



# Bucks Pottery and Sculpture Society

## Newsletter September 2024

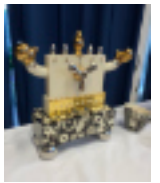
**TALK and DEMO**  
28<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Mark Dally: Ceramic Artist**  
Article & Photos: Lucinda Etchell



Mark Dally has been making ceramics for 35 years (supplying Galleries for 25 of these) and describes himself as a ceramic artist - not a potter - who likes to cross the boundaries between sculptural art and functionality. His journey into ceramics was atypical: he studied textiles at Salisbury College of Art, enjoyed life drawing, the medium of pencil and paper and especially loved mark-making - an early indication of his passion for slip trailing. He went into ceramics with a non-traditional view 'no smock or beard' and considers himself a maverick in his work. This is clear to see in his pieces, not conforming to a particular way but experimenting with different methods: slab building, extruded parts, slip cast elements, drilled holes, sprigs, lustre and slip trailing.

He aims to entertain, to amuse, to provide a narrative. His Magic Boxing Box was made in response to the Covid pandemic. Unable to hug anyone, coupled with confrontational politics, he created a piece with open arms wearing boxing gloves. Loving the concept of found objects, Mark used parts of old toys to reassemble into his sculptures, such as gloves from a bunny toy and a plastic aeroplane propellor.



As a boy he was always fascinated by the patination of amoeba, seed pods and spores. His adult travels to Australia led to an interest in Aboriginal patterns and both these influences can be clearly seen in the decoration of his work.

He sees his work as a canvas for decoration. His influences come from his childhood love of Meccano, 60's sci-fi comics and his student art and textile beginnings. He later trained in mould making, spending 4 months in Carlton ware for his industrial placement and absorbed the Stoke ethos.



A lover of black & white, he balances chaos (scribble) with order (grids), combining rigidity with expressive mark making. His ceramic art pieces are also a contradiction: they imply functionality, but instead they are purely for visual enjoyment. He appreciates this is an acquired taste and so makes lots of accessible work comprising of jollied mugs, platters and bowls in his signatory slip trailing style.

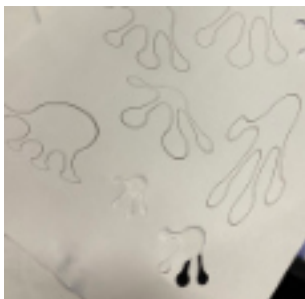
Slip trailing 6 hours a day led to developing Repetitive Strain Injury and as a result he went in search of a tool which was both soft and did not suck air. He researched, designed and produced his own slip bag tool, which he has been selling very successfully since 2017.

Mark believes in the generosity of sharing techniques and demonstrated his slip trailing and paper stencil resist technique. He showed how he used photoshop to stretch and warp a pattern to suit, e.g. frog feet, scalpel cut from wet strength Carnival tissue paper and placed on a tile, covered in black stain and removed with tweezers.

His slip trailing is freehand and he finds brush strokes, lines and dots pleasing. He stresses there is no figurative or animalistic intention and his designs emanate from patterns he has absorbed through life. He practised on a board to 'loosen up' and connect with muscle memory, letting his mind and hand relax.

We really enjoyed Mark's interesting story of his work and his informative demonstrations, as well as snapping up a slip trailer to take home.

[www.sliptrailer.com](http://www.sliptrailer.com) [www.markdallyceramics.co.uk](http://www.markdallyceramics.co.uk), instagram and facebook.



## TALK and DEMO 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Paula Sutton: Smoke Firing

Article: Celia Barnes Photos: Bronwen Corral



Paula brought a display of her exquisite smoke fired ceramics made with terracotta and stoneware clays. These included bowls, animals, eggs and tiles - some with delicate mark making. Paula explained her method, all were hand-built and burnished

when leather-hard 2 to 3 times to achieve a smooth texture. She also discussed the use of terra sigillata - an ultra refined clay slip that gives a soft sheen when applied to bone-dry ware.

