



Bucks Pottery and Sculpture Society

Newsletter, April 2025

Hi members.

I hope those of you with outdoor studios are getting back into making, with spring getting underway and with Art Weeks & the other summer exhibitions happening soon. CAL was an impressive exhibition last year and the Olympia venue suits it well. Don't miss that at the start of May.

This is a full newsletter with good articles including the monthly meetings which were varied and inspiring. There isn't enough room in this edition to show more of the work from my visit to the Te Uru ceramics exhibition in Auckland, NZ. I'll try to feature some others in the July issue as it was a brilliant show. Happy reading, Yvonne.

31 January
DEMO

Becky Paton

Jane Ostler

Becky comes from a creative family, with her father being a photographer, and her mother a botanical artist working with Oxford University and Kew gardens. She started her working life as a nurse, but at the age of 26 decided she wanted to do something more 'arty' so she elected to study public art and design at Chelsea school of Art specialising in mosaics.

She now exhibits widely, takes part in Oxford Art Weeks and is involved with art therapy in hospitals and mental health settings. She is currently working on a community piece with patients at Wallingford Community Hospital. (see top 'Duck' photo).

She also takes commissions including from TV shows and has completed one for Gentleman Jack using the actor Suranne Jones who played the character as the model. Materials used for her mosaics are ceramic and glass.



'Gentleman Jack' mosaic

She buys glass tiles (from Hobby Island UK) and painstakingly cuts them to size, then uses Gorilla glue to hold them in place, adding grout to the finished piece. Sometimes the grout has colour and she uses Mapei coloured grout (widely available from Amazon) but she doesn't use ready made grout as it does not give the smooth finish required. Additional colour can be added using an acrylic paint wash to get the exact colour match.

In addition to the bought glass, Becky often uses fossils (Amonites), rods, washers, and swarovski crystals in her mosaics, notably in Queen Elizabeth I.

The large pieces (usually 90cm diameter) are backed onto sealed cedar wood. These are suitable for outside, although the colours may fade a little. They take around 1.5 to 2 months to complete.

Smaller pieces are backed onto MDF. These small pieces can be made using starch glue on paper then put into a silicone mould - adding quick dry cement and a little wire mesh for strength. This is mostly for garden tiles, stepping stones etc.

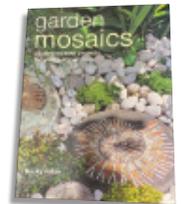
For very small pieces like brooches she uses Epoxy Resin, which takes up to two days to completely dry and harden. There is a discount code available: BECKY10 from Hobby Island, but only on your first order.

If you are interested in making mosaics, Becky has written a book - 'Garden Mosaics' and has a second book due to be published this September. It has all the details and recipes on how to make a mosaic with the correct grout etc.

www.beckymosaics.co.uk



Becky explains her current community project which is still to be completed with patients from Wallingford community hospital.



Becky's first book



One of Laura Crosland's pots, (taken from her website)

MY POTTERY QUEST... Pauline Upstone

Last summer our pottery class tutor suggested I try some decoration and glazing inspired by photos of some pots made by Laura Crosland, who was potter of the week at the Leach studio.

Laura's pots have a section with precise geometrical patterns, and her glazing blends

colours beautifully. I wouldn't be able to make pots anything like hers, but thought I would try the combination of the geometric patterns with the glazes running together.

We had a good look at the photos to figure out how they might be glazed and I made my first attempt. The glaze ran nicely, but was far too thick, completely covering my painstakingly made geometric pattern. So I had another try, putting on much less glaze this time. Much too much less!

In November I went to St Ives and while I was there I visited the Leach Pottery. The shop and gallery have some amazing work, including some of Laura's pots. Seeing them in three dimensions



My first attempt



My second attempt



My third attempt

was very helpful and I later also discovered that Laura had been a 'remote' speaker at one of the Bucks Pottery and Sculpture Society meetings during covid and that Holly and Yvonne had made notes! (Featured in the March 2021 newsletter, YC.)

So, I've decided to have another go, my third attempt. Better, maybe, but it needed much more colour and movement. My fourth attempt has just gone in for firing. So watch this space! If the firing goes well it will feature in the next newsletter. 🍀

Do you have a pottery quest?

