



# ASP NEWS

June 2005

The Newsletter of the  
Auckland Studio Potters  
Society Inc.  
ASP Centre  
96 Captain Springs Road  
PO Box 13-195 Onehunga  
Directors: Peter Lange,  
Duncan Shearer  
Phone: (09) 634 3622  
Fax: (09) 634 3626  
Email: asp@ceramics.co.nz  
Web: www.ceramics.co.nz

## Studio Opening Hours

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

Remember to pay \$2 per hour  
up to a maximum of  
\$6.00 per day

# Fire & Clay

## ASP Annual Exhibition

**When: July 6th - 30th**

**Where: Mairangi Arts Centre**

There's still time (just) to get exciting work made and organised for this the 41st exhibition (that's a marvellous achievement) but you need to get potting .... don't be shy, have a go. You get excellent and constructive feedback and as well your work could easily sell; this exhibition has a history of good sales.

Duncan Shearer is the Guest Exhibitor with some of his latest salt-glazed pieces, and there will be slip-cast work on show from our Diploma students so you will have a chance to see what they are up to. You are welcome to enter up to four works, which can include one set, and one work not for sale. And there is good prize money this year ... \$500, \$200 and \$100. Plus a free term for the best student work. So get potting ... the receiving date is 3rd July. We would love

to hear from you if you are available to assist to make sure this exhibition runs well. We need help with all aspects of the setting up and dismantling. Phone me on 3600726 and leave a message, thanks.

Your entry form and invitation are included in this newsletter. Note the new opening time (7pm) - a much better time for traffic.

Student work competing for the free term's tuition must have been made without any "hands-on" assistance by the teacher, and the student should have been involved with the firing of the work.

So there we are ... we need your pots, your help with setting up, and your presence at the opening. See you there.

Judy Rae

### Review of the Scott and Paul workshop

*Duncan Shearer*

I had originally met Scott about 10 years ago when he and Jeff Oestreich were artists in residence at UNITEC and I was studying for my Diploma in Ceramics. I remember him as the quieter one of the two, but mainly for the way he manipulated the clay. Much of his technique must have gone unrecognised by me at the time as I didn't have either the skills or the eye to see the subtlety in his pots. So I was looking forward to meeting him again, and once again see-

ing how he made pots. I was also keen to see Paul, and the way he manipulated the thrown forms and layered up the decorative elements. The double banger workshop had both potters working simultaneously in the studio, one at each end, making the swivelling chairs in the centre hot favourites. Over the course of two days both made a number of pots and illustrated their various techniques. I guess my personal preference and inclination at the time was to see



*The infamous Maine handle pull*



*Spout alignment by Paul*

Scott's throwing and finishing, but I also dropped in to check on Paul from time to time. This time around I picked up a lot more about small things - things like the rim detailing and the handle joining - often overlooked by both potters and the public, yet it is the small touches that set pots apart. Overall I found it a rewarding workshop, both from a professional standpoint and from a personal one - it was good to see Scott again.

## General News:

Peter Lange



Winter has hit the Centre and the old building is a bit of a coolstore – the new building stays relatively warm in spite of the big space and clearlite in the roof. The kiln room is always warm and some of the heat is now being ducted through the wood stacks outside to dry the wood for our kilns. Our regular millslab supplier has pulled the plug but there is an endless source of pallet timber in the area and a lot of it is relatively free from nails. Might be time to install a chip heater in the old house.

Classes remain full on paper but there is a lot of coming and going these days with sickness and people taking holidays or trips away, so the attendance is erratic and the morning teas very unpredictable. We have a new member working at the Centre some afternoons, Carla Luka, a young Maori woman graduate of the Hawkes Bay Diploma programme, who has great skills with coiling techniques and makes substantial figurative work in very short time. We are hoping that she will take a school later in the year – perhaps two consecutive Sundays. Those who went to the Invercargill conference and watched Yi-Ming Lin make his figures, will find Carla just as skillful. Her design sense is excellent as well. So watch for that school; it will be hands-on and limited to 12.

The Diploma students have finished their slip casting module and produced some great work – there will be a display of some of it at the ASP Exhibition. It's very exciting when you show a group what you do and how you do it and then send them out to copy what you do, and they come back having gone in a completely unexpected but really interesting direction. Now the group is starting a module with Renton Murray which is based on salt-glazed domestic ware. This programme is going really well, apart from bureaucratic mix-ups at the Otago end, and it would pay to start thinking about joining it sooner rather than later because it is always going to be limited to only a few enrolments each year. Get in touch with the Centre – and also make a point of checking out the display at the exhibition.

We have ordered four more Pacifica wheels from the US; our stable will then be: 8 US wheels and 8 Talisman, and 2

Leach. The poor old Talisman get a thrashing and are overhauled 4 times a year, but they do not have the guts of the US ones. However they do have advantages – not everyone likes to sit on the floor with their knees around their ears, and they do stop on command, not glide to a halt. The kickwheels of course stop easily, but the motor wore out on mine some time ago.

Great salt-firing just unloaded an hour ago - wood and diesel, cone 11, very juicy, good stuff!

