



# Bucks Pottery and Sculpture Society

## Newsletter, January 2025

Hi again members.

Wishing you a happy and creative year for 2025. New beginnings and we'd love to hear from you if you'd like to join the committee. Shivashtie Poonwassie and Trish Hall have needed to step down (as designer/editor and exhibition co-ordinator, respectively) but they will both remain members. We thank them for their help which has been invaluable.

If you'd like to discuss joining up and becoming part of the team please speak to a committee member at one of the monthly meetings or email Holly at: [hlinglis@gmail.com](mailto:hlinglis@gmail.com)

We value fresh input and you'd be given a lot of support.

This is a full newsletter with some great up & coming speakers at the monthly meetings. Happy reading, Yvonne

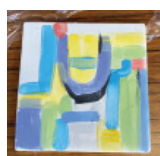
### 30 August WORKSHOP

### Tile art Jane Ostler

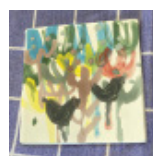
This was the second of our afternoon meetings this year. Four members of the committee decided to share some interesting ways of decorating on tiles. Trish brought a couple of her slipware vessels and demonstrated scraffito on a green ware tile and the use of paper stencils.

Jane then demonstrated the Mishima technique. With scraffito, a layer of coloured slip is painted onto the piece and then carved through, revealing the clay colour beneath. Mishima usually involves a layer of wax over the coloured slip. This allows another colour to fill the carved areas as well, before the piece is bisque fired. The wax burns off during the firing. Paula talked about her underglaze decorated tiles.

Bronwen provided us with some coloured slips (and underglazes) and had brought a selection of greenware and bisque fired tiles for members to use. She also brought a selection of her own tiles as examples of different techniques. Everyone seemed to enjoy having a go with some very artistic results.



Painted bisque tiles.



Paper stencil with slip.



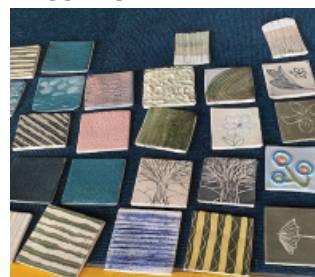
Some of Paula's painted tiles.



Trish's scraffito vessels and examples of scraffito and Mishima.



Group participation.



Some of Bronwen's tiles showing scraffito and water etchings.

## The Mystery of the Tring Tiles

Photography by Isabel Colomar



There are some wonderful medieval tiles temporarily on display at the Tring Local History Museum.

They are on loan from the V&A until the spring and are believed to have once adorned the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Tring.

They date from the 14th Century. There are no tiles like them in this country at all, which adds to their mystery – the only similar tiles having appeared in France.

According to the Curator's comment on the British Museum website: "The relationship of such a fine series of tiles to a minor parish church is puzzling. The scenes are depicted with great humour, and the economy of line produces a vividness of expression that borders on caricature. The device of showing the dead person upside down is a remarkable way of showing death."

In addition to these tiles, Artist and Tilemaker Sue Jones has explored the original sources and created speculative designs for tiles that may once have existed (see bottom right). It is hoped she can offer tile-making workshops as well, and fire the results.

Many thanks to BPSS member Isabel Colomar who suggested this feature. [tringlocalhistorymuseum.org.uk](http://tringlocalhistorymuseum.org.uk)



**The Tring Local History Museum.**  
10am-3.30pm Fridays & Saturdays only.  
Market Place, 9 Brook St, Tring,  
HP23 5ED (beside The Forge car park).  
Free entry, relies on visitors' donations.

Congratulations

to member

**Caroline Selvey**

who was awarded

the Peoples Vote for

'Best Sculpture in

Show' at the recent

Buckinghamshire Arts Society Exhibition

in Wendover. Caroline's 'Rhino' was in our exhibition earlier this month.



## BPSS EXHIBITION

We had a successful exhibition in early December at Oldham Hall. It was well attended and thank you to everyone who took part, visited or helped in any way. A big thank you to Trish Hall who has been our exhibition co-ordinator for the last five exhibitions and did a wonderful job as always. As Trish is now standing down from the committee we thank her so much for all her work as a committee member and in finding such a great venue for our exhibitions.  
*See exhibition photos on back page.*