For the Laura Crosland Shop at The Leach Pottery: <https://www.leachpottery.com/laura-crosland-shop>

28 February
DEMO

Show and Tell

– Jane Ostler

Photos by Jane and Varvara

This meeting was a bit different to our usual. As the speaker had dropped out, it was suggested that we have a 'show and tell'. Members were encouraged to bring a piece they had made, to share and discuss with others. A group of about 13 people sat around a table (keeping it informal) and took it in turns to show and discuss one of their pieces. It was fascinating as each piece was so very different.

Paula showed her 'alien princess' – made from white clay and decorated with underglaze colours and then decouped after firing to earthenware, plus a couple of her handbuilt coiled bowls with glazes sponged on.

Wendy had a wall planter made from crank and had used red blackboard chalk to colour with great effect, followed by gold leaf.

Pauline showed her Obvara fired owl, and small pots, both with and without texture.

Tina had two pieces. She took some clay to a life drawing class and sculpted a body. Her lesson learnt was not to glaze similar pieces in the future as a lot of detail was lost under the glaze. Her second was a very innovative piece – a plaque made by putting a piece of cotton onto a kiln shelf, then putting both into water so the material is just touching the water, then sprinkling ball clay over. She allows the clay to dry and then the whole shelf – with the cotton still in place, was fired. A very interesting result.

Maddy brought tiles that she had decorated using a large wooden stamp, which are styled like local tiles using a repeating pattern.

Caroline showed some pieces she made as part of her ceramics course at West Dean, using paper resist & slip.

Varvara brought a musical instrument sculpted from copper sheet, and



Paula



Wendy



Pauline



Tina



Maddy



Caroline



Varvara



A Compilation

one of her favourite fish sculptures, explaining how she gets the different colours with 'torch enamelling'.

Jane brought a couple of raku fired bottles in terracotta clay which is an unusual clay for raku ware.

It was a very interesting evening and the two hours just flew by. Thank you to everyone who came and took part.

31 March
DEMO

Fay De Winter

Celia Barnes



Faye demonstrated making one of her small Buddhas. Each one is unique.



Fay's individual unique Buddha's, each made from a two part mould.

Fay De Winter's love of ceramics began as a child. Her mother's support and love of Bali had a great influence on her.

She graduated from Central Saint Martin's School of Art specializing in Ceramic Design. She then taught pottery and joined London Potters, organising many ceramic events with them. She then did a Masters in Contemporary Design Craft specialising in Ceramics at Farnham University for the Creative Arts. Fay teaches at Sutton College and Morley College. She has also written a book: 'Make it with Dry Clay' featuring projects using Air-Dry Clay.

Much of Fay's Ceramics are inspired by her love of travelling and she has participated in many events and exhibitions in England, Japan, Bali, Milan, Bahrain, Dubai and the USA. She uses Valentine's 'Royale Porcelain Clay' and terracotta for her small imaginative pieces. Some porcelain figures are unglazed or clear glazed and the terracotta pieces are raku fired.

She demonstrated the construction of her miniature Buddha characters. On closer inspection each piece is individual and unique. She makes them in tiny moulds in batches of ten. A few have butterfly wings' transfers and all have hidden words and quotes. She likes her objects to tell stories of the people she gives them to.

Fay also had her electric Mini Maker Wheels used to make her miniature bowls (see right), but is yet to find the perfect one. One runs on a battery and is totally portable. They are used in her Miniature Pottery Workshops: 'State of Clay'.

She also explained her method of raku firing in a standard microwave. (Don't use the one used for food in your kitchen!) She puts her small terracotta Buddhas into a brick chamber in the microwave. As in normal raku, these tiny pieces are put in sawdust and water, wearing protective gloves and using tongs. We were all amazed at this technique.

All her equipment and pieces for our talk were packed into her wheelie case to return to London on the train. She uses this format for mobile workshops for events in various locations.

Fay's work and her philosophy in relation to her ceramics was fascinating and inspiring, a lovely evening. She is a ceramic artist who has perfect manicured nails!



Fays thrown bowls.



Mini Maker Wheels.

SOCIETY NEWS

MEMBERSHIP

A very warm welcome to our new member Sarah-Jane Wellington. We hope you will enjoy being involved in the society. Sarah has written a few words about herself.

Sarah-Jane Wellington

I started hand-building after taking a course many years ago with Sophie Smith Ceramics.



