



ASP NEWS September 2006

The Newsletter of the
Auckland Studio Potters
Society Inc.
ASP Centre
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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

Portage Judge Workshop/discussion

Saturday 7th October, 10am - 4pm

The ASP is hosting the Portage Awards Judge's Workshop Discussion by Bill Samuels. This will be an important event in every member's diary as it is the first time that one of the Portage Judge's will give a workshop – not only that but the format will be different from before. Although Bill is Head of Ceramics, Ceramics Department, National Art School, Sydney, he is keen to go beyond a workshop that focuses solely on techniques. Instead, this workshop/discussion will also look at extending the debate started with the Garth Clark lecture early in the year and engage you as an audience. Bill is keen to use the workshop situation to raise issues around the making of objects and how ceramic fits into a contemporary art practice. And before all those 'dyed in the wool' potters dismiss the idea of having an art practice - you do operate in a world of galleries, exhibitions, one-off pieces and limited individual creations. So come to this workshop/discussion to learn how to talk meaningfully about what you're up to. We host these kinds of events as another way to educate our members and students – learning a new technique or glaze recipe is only part of the mix of being a potter – this talk will provide the other half as well. As a further inducement we are keeping the fee to a record low of \$20 for the day – plus bring a plate for a shared lunch. It is essential to book for this event and pay in advance.

Bill Samuels is an Australian studio potter who has worked on the development of forms and glazes for about 30 years. He is regarded as one of the key Australian potters working in the woodfiring tradition, and one of the most experienced and innovative in the use of Shino-type glazes. Making pots

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Studio Fees Increase

The ASP Committee has decided that the studio fee is to be increased from \$2 per hour to \$3 per hour and the maximum per day increased to \$9 as from the 1st October. These price increases reflect the improvements to the studio over the 6 years since the last price increase. Since then we have built a new spray booth and wax booth, bought 8 Pacifica Wheels and a large slab roller as well as a host of other improvements.

Presidents Report

Michael Billington

The 2006 Fire and Clay exhibition at the Mairangi Bay Arts Centre is, as most of you will know, underway. Huge thanks go to the many people who helped to make this exhibition the great success it is. Special thanks go to our exhibition coordinator Judy Rae for all the hours of work she has put into it. Many aspects of the exhibition were organized well in advance, cutting down on some of the last-minute glitches that can occur. About 2 weeks before the exhibition opened I woke up at 2 am one morning with the thought that the plinths were wet in their storage area, and then promptly went back to sleep discounting it as an aberration. Yes you guessed it, on arrival at ASP to make some pots (a novel idea), the following week I was informed that the storage container they were in had leaked and there they all were drying out on the verandah. I needn't indicate here what the moral of that story is. Success to say after some serious concerns about the condition of the plinths "it all looked good on the night". Many thanks to Renton Murray who organized their speedy repair. The layout of the exhibition this year is very impressive and if you haven't seen it yet get over there - it's fantastic. Sales were so quick on the opening night that in the blink of an eye red stickers seemed to



Photo taken with the CCG camera

appear. A comment I have heard several times since the exhibition opened is that there were fewer entries from older and more experienced potters.

The new salt kiln has had its first firing and what an excitement that was. I was convinced after some trepidation to

continued on page 2

Members evening Garth and Chips

We will be using the recent talk by Garth Clark as a starting point to look at issues in contemporary ceramic practice that are relevant to New Zealanders. Edited excerpts from the DVD will be shown on the big screen to remind members about what Garth's major points were and then the discussion will focus on how we can best develop our working practice to take advantage of these new opportunities.

The idea of the chips is that while the mind ranges over the esoteric the body is also satisfied. So stop off at the fish and chip shop on the way and we'll see you on Friday 22nd September from 7 to 9pm. We will provide copious tea and coffee to wash down the fish and chips

continued from page 1

put two pots into this inaugural firing (2 Tagines) after hearing things like “oooh don’t ever put pots that you really like into a first firing”, “the pots will be under-salted” etc. But to my delight I was well pleased with the results. The firing on this particular day didn’t start until 12.00 noon and experience told me that it was going to be a long day. The firing ended up being a diesel, gas and wood firing all in one – a bit like the combo deals from McDonalds. We needed the three sources of heat to drive the moisture out of the kiln and thereby reach temperature. Jocelyn’s diesel tunnel came in very handy (it was Jocelyn’s idea to have this optional extra).