We all then went outside to a corner of the very sunny car park and began firing! Using a baking tray filled with fresh sawdust, a bisque fired ceramic piece was placed on top and more sawdust soaked with white spirit was added to cover the piece. It was then set alight. It was fired for about 2 to 3 minutes then the piece was moved around to achieve different depths of colour and markings. Then under Paula's instruction, we all had a go at a firing - we were all becoming pyromaniacs!

We then returned inside and Paula demonstrated the finishing technique of wiping, polishing and waxing. Paula then gave us a leather hard egg for us to burnish - very therapeutic. A really good burnishing result was obtained using a stainless steel deodorant soap odour remover. Thank you Paula for a lovely afternoon sharing your smoke firing techniques.



## Workshop 28<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Raku Day: Carol Read & Richard Ballantyne

Article & Photos: Jane Ostler



Ten members enjoyed a lovely sunny day for the Raku this year - quite different to last year! Thanks to Carol and Richard again for their hard work making it all happen. Thanks to Elaine as well without whose premises the day would not have happened. We had traditional raku glazed pots, horsehair and feather pots and obvara pots.

Obvara, sometimes called Baltic Raku, is an Eastern European firing technique which originated in the Baltic region. The hot piece of pottery is taken out of the kiln and quickly immersed into a fermented liquid, which is made with water, flour, yeast and sugar.



## Workshop Update: Isobel Cherry Chesham Leys Care Home

All the pottery the residents made came out very well. I was able to walk around with William, one of the staff, and give the pots to the residents who made them. Jackie was thrilled with her pot. A successful outcome and an enjoyable experience for all.

Workshop held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024



**Workshop**  
10<sup>th</sup> August 2024

**Mould Making: Sophie Smith**  
Article & Photos: Holly Inglis



We started off by making a one-part mould of some tiles, which can become press moulds, sprig moulds or slip moulds for tiles. Some of us had brought unfired clay which we had already carved/sprigged, others brought pre-fired ones that required adding resists. We used roasting tins to level our tiles in, with extra seals of tape and raw clay and poured in the plaster we had mixed. We mixed up the plaster by adding the plaster mix to a bucket of water until it formed a volcano shape and then we stirred it by hand (with latex gloves on) until it had thickened to a double cream consistency, which we then poured into the moulds - none of the moulds leaked - yay!



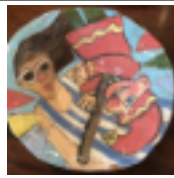
Next it was the two-part mould. After choosing an item, from a choice of wooden eggs, a couple of jugs, light bulbs and a bauble, we formed clay around them to the midline with a funnel extension and sealed any holes e.g. the vase openings. We enclosed it with cardboard barriers and sealed those with tape and raw clay. All our items were coated with a resist of vaseline to stop the plaster sticking to it. We mixed up another batch of plaster and poured it into our cardboard former until it reached the top to create half a mould. The mould was left to set, whilst we enjoyed the sunshine and some lunch.



After lunch, we began by removing the cardboard former and then removing the clay to leave half the model exposed. A clay funnel was formed around the piece and some lugs carved into the exposed plaster to help the plaster mould lock together when completed and then applied the vaseline resist. This was then wrapped in a cardboard former, sealed with tape and clay and a new batch of plaster was mixed up. I was the only one with a minor leak which was swiftly quashed with some raw clay! Time for some tea whilst the plaster was setting. The workshop was concluded at this point and we took our plaster moulds home to dry out, once dried we could remove the item and use the moulds to press mould or slip cast the moulded shape. If slip casting remember to neaten edges if required.

## New Members

**A warm welcome to our new members:**  
Johanna Rosin, Julie Wetenhall and Steph Broadribb.



**Julie Wetenhall**

I work in earthenware and stoneware. I am a painter first, ceramicist second, so I marry the two and slip paint my ceramic pieces. I usually have a theme and make quite a few pieces, then move on to a new idea!

**Our next exhibition is**

**6/7/8<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

**At Oldham Hall, Great Missenden.**

Time to start thinking about what you would like to exhibit.

Open to all members to exhibit and sell your work.

Details and forms coming soon!

