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- *Ann Hay reports on Liz Bryant, June Kingsbury and Carol McNicoll.*
- *Reminder to members that this year's **WFP Annual Exhibition** will be held in Henley from **10th- 16th of June.** Please start making pots for this occasion!*
- *St Bernard's Prep School Ceramic Exhibition, 17th February, 2007. Details inside.*

Jo Frith

14th Feb, 2007 at 7:45 PM

Polehampton Junior School

Jo makes bottles, bowls and abstract vessels inspired by ancient art and archaeology. Each is individually raku-fired, imparting dramatic smoke patterning to the surfaces. These may be stoneware clays stained with oxides and burnished or, increasingly, terra sigillatas: very fine hand-made clay slips of the type used in ancient Greek red and black ware, yielding attractive smoke and reduction effects.



Kevin Millward

7th March, 2007 at 7:45 PM

Polehampton Junior School



Kevin has been potting for over thirty years. His studio is based at the world famous Gladstone Pottery Museum in Stoke on Trent. During his career as a potter he has made many types of ceramics from large-scale garden ware in stoneware and terracotta to decorative porcelain; he is currently making decorative contemporary bowls in cream earthenware.

April Potters' Day: John Chipperfield

28th April 2007 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Knowl Hill Village Hall

John Chipperfield studied at Ipswich School of Art, and then Central School London, now Central St. Martins College of Art & Design where he is now an Associate Senior Lecturer. He previously taught at Ipswich School of Art and Norwich School of Art with other Visiting Lecturerships as well as being an exam board assessor.

As well as teaching he has always worked as a potter and, since 1984, also in kiln formed glass. He has had nearly forty exhibitions in the U.K. and abroad and his work is in collections throughout the world. A versatile ceramist, John Chipperfield uses a wide range of forming processes to produce vessels including strongly asymmetrical jug forms and shallow dishes, all of which are vehicles for dramatic surface designs using coloured glazes.



Tickets cost £15 for members and £20 for non-members

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Liz Bryant

Report by Ann Hay

13th Sept, 2006



"No Towels in the Airing Cupboard"

This was Liz's own title, explaining where she dries out her stylised clay figures. A former primary school teacher, she enjoys handicrafts and decided to do a pottery course some years ago where she became hooked on raku. She showed slides of the kiln her husband built for her, and of the various firing stages of her work.

Liz then demonstrated the making of a basic figure. The premium craft crank clay is rolled into a slab, which is then wrapped round a tapered wooden armature covered in newspaper. The join is scored but not slipped as the clay is quite moist. She then smooths it out well before using a hairdryer to stiffen it up. Coils are rolled to form arms, attached to the body all the way down for stability and shaped at the wrists. Sometimes she has arms above the head, as for a dancer, using Nichrome wire inside, but these frequently break.

Then the piece is slid from the armature and the newspaper picked out. A ball of clay is inserted into the base and sealed. She thinks this gives more weight than a standard flat base. A small hole is made in it. The neck and the small round head are solid, with a pinhole pierced right down into the body. This is the basic figure. Some she will decorate by adding a ragged textured 'cloak of wisdom' – these are her Minerva figures. (All her figures are female, although they have no specific features.)

After at least a week in the airing cupboard, she bisques about 15 figures at a time to about 1000 degrees centigrade. Then they are ready for the raku process. She uses bought glazes, mainly coppers and white crackle, from Bath Potters Supplies. She has a sawdust pit, built of ordinary house bricks and using hardwood sawdust from a nearby wood-turner. She likes to lay the figures face down in the sawdust pit to ensure the faces are reduced and stay paler.

The figures are glued on to plinths made of polished granite tombstone off-cuts.

Her work is popular in galleries. The evening was enjoyed by 18 members, despite the infant-sized chairs! And the raffle prize, a new book on coiling was won by Gill Harrison.



West Forest Potters AGM

Report by Penny Murray

8th Nov, 2006

The 2006 AGM was very well attended compared to previous years. 22 members came. Six members came with a box of pots to sell.

The business of the evening began with the treasurer's report. Lucie will be setting up a new account with Lloyds Bank. Funds are healthy this year and it was proposed and agreed to buy a potter's wheel for visiting potters as a back up to the one that we borrow from Jane Rivett.

Two Potters days have proved very successful. January is particularly popular however April has proved to be awkward with Easter school holidays when members have other priorities. October has been proposed for the second one except for 2007 as John Chipperfield has been booked for the end of April. A vote was taken and 2 days approved with an opportunity for 3 in 2007! It was decided that 2 occasions would be plenty as more could prove difficult to keep providing excellent lunches as part of the day.

The Henley exhibition Hall has been booked for 10th - 16th June 2007. It may not be available for 2008 so Susan Day is making a dossier of other sites. If members have any suggestions please email Susan.

The library needs a volunteer to run it on the evenings we meet. Anyone interested should email Susan Day. It was agreed to spend £150 on new books and DVDs to add to the library.