The salt was delivered to the firebox in the form of carefully constructed paper missiles (Simon Leung). After some misfires each “salter” was able to aim correctly and throw the salt into the firebox and not splat it against the side of the kiln. I left at 12.30 early the next morning and apparently the fire was shut down at 1.00 am. It was a long but exciting day interspersed with much mirth, good food, kiwi ingenuity and camaraderie.

Also on the day of the first salt firing in the new kiln I learned to trust “a hunch” once again. Some weeks before this Peter and I had smelled that ominous burning electrical insulation smell in the kitchen and dining area at ASP. Try as we might to find the source we could find nothing. Because of the increased demand on the kilns leading up to the exhibition both big electric kilns were going and created too much of a load on the main supply board and some insulation was melting – this is what had caused the smell. Power was turned off and things ground to a halt in the kiln shed. Thank goodness the toilets work without power. An electrician was called and some power was restored to the centre. Life stops when you can’t make a cup of tea. All’s well that ends well and the problem has been fixed.

In conclusion it has been a busy month with many wonderful people working together to launch yet another wonderful event for ASP.

New DVD series of interest to potters, collectors or galleries

Stuart Newby

Last year a group of A.S.P members were talking (as you do), and the conversation rambled over ideas around the history and stories of New Zealand potters. Who are New Zealand’s most important potters? (Here’s a topic to ruin an evening) What do we remember about the development of new potters? What are they like? Etc etc... So, we applied to Creative New Zealand for some funding to put together a publication (as you do). And, as happens, they turned us down flat. So, what now? Well, we decided to make up some DVDs – someone knew a cameraman (Bob), Duncan has been a film editor in a previous life,

Peter seemed well-liked, and is not bad at intelligent conversation. Stuart was a (borderline) reasonable organizer. Lots of others had excellent advice. The result of this was the production of a limited number of DVDs (25) for sale at a low price (\$25). No profit expected, just a desire to record the stories for posterity. Our first one was to record the Garth Clark/Mark Del Vecchio talk at the Auckland Museum in July. It had nothing to do with our first ramblings, but just seemed a good idea. This provocative and interesting DVD is now available (\$25) from www.slides.co.nz.

We have spent a lot of time (and some money) getting old video footage (a lot under licence from T.V.N.Z). We are storing this to use in future DVDs. If you have any significant or interesting Super8 or videotaped ‘stuff’ you think we could use, talk to Stuart Newby, phone (09) 416-3995. He is sort-of a collector of material we can use. We also have a DVD on Chester Nealie, based on his sellout exhibition at Ron Sang’s Gallery in December 2005. This also includes all the bits and pieces on Chester that T.V.N.Z have, plus some other stuff from

the archives. It also includes a demonstration of Chester throwing pots at the A.S.P in 2005. Great Stuff!

Also available is a DVD with conversations between Peter Lange and Duncan Shearer, Peter with Chris Weaver, and Peter with Richard Parker – all on one DVD!

A DVD is in production based on Warren Tippett’s retrospective exhibition at Object Space earlier this year, with lots of archival footage. As mentioned earlier, we plan to produce a limited number of each DVD (25) and sell them at a low cost (\$25) in order to get them out there. If you or someone you care about is interested, you can order them from www.slides.co.nz (slides.co.nz is the production group we are using to produce the DVDs, on account of the fact that none of us have the gear to do it. You can also get them from the A.S.P.).

Other ideas for DVDs that we are thinking of include conversations with some of New Zealand’s important female potters (so far this project has been a bit of a blokes thing), a DVD on Dennis O’Connor’s ceramic work, a collection of archival bits and pieces that will be sure to entertain, and whatever else seems like a good idea (we are open to suggestions).