I'm off to Wales to perform a few party tricks at the Aberystwyth conference – three kilns and a slide show in two days. I'll be there for the Lions-All Black tests and keeping very quiet. I expect to bump into John Dawson, Jo Finch, Morgen Hall, Janet De Boos and a few other folk who have visited the Centre. I'm picking up Adriano and Linda (both ex-ASP members) in London and heading West with them. I'll have a bit of a slide evening when I get back, boyo (and girlo).

### More Member News:

Brendan Adams has been selected as one of the three finalists in the Mairangi Arts Centre public sculpture competition. Bravo! And good luck with the final selection. The budget of \$8,000 seems pretty modest for a large public work, but perhaps the Council are covering the engineering and legal costs.

### American Connection

I want you to know how much Paul and I appreciate your having made the arrangements for us to do the workshop. We had a wonderful time with you and the terrific group assembled there at ASP. The tasty lunches were an added treat, and it was so kind for you to take us to that delicious dinner at "Mao's" Chinese restaurant. What a special place you've created. ASP is permeated with such good spirit. A relaxed, spacious, and organized environment coupled with ample doses of good humour and an eagerness to make better pots. If you're ever in the vicinity of Maine, please get in touch. We'll do lobster. We loved seeing the video of the spectacular Ice kiln. I'm pretty sure there'd be a market for it, or for videos or books documenting your other sundry ceramic escapades. Please extend our thanks to the members of the class.

Warm regards, Scott.

## Member News:

Jenny Williams, one of long-serving Committee members, has been taken to hospital suddenly. This from her husband Raymond:

As you are probably all aware by now Jenny has been hit with one of those horror cancer things that we all dread, Jenny decided to go for the more up-market type - hers is called Acute myeloid Leukemia.

When we first learned of it, it was shock and horror; however this horror was to be short lived, Jenny's own personal statement on life is for living and if this is to be a test for her she is the best to take it on. Jenny's strength on enduring the chemo for the leukemia has been more than admirable, and she still has this ultimate attitude to keep on. The support she has had has been huge from all her very special friends.

It was on the Tuesday that Jenny was diagnosed, by Thursday a friend Leo had phoned me from Peru and said he would get the biggest luckiest rock that he could find and bring it back for Jenny. Well he did find two stones, but that wasn't good enough, so he and his son ran up a mountain 4800 feet with these stones, waited for the sun to come through to give them warmth and strength then ran back down Macchu Pichu, kept them well and brought them to the girl. Jenny has had well-wishes from friends who have had all their staff and friends personally sign cards of support for her including the a past principal of Onehunga Primary School who is now 80 years old.

From the flowers, to the lovely oils, skin lotions, cards, words and thoughts; Jenny's nature is to take things on and endure, from this support from her friends gives her that extra nudge.

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**MONDAY-FRIDAY 8:30 am-5pm**

**Letter from intrepid member  
Robin Briant in Sukhumi.**

Hullo to everyone :

So where is Sukhumi I hear you ask ? Relax – I had never heard of the place before mid-March, and almost all of my friends and relations were equally uninformed. So let's begin.

I am currently with MSF again, this time working as manager of a TB programme in Abkhasia (Abk) – a defacto Independent Republic, recognised by no one and therefore an

international pariah. Sukhumi (also Soukhom) is the main town. We are in the southern Caucasus; look on a map that includes Georgia and the Black Sea. It is a strip of land between the Black Sea and the Caucasus mountains, albeit a larger strip than Gaza. There are some similarities with Gaza, and also many differences. As I understand it, Abkhasia was an independent state for centuries, although the area has been subject to numerous wars and takeovers also for centuries. In 1921 Abk was officially absorbed into Georgia and many Georgians settled here.

After the USSR breakup there was early movement for secession from Georgia, typically put down rather brutally. Then in 1992 conflict broke out, was temporarily settled, and then the truce was broken by Abk in 1993. Many Georgians were driven out of the country, and there was a large loss of life on both sides. Since then, for 12 years there has been a ceasefire, but no peace agreement. There is great bitterness on both sides and no obvious solution ; one of the Georgian government's planks is the reunification with its rogue republics (Ossetia is also a problem) ; Abk still wants to be independent of Georgia, though has a more friendly relation with Russia. Russia is almost certainly stirring the pot, because of course things are not all sweet between Russia and Georgia, not helped by the visit of George W to Tbilisi in May. (I had a day in Tbilisi on my way here in April ; all the potholes were being filled and frontages of any buildings on his planned were getting a lick of paint to make a good im-

pression. He arrived with 700 aides and general factota). There is a border between Russia and Georgia and this is the lifeline of Abk – without it there would be even worse hardship than there currently is. It is easy for the locals to pass that border, but not expats, we can only leave via Tblisi, something to do with visas. The road to Tbilisi is long and trying – about 7 hours driving, 400+km on generally bad roads, previous tarmac now broken and potholed, and with cows and other livestock littering the route (foraging very successfully). My

friend gets paid 1200 roubles per month (about \$US40) in her University job teaching English. \$40 goes rather further than in NZ, but is not a livable wage by any stretch of the imagination. MSF pays us several times that amount per month

for food and essentials of life, and we have free housing ; with a few beers and meals out and the odd treat in the kitchen, that amount barely sees one through !

