product he'd used.

To complement all this pot making was an anagama kiln opening, trade stalls from all the major clay producers, wholesalers and other related pottery businesses, plus a pottery market of the local studio potters. The Victorian Ceramic Group also coordinated a large number of exhibitions. In Melbourne there were nine exhibitions that had clay either as a focus or as part of a group show. In Bendigo there were 16 exhibitions on, with at least one opening on every night and occasionally 3, it made for a busy evening schedule as well. The quality and diversity was on the whole impressive. A large proportion would fall into the ceramic sculpture category but probably no more so than our exhibitions.

Talking with the Aussies it became clear how close our two situations are. The markets, tastes and purchasing decisions of the Aussie public are much the same. The numbers involved and the level of their involvement are

proportionally similar. If anything there seems fewer outlets in Victoria than I'd imagined. The tertiary sector education seems to be in crisis, with many courses either closing or being slowly phased out. This seemed a familiar story and it interested a number of them when I explained how we are expanding again the tertiary teaching of ceramics, but in a more controlled manner and with a more flexible approach.

Overall the conference was a very comprehensive and informative event. I would like to see a formal exchange between Australian and New Zealand pottery communities. We both have a lot to gain from each other and I propose that at each Australian conference a paper is presented from a NZ representative outlining our situation, including new artists, exciting recent exhibitions, our training sector, workshops and events held. And in exchange convince a reciprocal arrangement every three years from a visiting Australian representative.

I would also encourage more Kiwis to fly the ditch and come to one of these conferences. The contacts alone are worth the effort, and the quality and depth at these conferences do make them a step above the average. To make it even easier for us the next Aussie conference is to be held in Brisbane in 2006.



Visiting Indian potter at Ignition

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ASP New Members

Welcome to:
Young-Hee Seung,
Yoko Maxwell,
Alfred Feat.

classified

All phone numbers in these sections are in the Auckland free-calling area unless an area code is explicitly stated.

For sale:

Leach style kick wheel, good condition, Phone Mike 6220723 (mention the ASP)

Electric Cobcraft kiln 3.2 cu ft, digital controller, shelves, props, ducting, banding wheel. \$2,500 the lot. Phone Carol 3096806 or 0212532317

Cotter 15 cuft, 4 burner gas kiln. On wheels, 950mm inside height, completely rebuilt, inc shelves, props, bottles, hood, ducting and bonnet, all gas pipes ex. cond. - \$3000. Pugmill, venco 3", on trolley ex. cond. - \$950. Talisman wheel, good cond. - \$250. Leach wheel, good cond. - \$250. Ph: Graham Ambrose on 8335259

Wanted:

Collectable Pots wanted: good prices offered. Any pots by Denis O'Connor, Ian Smail, Len Castle pots from the 70s and 80s, early Brickell domestic ware. Ring Stewart Newby 0272750045 or 4163995.

Electricians:

Electrical Ltd are experienced in kiln installations. They have installed our Centre kilns and do a great job. Phone 6365031.

Material Suppliers:

Imported Australian Clay and Ceramic Supplies: Southern Ice porcelain clay and slip, White Diamond clay etc. frits, glazes, raw materials, stains, tools. Phone/fax for price list from Jan at 09 235 6283, or email at creativejoystudio@xtra.co.nz."

Copies of de Morgan tiles were produced very soon after he first made them. It is reported that when William de Morgan was advised that Ironbridge factories were producing imitations of his tiles he responded, "imitation is the sincerest form of pottery".

WESTERN POTTERS SUPPLIES

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- casting slips (white, terracotta and stoneware)
- clays
- raw materials
- tools
- kilns and equipment
- ceramic colours
- glazes (transparent & opaque)
- on-glaze, glaze and body stains
- enamels

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PO BOX 60126 Titirangi Ak7
Phone (09) 815 1513 Fax (09) 815 1515
quentin.w@ihug.co.nz

classes

Great News

Chris Weaver is coming to the ASP in August for our Winter School Double Banger. He is one of New Zealand's finest potters. It's going to be a feast for throwers and domestic-ware makers, and we will incorporate a salt firing in the 2-weekend mix. The enrolments will be limited to those who register early, who will be superseded only by those who actually pay.

One Piece Mould Making

Class with Nicky Jolly.
Limited to 12 students (only 2 spaces left) \$80.

This introductory course is all about moulds and what you can do with them. Nicky is experienced in making moulds from original shapes and textures and then using them in creative ways. Learn the basics of mould making and then how to use them as press moulds. Includes free plaster of Paris.

4 Wednesday Evenings 11th June – 2nd July, 7-9pm

exhibitions

New Woodfired Ceramics

A great chance to see all those recent anagama fired pots by Duncan Shearer, also pots by Paul Melser Opening 3.30pm on Sunday 6th July at Compendium Gallery, 5 Lorne St, City Ph:3003212

Pots of Ponsonby

Brendan Adams
8th to 22nd June
Shelly Cartmell and others - Jewellery
22nd June to 6th July
298 Ponsonby Rd, Ph: 3760145

Bowl Exhibition

Bowls by Graham Ambrose, Linda Forrest, Christine Boswijk, Peter Collis, Graeme Storm, Len Castle, Virginia & Stuart Angus and Ray Rogers. Sang Architects, 11 Glenfell Place, Epsom. Ph: 6388026. Saturday 7th June (12pm to 4pm), Sunday 8th June (10am to 4pm).



Members evening

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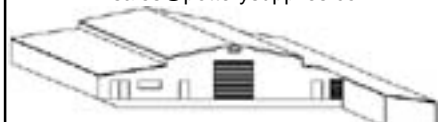
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Write for more details to:



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