Photo taken with the CCG camera



Photo taken with the CCG camera

WESTERN POTTERS SUPPLIES

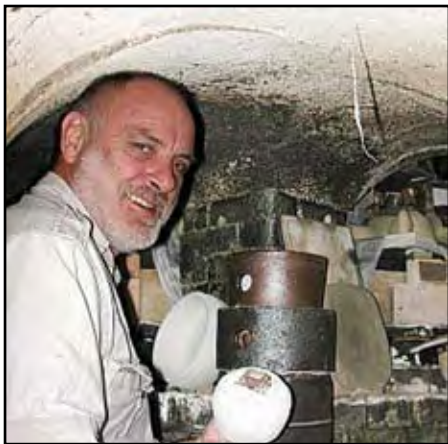
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- tools
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is part of understanding himself. He prepares all the glaze materials himself because he has a belief in pursuing something that is distinctly Australian. Using a new clay, made early in 1994 with local clay and clay from Marulan, he bisque-fires the clay body to toughen the clay for the glazes and then fires for many hours in a woodfire kiln.

Bill Samuels' works embody a distillation of the physicality of the Australian landscape. His open bowl forms and complex, rock-like glazes are inflected with the spirit and technique of traditional Japanese shino tea ceremony ceramics. However, through the use of common materials, such as gravel, these works become strongly connected to place and his observance of its nuances. Embracing an aestheticised poverty of material and accepting the result of the object's metamorphosis during the firing process is central to the appreciation of the tea ceremony. Samuels avoids direct imitation of this aesthetic, using it more as a touchstone for a way of transforming abundant and ordinary elements that are close at hand.



From the Brickyard (soon to be Winery)

Peter Lange

It was good to be able to award Wally Hirsh the status of Life Member of the ASP. Took a bit of engineering to get him to be in the right place at the right time but he got suckered in, and was really happy with the honour. He was a wonderful President for seven years, taking the ASP from a fairly precarious position through to its present solid state and chairing the committee meetings with a mix of efficiency, vigour and good humour, brooking no minor distractions. Though I do recall one meeting when the

dignity of the chair was shaken when Chris squirted a water pistol up Wally's shorts-leg under the table during what Chris obviously felt was a boring discussion.

The position of Life Membership is not awarded lightly, and it is not awarded for being the top potter in the pack. It is for services to the ASP and Wally certainly put in a huge amount of time and effort during the last seven years. Over the last twenty years we have relaxed what seemed to be an unwritten rule, in the early days, of having a practising potter as the President, and this change has been quite sensible for two reasons ... first there is a shortage of practising potters (and anyway they seldom have much spare time on their hands these days), and, as well, potters don't necessarily make good administrators. Wally got fingered originally because he is a serious collector, was attending a Centre class (and really enjoying getting his hands into the clay), had had a distinguished career in Public Service and in education, and had a reputation as a great communicator and conciliator. A pretty good package and one that worked brilliantly for the ASP.

A consumer story: I needed four new elements for my electric kiln and went to Hislop and Barley to get them mainly because they are now close to the Centre in Mays Rd, and our dealings with them have been generally OK. Unusually for me I decided to ask for a quote, and a couple of days later got the details on my answerphone \$146 each for the 2 big ones and \$85 each for the 2 smaller ones, all plus GST, delivery 10 days. Total of about \$520. Sounded a bit expensive and I needed them urgently

so I rang Henk at Furnace Engineering at Pokeno (biggest problem with FE is their location, the Other Side of the Bombay Hills) and even though they weren't from one of his kilns he seemed to be able to figure out the details, and I was able to pick them up the very next



morning on my way to Hamilton, for a total of \$158!! 30% of the price quoted by H and B, and in a tenth of the time. I rest my case. As my history teacher used to say back in the 50s, it was getting heavy and the native bearers have all knocked o .