Penny Murray and Jenny Wijesinghe agreed to produce the newsletter for another year. Volunteers to take over the task should contact them please.

Paul Sanders showed us the web site for West Forest Potters. We were all very interested and impressed. He has very kindly agreed to maintain it for us.

With the business ended, June Kingsbury returned to continue her talk, with slides about her recent work, that due to a technical hitch, she had been unable to show us in October.



Six members brought a box of pots to sell at the AGM

Diary Dates:

- **St Bernard's Preparatory School Ceramics Exhibition, In aid of the Thames Valley & Children Air Ambulance Trust, Saturday Feb 17th, 2007. Preview 11am-1:00pm by invitation or £1 at door. Open to the public from 1:00-5:00 PM, St Bernard's Preparatory School, Hawtrey Close, Slough SL1 1TB. Pot raffle at 2:00 PM.**

Potters' Day: Carol McNicoll

Report by Ann Hay

27th January 2007

Carol started with a Fine Arts degree course having made and designed costumes for actors and rock performers. She developed a love for colour and pattern in her childhood. She worked for a while with Janice Tchalenko designing ceramics for Next Interiors. This proved a venture that she preferred not to repeat as cheaper mass produced work devalued her individual pieces. Next, she experimented with casting clay. Instinctively her pieces had to be functional. She showed slides of her work from the last 30 years. She began with pieces that had been moulded and then altered. Some pieces had the addition of 'found' materials, such as a pressed-glass vase from an Oxfam shop supported by four slip-cast giraffes of her own making. She haunts charity shops, collecting objects to cast and then distort in various ways. Later she sculpted her own models to cast, such as oriental figures. These cast figures she would group and by adding a 'found' object, for example a glass bowl or vase she satisfied her need for her work to be functional.

She was unable to bring any of her work with her for us to see having come from London by train. She brought two moulds which she had filled and prepared the previous day, and demonstrated how she unloaded them: one a figure and one a distorted cup. The figure was of a dancing lady inspired by drawings made at the Notting Hill Carnival. At this point she explained how she constructed the 6-piece mould around the clay figure she had produced in her studio.



The distorted cup comprised of two halves of two different cups with different handles which had been recast. We watched her fettling the pieces which had been removed from the moulds. She reconstructed the moulds and poured casting slip in before lunch.

She makes her own slip from Scarva white earthenware with water and a handful of paper-pulp added to 10 litres of slip, to give an extra stability. The cup was in a 4-part mould, the figure having 6 sections. She makes the mould first by pouring plaster over each section, patting more plaster on by hand, using a rough clay cottle. She can get three casts a day out of a mould by drying it in the oven between castings, having scrupulously picked off all the scraps of clay.

The finished work is biscuit-fired to 1000 degrees, then glazed to 1200. Sometimes she will add under-glaze decals (over the glaze) which she found while on a course in Japan. She has since found that she can get

digital photographs made into transfers by Digital Ceramic Systems in Stoke-on-Trent. These she will apply and give a final firing to 750 degrees. She is not very interested in glazes, preferring the use of coloured slips under a clear glaze. When she does use coloured glazes she buys them from Potterycrafts and brushes them on.

After the usual excellent lunch she unloaded the recast moulds. Carol concluded the afternoon by demonstrating how to construct the final piece. She attached the dancing lady figure to the cup. For fun she balanced the other newly cast cup (which was a little too soft) on the dancing lady's head. A suggestion from the audience was to call the piece "Tea Dance". Carol always likes to give her work weird names.

At present she is displaying in the Barrett Marsden Gallery in Great Sutton Street in London.



June Kingsbury

Report by Ann Hay

11th October 2006

On account of a technical hitch with laptops, June's Powerpoint presentation failed, and she was able only to show slides of her earlier work. Fortunately she came again after the A.G.M. and we saw her more recent pieces. She became hooked on pottery after starting evening classes, but also fell in love with glassmaking. Her work now seems to be equally divided between the two. Her ceramic pieces are non-functional and all her work is derived from nature. She showed pictures of a year-long exploration of a local walk to explain her inspirations. Pod forms influenced her handbuilt figures, also birds' nests and strange birds with metal legs. Boat-shapes were covered with multiple layers of slip with sgraffito lettering.

On her walks she collects roadkill, and casts the creatures sometimes in clay and sometimes glass. She also casts children's clothing in glass, such as christening-gowns and romper-suits. Her website is www.jfkglass.com, where those who missed her talk can see for themselves.

Liz Bryant



Liz with one of her Minerva Ladies



Raku firings produce rich lustres

June Kingsbury



Above: June with an example of her child's smock cast in luscious pink glass.

Carol McNicoll



Above: Carol decides to stand the dancing lady on the first mug.



Above Two: Peeling back the 6 pieces of plaster mould to expose the figure of the dancing lady.



Below: Carol's demonstration was well attended.



Top Right: Pouring slip into the reconstructed moulds.

Bottom Right: The completed composition with second cup balanced on the head of the dancing lady.