## Remember!

Our annual competition - bring your entry to the November meeting.  
Voted for by members and announced at the meeting

### Peter Stocker Annual Competition



**Literary  
Animals**

**£75 prize!**

**Entries:** handmade pottery or sculptures by members.

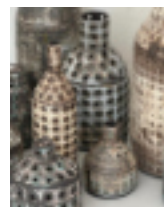
**Deadline:** November meeting  
8pm 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**Voting:** members present at the meeting

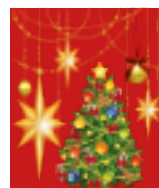
As it's the last meeting of the year there will be mince pies & mulled wine!

## Up & coming Meetings

**8pm at Little Kingshill Village Hall,  
Little Kingshill HP16 0DZ**



**25<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Elly Wall** uses clay slabs and adds texture with slips and impressions to create groups of vessels that have a narrative. She combines the material itself with a narrative from empty and forgotten old buildings and structures to explore the expectations and boundaries of function and aesthetics.



**29<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

Our last meeting of the year! With mince pies and mulled wine and voting for the Peter Stocker Annual Competition to find our winner!



**31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 Fiona Booy** combines hand-building and throwing to create her ceramic pieces. Her current series entitled 'Be More Mountain' explores 'slowing down to earth time' looking at the geological time scales of the formation of rocks over billions of years in contrast to humans and how we live a fast paced life.

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“Tell your own story, and you will be interesting.” Louise Bourgeois

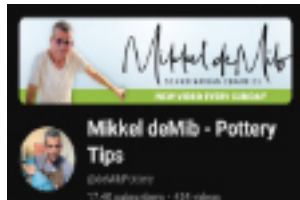


### You Tube Tips from Pam Cawley & Paula Sutton

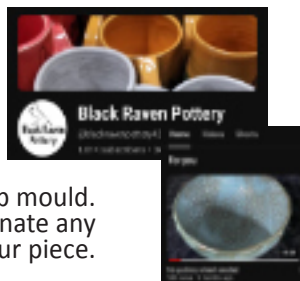
**Templatemaker.nl:** A free website where it makes a template for you. Choose the 3D shape you want, add dimensions and click the create button. Print it out and make the shape using the print out and if you like it make it in clay! Enjoy!



**Mikkel deMib:** A Danish thrower who makes videos covering most aspects of pottery making - pit-firing, raku, agateware, texture, stains & oxides etc.



**Black Raven Pottery:** Creates handmade pottery. A video dated 11/2/24 called 'No pottery wheel needed' shows an alternative way of covering a non porous bowl with an old pair of tights (tuck the excess inside the bowl) to create a hump mould. You can stretch the tights to eliminate any wrinkles that might transfer to your piece.



## Your BPSS

**Website** We have a **Members Gallery** on the BPSS Website for members who wish to upload their work.

To set up your own page contact our webmaster **Adam Hoyle** on: [adam@adamhoyle.co.uk](mailto:adam@adamhoyle.co.uk) and he will get you started. Once you have your gallery set up, you can add photos to the gallery directly or from Instagram by tagging the images #bpss. The website checks twice daily for new Instagram images and shows the 3 most recent ones.

**About the Society** The Society was formed in 1963 and welcomes all artists working in 3D. Individual membership costs £25 per year, family membership is £35 and full-time student membership is £10. Membership provides access to monthly demonstrations, several hands-on workshops and a quarterly newsletter. Members can add their profile and a few images of their work to the Members' Gallery on our website [www.buckspotters.com](http://www.buckspotters.com). Our Facebook page is '**Bucks pottery and sculpture society**' and we are on Instagram as '**buckspotters**'.

**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 do tell us. Also, if you have ideas you would like to raise with us, please do so at the monthly meeting or email [hlinglis@gmail.com](mailto:hlinglis@gmail.com).

**GDPR information** The information provided 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

**Chair:** Holly Inglis

**Treasurer:** Bronwen Corral

**Zoom Minutes:**

**Membership & Correspondence:** Jane Ostler

**Exhibitions:** Trish Hall

**Newsletter:**

## CTM Potters Supplies 5% Members Discount!

We have agreed a **5% discount** for all BPSS members with **CTM Potters Supplies**.

When ordering you will need to phone and say you are a member of BPSS and give your name.

They will then check against the list of names (no contact details) that we have sent.

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