It was a splendid opening at our exhibition this year – good display, good pots, lots of people but still room to move. Michael, in his first public presidential outing, opened the show with aplomb, the various awards were presented by Brendan to the approval of the audience (bravo Renton!) and the band (Helen and Tom) played on. There was even a small Irish jig going on in one corner which tested some of the pots with unstable bases. At least the jiggers kept their arms by their sides. Maybe that's where the tradition started – a dance suitable for an Irish pottery exhibition. Make sure you get to see the show – it's our best for a while, and even though a lot of our "senior practitioners" are not there, the newcomers make it really interesting and a little unexpected. Well done Judy and her team.

I'm heading for Corbans Estate Art Centre to a really grubby workshop in the "Still Building", a three storey tin shed, which is just fantastic for me and the grubby work I do. I hope to have an exhibition of my year (and a bit)'s work out there in February. Pop in and say hello and look around. There are a lot of people working out there now – Chiara Corbaletto, Neil Miller, Louis Purvis, Allie Eagles and a host of painters, photographers, and other creative souls. I will try to set up a tea urn before you get there.

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Ramblings

Renton Murray

Spring has sprung, if the plum tree at home and the Kowhai at the ASP are any guide. I have been struggling with a sore back but the surprise of "Best in Show" for me gave me a boost. I liked the pot when it came out of the kiln in America and hauled it back home [with others]. Alas the Portage judge was unimpressed with what I thought personally was a nicer pot. Just goes to underline that old adage "you can please some Judges sometimes, but not all of the Judges....."

Duncan and Peter and Anne Crane have been selected for The Portage Award, good on them and good luck. Quite how Peter will get his piece into Lopdell House remains a mystery, but I have spied demo gangs measuring up the front door.

Now back to the ASP show, what a good night the opening was and how good it looked. The selector Brendan Adams and Judy Rae with her loyal helpers put together a sleek and stylish show. Speeches were fun and interesting and it was great to see Wally Hirsh getting recognition for all his good work over the years with a Life Membership. Our new President - Michael appears to have an easy line in public speaking... lots of practice I think. But most importantly the pots look great and there are pots for all tastes. Get along and see it.

What a wide range of talents we have at the ASP. It really is a vibrant centre at present. I'm going to miss the involvement when Peter returns (he's extended his leave by a few months) and even though "The Till and I" have become friendly the wretched computer and I only have a superficial relationship. Thank heavens Duncan is skilled.

The rest of the Centre is in good shape and the gardeners have it looking better than ever. Improvements seem constant, Michael Donaldson is a whiz and his latest solar powered container ventilation system is a hoot.

Come on down, have a look around and take part in your centre activities. If you are lucky you can have a cup of tea. I have never seen tea bags and coffee disappear at such a rate. We will have to increase membership fees to cover...only joking.

Review of ASP Exhibition

Anne Hudson

is years Auckland Studio Potters member's exhibition Fire and Clay is again a wonderfully eclectic collection of ceramic work. This exhibition is probably the most honest expression available of what is happening in the ceramic community.

The ASP workshops and facilities introduce potters to the whole repertoire of pottery processes, materials and styles and these are represented at Fire and Clay. Although the selector Brendan Adams did reduce the number of entries it is still an inclusive exhibition demonstrating a wide range of ceramic journeys. Award winners not only received accolades but clay from Potters Clay Nelson. Judy Rae, with a team of helpers, presented the work in a professional manner. There is nothing amateur about this collection of work.

The winning piece by Renton Murray captured the selector's eye. It is a simple plate the product of a wood firing that Renton created while visiting the United States. The

subtle colours created by underlying slips and the expressive lines of ash glaze meet all the criteria of a beautifully crafted plate. It is well executed, functional, and has a simple beauty, which sets it apart.

Domestic ware is well-represented at the exhibition. Japanese teacups and salt glazed teapots and some expressive bowls by Elena Renker, tell us that this genre is still alive and well. Simon Leong's 3Degrees Lange teapots take this tradition and literally give them a new twist. Reminding us how lively clay is and how it can capture humour and movement and still be just a teapot. Simon's work is a tribute to his teacher, capturing the essence of the relationship between the student and teacher - one of admiration and camaraderie. Graham Ambrose demonstrates his throwing skill in his beautifully balanced orange bowl. Although this bowl is decidedly functional it is actually a sculptural piece, not for filling with knick-knacks.