27 September  
DEMO

## Sue Mills – Polymer Clay demo

Pauline Upstone

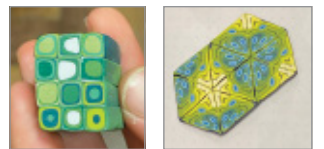
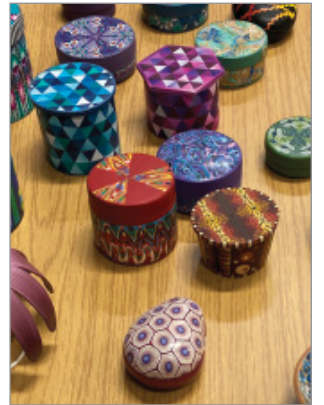
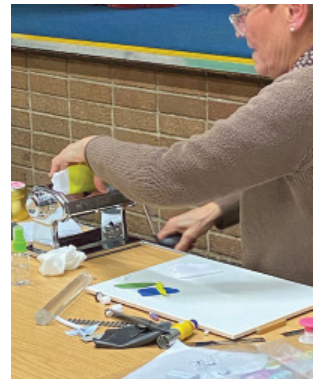
Sue, a former member of the BPSS herself, was an engaging speaker who generously shared her work and techniques. She studied History of Art and pottery at school, and worked as an Occupational Therapist. Sue has gone on to work with both ceramics and polymer clay in the UK and in California.

Sue's polymer clay pieces have intricate and beautiful patterns. She uses pottery tools, acupuncture needles, blades (*see left*), a mini extruder, and most importantly, a pasta machine (*see top right*). This is used to condition the clay to reduce it to the desired thickness. She rolls out single colour polymer sticks to be long and thin and then stacks these up, in a long log which can be a triangle, circular or square shape, like a stick of rock with the arrangement of the colours, staying true along the whole length. Sue then rolls out this log to be long and thin, cuts it into shorter lengths, stacks these and rolls again. Each time the process is repeated the pattern becomes smaller and more intricate, similar to making millefiori.

Sue usually leaves these logs to harden for a few hours. They can be wrapped to keep for a long time. For the demonstration she used them immediately. She sliced the final log into thin slices which all had the same pattern and shape. She fits these pieces together to form sheets, then puts them through the pasta machine again to thin them a little and to help stabilise the material. They can be made into the jewellery, boxes and bowls. Her examples were on display. The finished pieces are baked at 210-250°C in a conventional oven.

Sue demonstrated a 'skinner blend' using flat squares of four colours, combined and recombined through the pasta machine, creating a sheet with a gradual transition of the colours across the final sheet. She also demonstrated using equilateral triangular shaped logs and recombining these to make a stunning kaleidoscopic pattern (*see bottom right*). She then cut these into thin strips to recombine for a bargello pattern. Sue says the sky is the limit to the patterns and designs which can be created.

The finished pieces can be given a sheen using transparent liquid clay or renaissance wax. The process was methodical, but definitely created magic, and I cannot adequately describe it or do justice to Sue's work here. Sue is on Instagram for examples of her work and she enthused about information, ideas and tutorials on the internet – eg British Polymer Clay Guild: [www.bpcg.org.uk](http://www.bpcg.org.uk)



25 October  
DEMO

## Elly Wall

Jane Ostler

Elly's interest in ceramics began when she took an evening class in pottery aged 17 at the local college in Salisbury. She then went on to gain a degree in Ceramics and 3D design at Bath Spa University College, and after that a Masters in Ceramics at the Royal College of Art, graduating in 2004.

Her work evolved to her current style during Covid. Working alone she had time to develop her own style.

Elly's work is hand-built using slabs of clay with slips and textural marks and impressions applied during this making process. She likes to work in a variety of clays and is interested in how these clays transfer their unique qualities and characteristics to the work, but mainly (and demonstrated with) Valentine's Black Vulcan clay.



The slip covered paper being applied to the clay.



The edges are scored and slipped.

While the work has evolved to be influenced by the material itself, in the background is a continuing fascination with empty and forgotten old public buildings and structures. The physical and historical layers of these spaces become fascinating empty vessels. In her work she explores this form, looking at the expectations and boundaries of function and aesthetics.

A piece of clay is rolled out to the desired size, then porcelain slip or underglaze is applied to a piece of paper and then pressed onto the clay. She uses a kidney tool to smooth it on so there are no brush marks. The piece is then turned over and patterns are made using the round end of a needle tool or similar.

The vessel is then made in at least two pieces. The shape and size of the top section are determined when the bottom is made and she has several different sized templates for this.

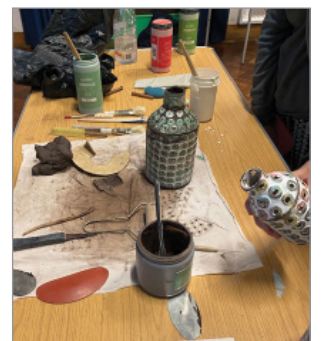
To join the bottom onto the main part she uses a surform blade and then roller to smooth the join and this seems to work. To minimise waste, left over slip or underglaze are used on smaller vessels which do not have the holes and therefore can be used as vases.

After the piece is bisque fired it is then dipped in a white glaze which is then wiped back and glaze fired to around 1240°C.

The small vessels are fired to stoneware but not glazed, just sanded smooth. Elly's sideline of cups and plates that she began making this year did really well at Potfest and Waterperry this summer, and can be found in her Etsy shop.



The finished products. Vessel on left is glazed. Vessel on right was fired to stoneware and then sanded.



