



Bucks Pottery and Sculpture Society

Newsletter, September 2020

Hi members.

Another lockdown newsletter! I hope you're keeping well and adapting to the changes to life as we know it. Thanks again for all the info received, it's a busy newsletter again. I hope you've been enjoying the challenges, either making and/or voting. The challenge information and all results are available to view on the Bucks Potters website.

Raku has been a popular pastime, with its suitability for keeping compliant with Covid rules. Great results were achieved, as featured. Some of the changes following the last committee meeting will hopefully be popular with the members, especially the free entry for members at the monthly meetings when they recommence (see inside). Also see back page for Connie's classes. Happy reading, Yvonne

Glaze Testing Workshop with Elaine Wells

I presume I am normal when I say that I have an inexhaustible collection of glaze recipes that I think one day I will try? Some potters create pots and then find an appropriate glaze, but others are inspired to create a pot for a particular glaze. Some potters can put more than one glaze on a pot and be successful, other times it just results in another muddy brown pot. (I actually have a vast collection of brown pots...) Purchased glazes are expensive but reliable, however you may recognise them on other people's pots. Coming up with your own glaze is very satisfying and not expensive.

I spent years using what I thought was the perfect white glaze that I found in an old Ceramic Review. It had depth and gloss, was cheap to make and able to hold its own to 1260 in an electric kiln without moving.... described by the ever-honest Kevin Millward as ... 'Toilet White'. I then spent two years at Clay College Stoke, being given recipes and advice from 27 of the most famous potters. My final glaze choice was simply my toilet white recipe with a slight alteration resulting in a glaze that has the beauty of a wood/gas fired pot (still fired in an electric kiln), but has retained its gloss and staying power! I am thrilled with it and feel that it has moved my work towards a level of professionalism (purely my personal opinion of course ha ha).

I am still a little frightened of colour but now have a new gas kiln and am looking forward to experimenting with shinos and celadons. However, what to do with all those recipes I have collected.... what else but test them? I love a project and have spent time making up 100gm amounts of many of my recipes and firing them in both electric and gas to see the results. The picture on the right is the last batch I fired in the electric kiln,

some great results, some that will need tweaking to give even better results and some that will be added to the muddy brown pile. If anyone wants to have a look at the tests and a copy of any of the recipes, call round for a cup of tea!

I have accumulated almost every ingredient that is needed for glaze recipes and developed a list of substitute ingredients either to replace those no longer in production or to substitute those not available in Great Britain.

I would like to run some workshops where you can bring that stash of recipes that you have promised yourself to try one day or your 'go to' recipe that you would like to alter and experiment with. A maximum of 4 people at a time, a couple of hours to mix the glazes and put on test tiles that I will provide; I will then fire all the tests and I can review them with you on an individual basis. I am by no means an expert at glazes but if you would like the details of the workshop please email me at: elainewellspotter@gmail.com or telephone on 078108 37543. There will be a pro rata charge for each of the tests you mix according to the ingredients you use but there will be no charge for the first workshop I run.

Elaine Wells



The Bucks County Museum

...is currently closed but hopes to re-open for a Halloween experience 29-31 October, during the October Half-term holidays. There will be crafts and the opportunity to handle some of the collections, tickets will be timed and there will be charges for the crafts. More details to follow. The museum is hosting the Bucks Art Society Centenary Show from 14 November to 21 February 2021 but opening arrangements are still to be decided. It's likely that opening days may be reduced but details will be on the website when known.

www.buckscountymuseum.org/museum/

Upcycling Ceramics!

Dorothea Reid

You know when you make something that is "OK" but somehow it doesn't do it for you? Why not experiment with decals? You have nothing to lose!

Years ago, I made one of my "Cowboy" boots (earthenware) with white glaze and blue trimmings, but I knew it was boring and it lingered on the shelf for a long time. I decided during lockdown to play with decals and I hope you will agree I have transformed it!!! Fired 3 hours to 820°C, soaked for ten minutes.



BPSS Raku day – 23rd August

It was such a treat to finally have a Bucks Potters event. Raku days are always exciting and this one was even more so given the current situation.

Elaine, Richard and Carol's careful planning covered all options required by the Covid restrictions. Elaine had chosen a large space which allowed plenty of social distancing for all the activities. With Elaine's monitoring of the event, Richard and Carol's advice, hard work and careful handling of our pieces, we had an excellent day.

Even the weather behaved until a downpour just as we were about to pack up. To escape the rain, Elaine invited us into her dining room where we could see her broad collection of pots which she's built up over the years, including some from her time at Clay school – Middleport Pottery. Elaine even gave us a quick lesson on how to create our own teapot handle by soaking and treating fresh twigs. She says you can make a handle from anything that you can 'wrap around your wrist'. (More on this in the next newsletter.)

It was a fantastic day. Thanks so much to Chris, Elaine, Richard and Carol for all their planning and hard work. Much appreciated. *Yvonne Cornes*



Other Raku firings

Naked Raku – Caroline Lamb

Here are the results of some of my experiments with naked raku, which I've been teaching myself for a couple of years. After experimenting with various slip and glaze combinations, both one step and two step, I've settled on a two step method which works well for me and I do the firing in my raku kiln, which is made out of an old oil drum. Burnishing with slip is an important part of the process and I am experimenting with coloured slips.



Raku workshop – Trish Hall

Here are some raku pots I made and finally raku'd on the 4th August.

It was a great day – only three of us raku'ing and all socially distanced. These should have been done some time ago but circumstances have made it impossible but we had a super day and the weather was kind.

It was run by Wendy Johnson and Jane Ostler was there too. It was a great day with wonderful results.