Sculptural pieces are well represented. Graham Collins amuses us with his flying women. The undercarriage perhaps detracts from the simplicity of the figures but solves the problem of elevating them.

There is an elegance to the figures that is very attractive and something disquieting about their mounting. Onlie Ong's Brink of Danger makes us think about the dangers for bird life in the environment. The eggs represent the vulnerable wild life literally trapped and mutilated by our clumsy efforts to control pests and domestic animals. A student award was given to Michelle Brown for her Secret Garden. It is obvious that the maker had pleasure in creating these whimsical plants. The porcelain cones by Annette McKone (with individual lustre decoration) make an effective display; is there a message in her name? More light underneath would have set off the translucency and added to their effect. Porcelain is on the upsurge. The most outstanding pieces in this medium are by Greg Barron. His enormous pot and plate with a perfect celadon dominate the room and

draw the viewer to them.

Much is said about the influence of the Diploma class. The Diploma students work does add a new dimension. They are required to complete projects and to seek resolution



Photo taken with the CCG camera

in their work, which as a result brings about some fresh approaches to clay. Rachel Carter's simple cups and bowls show a sensitive throwing style with a modern aesthetically pleasing drawn line. Helen Perrit deals with the female form and female condition with her haunting piece Caged and her Guardians. These two artists demonstrate the range of skill, design and concept that the Diploma course encourages. As part of the exhibition last years Diploma graduate students displayed their work. Charade Honey's Nags Head showed her further exploration into sculptural pieces with stamped and slipped decoration, all brought together in a soda firing. The juxtaposition of the horses head with its connotations of power and energy and the simple daisies threaded around it evokes questions about innocence and pleasure, life and decay. Jisu Jeon has continued to throw and is experimenting with glazes. Her work is a celebration of her observations of her surroundings in a new country. Anne Hudson's deconstructed Shamal Bowls challenge our expectations of a vessel and offer some visual teasing. The Diploma

student's work becomes part of the ASP influences. Students in other classes see this often conceptual and new approach to design and take up the challenge in their work.

Brendan Adams was the selector and visiting artist this year. The display of Brendan's work is delightful. His clocks and storage jars, with their quirky lids and attached spoons, are much admired. Brendan's work is appreciated not only by the potters who admire his skill and techniques but also by the viewer who see aesthetically pleasing pieces that they want to own (something many of us should consider). Often the potter's work is for the appreciation and understanding of other potters and in an exhibition such as this it is not a bad thing, but ultimately if we want to sell our work - and if it has a price tag on it this seems to be our intention - then perhaps we should be mindful of the possible 'eye of the beholder'.

My favourite exhibit was Petra Malloy's porcelain vessels. They look like cups for ceremony and ritual. They seem impossibly fragile and the layers of colour with their meticulous design create objects to be desired. Petra is a graduate of the Canberra Diploma of ceramics and I think we see here a refinement that has been brought about through a commitment to the design process.

Perhaps the most noticeable difference of this exhibition to other years was a noticeable absence of senior potters. Apart from Rick Rudd and his teapots and Greg Barron and his magnificent porcelain, some of our big names were missing. Where were Marilyn Wiseman, John Parker, Peter Collis, and Len Castle whose work we usually look forward to seeing at this exhibition? I don't think it was a deliberate act on their part but a reflection on the growing opportunities for potters in the art world. The standard remained high and the show was a success. This is a show that gives us an insight into the richness and diversity of creativity that working in clay allows. I am sure many people will visit the exhibition in the next few weeks and find plenty to talk about and hopefully feel inclined to purchase.