Such wages do not inspire motivation or energy which is a major problem in keeping things going. People resort to all manner of means to make ends meet and there is a lot of crime, and a lot of graft, although to date I have not been witness to either. We have 2 guards permanently by the house in a little hut, mostly reading books and playing backgammon ; I asked if they were there to stop us being kidnapped, but the answer was simply against robbery, kidnap does not seem to be a particular risk here, thank goodness. There are also

guards permanently on watch at the office which has been robbed several times ; and everything is triple locked. Despite all this we live reasonably normal lives, walking in the town, eating in local restaurants, shopping in the market – and soon swimming I hope. We are not allowed on the street after dark, but it is light till late now. We are not allowed to use local buses. And we are not allowed to drive a car, the road condition and the behaviour of other motorists being considered too much of a risk. We can use taxis, though the phone seldom works to call one, and I wouldn't be able to order speak to the operator anyway. So there are some limitations to activity. The greatest dangers currently are road crashes and falling into a hole on the street and breaking a leg.....

The letter goes on at some length and generally sounds a bit less stressful than the Gaza Strip, but still exciting stuff.



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**ASP New Members**

Welcome to:  
Joanne Brooks  
Matt Ware  
Tina Page  
Olga Dosen  
Carla Ruka  
Celia Walker  
Joan Buller  
Christine Everett

## A Special Firing to Celebrate Life

Jan Aliah

We had a great night last night. The drizzle came in the evening and we had to make a quick decision to move the party from the studio to Pollok Hall. We did it at 4pm, moving the entire party; food and everything up to setup again. It was quite nightmarish for a while trying to remember everything - which did not work in the end as we still forgotten the BBQ tools, oil, the ice cream and some desserts but we still had a really fun and memorable night.

The Auckland Studio Potters gassed up and fired a specially designed tree trunk that had a chamber with ceramic pots in it at dusk and got the kiln hot, close to 1260C in about 3 hours. The pots survived the intense heat and extremity of their environment- being in a 'kiln' that burnt itself down from inside out. About 110 people came to witness this firing and everyone was mesmerized by the strange looking kiln and this ingenious way of firing the pots.

## classified

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

### For Sale:

Lots of moulds for sale from Hobby Clay and Craft Co - phone 2700140

ELECFURN kiln 3.5 cuft, EMC 880 Controller, 3½ Shelves and props Extruder, near new, Triangular Stilts. Various items: Indian ink, Sieve, Brush, Slip Trailer, Nibs, 3 Bottles, Kiln Fibre Cement, Citrus Solvent, Mixed Texture Paste, Water Medium, 22 Under Glaze colours, Fine Grog, Abbots Clear Glaze, Africana Clear Glaze 4 Fluid ozs, Iron Oxide, Burnt Amber. TOTAL PRICE \$3,100.00.

Ann Grantham: 092924007. E-mail chasann@clear.net.nz

21 piece tea/coffee set by Paul Laird. Dark green with patterns and gold lustre. Contact Lois at 6343622.

### Wanted:

Ceramics Technical nos. 3, 7, 10. Ph. 8335259 if anyone can help.

Pugmill: Any reasonable condition, preferably de-airing. Phone Brian 5240938.

## events

### The 24<sup>th</sup> Gold Coast International Ceramic Art Award

is calling for entries by the 1<sup>st</sup> July. With a total of A\$17,000 up for grabs is certainly worth the effort. This year's judge is Grace Cochrane, the Senior Curator Australian Decorative Arts and Design, Powerhouse Museum. Entry forms either at the Centre or [www.ceramicartaward.com](http://www.ceramicartaward.com).

### Salzbrand

For salt-glazed work entries by 31<sup>st</sup> October. We have the information at the Centre.



## exhibitions

The strength of ceramics in New Zealand/Aotearoa can be seen in the next show at:

### Masterworks, Viaduct:

Christine Thacker: Preview evening May 25 2005; May 26 - June 11 2005

This latest series of new work by Auckland ceramicist Christine Thacker continues the artist's ongoing exploration of form, surface and illustration. This is a strong and impressive series of work.

Masterworks (Ponsonby) still has some of Duncan Shearer's pieces remaining from his display.

### Pots of Ponsonby:

6<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> June: Exhibition by Tom Barter, window display by Chris Southern.

24<sup>th</sup> June - 10<sup>th</sup> July: window display by Helen Adams.

### The Second Exhibition of North Auckland Sculpture Makers

31st July - 14th August 2005; Opening Function 31st Two Awards:

Fatu Feu'e, Bryan Jones, Barry Lett, Lauren Lysaght, Peter Oxborough, Allen Preston, Terry Stringer, Jeff Thomson  
Remuera Gallery, 360 Remuera Rd, Remuera Auckland. Ph: 09 524 7403.



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