Society News

New Committee – from Chris Inder

I hope you are all keeping well and have been enjoying the BPSS challenge. You may recall that earlier in the year, myself and two other members of the committee (Jeremy White & Richard Ballantyne) decided it was time to step down and we invited members to join the committee & potentially take on the vacant positions.

I am delighted to say that four people volunteered & have been along to the pre lockdown committee meeting and the more recent 'socially distanced' one.

As we have been unable to hold an AGM and are unlikely to do so this year and as a matter of necessity, your committee have taken the decision to formalise the changeover. Should you have any comments or indeed wish to join the committee please contact me by 30 September. chris.inder@gmail.com

The new committee members and their roles:

Holly Inglis - chairperson. Holly's enthusiasm and interesting ideas will I'm sure be a breath of fresh air for the society.

Bronwen Corral - treasurer. Bronwen introduced herself in the last newsletter and is already getting to grips with the finances of the society.

Debbie Taylor - committee member. Debbie is keen to be involved and amongst other things will assist Bronwen.

Adam Hoyle - Exhibition Co-ordinator. Whilst there will not be an exhibition this year, Adam will be looking at possibilities going forward. In addition he has been helping with the technical side of the 'challenge' and is going to be looking at options for refreshing the society website.

There is still a committee vacancy for someone to coordinate the monthly speakers/live streaming (which we are planning to start soon). Please consider whether this could be **YOU**. The committee as a whole provide lots of ideas and support but it would really help to have one person in charge. We are keen for members to come forward either to join the committee or to help generally. There are various ways in which you could become involved. If you're interested please email Holly at: hlinglis@gmail.com

I cannot thank retiring and existing committee enough for their support and enthusiasm over the years and I wish the new committee every success.

Regards, Chris

Membership News – from Jane Ostler

Dear members,

The year is 3/4 over and still we can't meet face to face, but we have been kept interested and connected by the challenges. At the committee meeting, it was agreed that all memberships will carry over until next year, and when we are able to meet again we will start the new year. New members are always welcome and for those joining this year their membership will also carry over for a year.

There will be some changes to the membership fees next year: £25 – single; £35 – family; £10 – students (this was lowered to encourage students to come and support BPSS). *Jane*

It was agreed that visitors should still pay for demo evenings.

No Entry Charge –Monthly Meetings

Although there will be an increase in the membership fee, there will be no entry charge for the monthly meetings.

Refreshments will also still be free of charge.

We are hoping that this will encourage members to come to more meetings.

BPSS 2020 Pottery / Sculpture competition

This competition will replace the last Challenge of the year. There will be a 4 week timescale for making for this. This year the prize money will be paid by bank transfer. **See ad to the right:**

The Challenge – Before and Afters

As many of the challenge entries were submitted in various stages of completion, we can now see some of the fully fired results. Thank you to Catherine Oakley for suggesting this as a feature.

Caroline Selvey:
'Stoneware Bull'
from the Freedom
Challenge



Hilary Audus:
'Run Rabbit, Run!'
Stoneware & black
slip, from the
Freedom Challenge



Catherine Oakley:
'Bird' Stoneware'
from the
Seaside/Waterside
Challenge



Catherine Oakley:
'Lioness symbolizes
courage and
protection'
Stoneware,
from the Totem
Challenge



Question and Answer Column

Claire Friend has come up with a good idea:

Members post questions on technique, materials or equipment and other members can respond in the following newsletter. A sort of slow burn help line. It might be very useful and also good for others to read the responses.

So to start the ball rolling:

Would anyone like to share a Stoneware transparent matt glaze recipe that doesn't go milky? Or tips to stop it from going milky?

Much appreciated. Replies to: y.cornes@talktalk.net

2020 POTTERY/SCULPTURE COMPETITION

The theme for this year's 'Peter Stocker Ceramic Award' is:

'Performance' £75 Prize

The competition is open to all artists, not just members and must contain a ceramic element. There are no other specifications.

This year the vote will be on a webpage.

The deadline for entering is 20th December.

POTTERY CLASSES AT WYCOMBE ART CENTRE

Desborough Road, High Wycombe

Tuesday evenings: 7 - 9pm.

(6 week course from 22nd September*)

Thursday daytime: 10.30am - 12.30pm.

(6 week course from 24th September*)

Most students stay on after the 6 weeks.

*Providing I have a minimum of three students, classes will run on a rolling system. **You can join at any time.**

For more info contact Connie Fielder:
con.fielder@googlemail.com

BPSS website

MEMBERS GALLERY

Are you aware of the Members Gallery section on the BPSS website?

You can add your profile with an image of your work in this section. It would be fantastic if we could have more of the membership represented there. So, if you like to contribute please send an image and a few words (anything up to about 50 words) to:

chris.inder@gmail.com

About the society

The Society was formed in 1963 and welcomes all artists working in 3D. Individual membership costs £25; £35 for a family and £10 for full-time students.

Membership provides access to monthly demonstrations, several hands-on workshops, and a quarterly newsletter.

We are on facebook and members can put an image and contact details on the Society's web page

www.buckspotters.com

The Committee

The Committee meets regularly to develop the programme, organise the Annual Exhibition and review costs. If you find a good speaker who could demonstrate to the Society, please tell us. Also, if you have ideas you would like to raise with us, please do so at the monthly meeting or email **chris.inder@gmail.com** 

GDPR information

The information which you provide to us on your membership form will be used solely for the purpose of processing your membership and dealing with you as a member of BPSS. The data will not be shared with any third party for marketing or commercial purposes without obtaining your explicit consent. Our GDPR policy is available to read on the BPSS website.

BPSS Contacts

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