Renton Murray
Best in Show

Greg Barron
Merit



Graham Collings
Merit

Rachel Carter
Merit



Annette McKone
Merit



Michelle Brown
Student Award

ASP New Members

Welcome to:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Roy Burgoyne | Paula Thornburrow |
| Geo Budd | Janet Mahon |
| Kelvin Bradford | Katie Humphries |
| Vivienne Keohane | Leonie Barlow |

The ASP Salt Kiln

Duncan Shearer

Due to the perseverance of Mike Donaldson and Renton Murray the kiln had its roof finished and burner mounting brackets welded up. So on the 20th August everything was set for the inaugural firing. Everyone who had contributed to the kiln building had a chance to put work in and it turned out that the kiln is about 40% larger than the last one, so virtually every pot got in.

We started up the gas burners at about midday and took it fairly slow for the first 3 hours, as we were concerned about blowing up the cones. But then we let the burners rip and started to get some real temperature in the kiln. About now we also had a play with the diesel burner and were mightily impressed with its ferocity. Around 6pm (having consumed vast amounts of gas) we decided to switch to the diesel burner to save the remaining gas for later. The diesel jet burner worked well but we were slowly realising that the kiln was a lot wetter than anticipated. In fact a veritable lake must have been contained in the bottom concrete block layer, slowing the firing down immensely. Eventually we switched back to gas, salted about 15kg of salt and finished the firing by flattening cone 11 in two places – and still the steam was erupting from the concrete base. The results were eagerly anticipated (more so as about \$340 worth of fuel was consumed overall), and to be fair some very nice pots emerged. But there were

also some substantially underfired ones as well. The salt glaze looked good. Now we have to work on making the kiln fire more evenly. The next firing will be Peter Lange's class firing.



Photo taken with the CCG camera



Photo taken with the CCG camera

classified

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

Situations Vacant:

Do you want to have experience in exhibition work? Cone City Clay needs some helpers on Thursday the 16th November and Friday 17th November at Artful Gallery, Newmarket. Please phone Margaret Bell on 2674501 for further information and to offer your help.

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exhibitions

Artful Gallery

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1 Morgan St, Newmarket.

Waiheke Community Art Gallery Natural Selection 2

1st September to 18th September

Twenty six ceramicists are participating

- Tony Bond & Sarah Holder
- Peter Collis & Anne Hudson
- Jim Cooper & Janeen Greig
- Rod Davies & Andy Kingston
- Penny Ericson & Phillipa Durkin
- Katie Gold & Aimee McLeod
- Peter Lange & Ann Crane
- John Lawrence & Elizabeth Halford
- Kiya Nancarrow & Judy Rae
- Manos Nathan & Colleen Urlich
- John Roy & Richard Stratton
- Rick Rudd & Paul Rayner
- Chris Weaver & Michael Tannock

Ph: 3729907.

Masterworks Gallery

Overlap

Work by Pauline Bern, Elizabeth McClure and Christine Thacker. Three of New Zealand's top object-makers whose paths have crossed over the years, come together in this exhibition to celebrate each others work

14 Sept - 7 Nov 2006

Preview 13 Sept 5.30-7.30pm

77 Ponsonby Rd, Ponsonby. Ph:3781256.

The Depot

Intersection

Featuring: Linda Gair, Judy Chambers, Julie Ross, Kim Boyd

Opening 23rd September

28 Clarence St, Devonport. Ph: 9632331.

Corban Estate Arts Centre

Legacy: The Arts Laureates of Waitakere

26th August to 1st October

426 Great North Rd, Henderson

Ph: 8384455.

Lopdell House Gallery

Portage Ceramic Awards

Opening night: 12th October

418 Titirangi Rd, Titirangi. Ph: 8178087.

Titirangi Potters

11th Annual Exhibition

Upstairs Gallery

Level 1, Lopdell House

Opening Night: Sept 7th at 7pm.

Pots of Ponsonby

Chris Southern "In the Window"

10th September - 24th September.

Leonie Clapham "Off the Wall" Ceramic Wall hangings

24th September - 8th October

Pots of Ponsonby is open 7 days.

298 Ponsonby Rd, Ponsonby. Ph 3760145.