A selection of tools and equipment used



# SOCIETY NEWS

## MEMBERSHIP

A very warm welcome to our new members: **Ian Hush, Tina Gibbs and Martyn Gates.** We hope you will enjoy being involved in the society.

### Martyn Gates

My background is as a painter having been to art school in the early 80's. My pottery experience is more recent and focuses on throwing. Being relatively new to it I find that I can re-experience the enjoyment of playing without expectations.

I have been practising at Queens Park, but now I have my own wheel so expect to spend even more time hunched over. I look forward to meeting the members and your work in the new year.



## LONDON POTTERS ANNUAL EXHIBITION

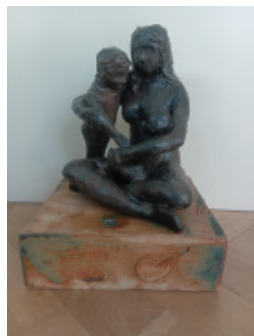
*Carol Read*

I was lucky enough to be part of London Potters annual exhibition at the Morley Gallery, Westminster Bridge Road, London from 28th November to 7th December.

There were 120 potters who took part. We could exhibit three pieces. The location with no parking meant that my pieces had to be carried on the train and tube – it did influence the choice!



*'Group of Three'*



*'We Three'*

I was at the private view on the evening before opening. Richard Miller, of Throwdown fame, is the president and was part of the judging and presentation team. There was an amazing variety of work – all clay and all different.

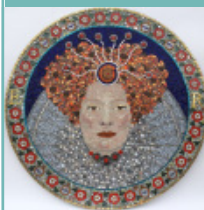
It was great to see friends winning prizes- Dawn Carroll, Fin Oram Carr and Fiona Booy all were successful.

I was really pleased to sell one of my sculptures. Photos are of my group of three at the exhibition and a photo of the one that sold, titled 'We Three'.



## UP AND COMING BUCKS POTTERS MEETINGS

at Little Kingshill Village Hall, HP16 0DZ



### Becky Paton – 8pm, 31 January 2025

Becky Paton studied Public Art and Design at Chelsea school of Art, specializing in mosaics. Since gaining her degree she has gone on to undertake many Public and Community Art. She also teaches adults and children and has used mosaic as art therapy. She is very influenced by the natural world and fossils and wildlife.

## WATCH THIS SPACE

### To be confirmed – 8pm, 28 February 2025

We've had a cancellation for this speaker but will let you know by email or at the January meeting about the replacement speaker.



### Fay de Winter – 8pm, 31 March 2025

Fay mainly works in porcelain, exploring different perspectives of nature, collecting cultural curios from around the world to be inspired by. She believes objects tell stories of people's lives, often holding personal and collective meanings of a particular time, place, and event.

## 29 November WORKSHOP

## Bowl making with Max Cowlin

*Jane Ostler*



Friday 29th November was the last meeting for the year. Long time member Max Cowlin helped us to make a free form bowl.

Using not quite leather hard pieces of clay (Valentines HT special stoneware) we rolled them out then cut into rough slices. The slices were placed on a piece of cloth and shaped roughly to the shape of each individual bowl and then rolled together. Stamps were used to decorate. The rolled pieces were then placed into the bowl and gently pressed.

As always there were many different styles and designs which we then took home to dry. Max adds a wheel thrown foot ring to his bowls, and for non throwers a hand-built foot ring will do just as well. Many thanks to Max for coming to share his expertise with us. Of course we also enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine while we were working.



## Peter Stocker Ceramic Award – *Jane Ostler*



*Holly presenting the trophy to Yvonne.*

During our meeting with Max we held our annual sculpture competition which was judged by all members present. The subject this year was Literary Animals and as always the entries were imaginative and varied.

Congratulations to the winner Yvonne Cornes whose winning entry was a Trojan horse. Chair Holly Inglis presented her with the trophy which she will keep for a year. She also wins the £75 – so, well done, Yvonne!

And if that wasn't enough excitement, Paula brought her light box (right) to show us how easy it makes it to take great photos of your work. The theme Yvonne has chosen for the 2025 Ceramic Competition is 'Wild Thing'. So thinking caps on!



*The winning Trojan Horse*



*Paula's light box*



*Members with their entries.*

(continued from front page) **Photos from BPSS December Exhibition**



*The private view*



*Julie Wettenhall*



*Paula Sutton*



*Isobel & Steve Cherry  
with Holly at the private view*

### 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.

For Doncaster, Tel: **01709 770801**. For Exeter, Tel: **01395 233077**

**CTM Potters Supplies** – if you use clay you need CTM

### 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. Members can add their profile and a few images of their work to the Members' Gallery on our website **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 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**

### 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.

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### BPSS Contacts

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**Treasurer:** Bronwen Corral

**Membership Secretary:** Jane Ostler

**Interim Editor/Designer:** Yvonne Cornes