After lockdown, I enrolled in Bucks College to learn throwing - very challenging - lots of wonky 'organic' pots! For Bucks Art Weeks, I've created tiles of hand-carved iconic buildings of London which can be hung individually or placed together on a plinth to create your own personalised 'street'. They currently include: No 10 Downing Street, St Paul's Cathedral, Royal Albert Hall, Westminster Cathedral, the Shard and the Gherkin.

instagram: @claytropolis_creations

email: Claytropolis@gmail.com

COMMITTEE NEWS

Following our call for members to join the committee, we are delighted and very thankful that Varvara White and Madalyn Baskerville have joined. They will both be involved with general day-to-day running of the society and are already showing particular skills.

Varvara is being particularly helpful in assisting Holly in finding speakers for our monthly meetings.

Madalyn has taken on the role of Exhibition Co-ordinator and already has the planning under control with the help of Trish Hall. She is also helping to arranging events and is showing a lot of expertise in this area.

We are still thin on the ground so it would be really helpful if more members stepped up to join the committee.

We are particularly interested in hearing from anyone with organisational/secretarial skills. You would get lots of help and guidance and we're a friendly committee!

We have monthly zoom meetings to keep on top of things. **We'd love to hear from you!**

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

WILD THING

The vote and prize giving will take place at the last meeting of the year on 21st November.

£75 PRIZE



UP AND COMING BUCKS POTTERS MEETINGS

at Little Kingshill Village Hall, HP16 0DZ



Lucy Baxendale – 8pm, 30th May 2025

Lucy uses surrealist automatism to create detailed drawings which become the starting point for her porcelain pieces. She invites observers to witness the evolution of lines into stories, forging connections between the drawn and the sculpted. Lucy's homeware range is inspired from characters that spring to life within her drawings.

WATCH THIS SPACE

To be confirmed – 8pm, 27 June 2025

Please check the website for updates. We hope to have this speaker booked very soon. You will also be emailed the details closer to the time of the meeting.

DAY OUT FOR MEMBERS – MONDAY 2ND JUNE

This will be a great day out. It is a double venue trip for BPSS members only. You will need to provide your own transport and entry fees apply.



10am: Meet at The Bucks Resource Centre at Halton to see their amazing British Studio Pottery collection and a hands on session with prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval pottery. This will be a 1½ hour visit. **Charge per member: £10 – cash only.** Address: Rowborough Road, off Icknield Way, HP22 5PN. Parking available.



12 noon: Meet at the Tring Local History Museum for a 15 minute presentation on 'The Tring Tiles' which date back to the 14th Century. (see article in the January newsletter). **Charge per member: £5 cash or card.** This includes a glass of wine or a soft drink. Address: The Market Place, Brook Street, Tring, HP23 5ED, beside The Forge car park.

Please note: Remember to bring **cash** for payment at Halton. There is a maximum of **15 people** for this trip so please book early to avoid disappointment!

During my recent trip to New Zealand I was taken to a ceramics exhibition at the Te Uru Contemporary Art Gallery in Titirangi, a suburb of Auckland. It's an impressive gallery over six floors. I was amazed by this massive wall hanging which is really more like a curtain. It was made up of multiple hand made tiles, hanging off each other with wire. They featured comments on life, nature, and other musings. All were beautifully drawn & fired. See some of the individual tiles on the right. *Yvonne Cornes*



Embroidery Gallery: 'On a Grand Scale' Exhibition

– now until December 2025

This new exhibition delves deep into the Embroiderers' Guild larger-than-life items in their collection.

Embroiderers' Guild have been, behind the scenes, digitising their collection of almost 8,500 textile treasures. This project has meant that people from across the globe can now explore their unique pieces through the Art UK website, alongside other museums collections.



'Grand cabbage' by Shelia Read, who was fed-up with caterpillars eating the cauliflowers on her allotment.

We have curated here a varied selection of pieces which, we hope, emphasises both the physical scale of the works and the broader themes of creativity, skill, and the impact of textiles as powerful visual statements.

Whether you're a seasoned stitcher or a newcomer to the world of textiles, we are sure you will find that these larger-than-life pieces will spark your imagination.

**B Discover Bucks
Museum**

Church Street, Aylesbury, HP20 2QP
www.discoverbucksmuseum.org

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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