



**DACORUM AND  
CHILTERN  
POTTERS GUILD**



[www.thedcpg.org.uk](http://www.thedcpg.org.uk)

POD: Andy McInnes, Eddie Curtis  
and Mike Dodd

Grayson Perry  
BBC at West Herts College

Peter Hayes

Kimpton Arts Festival

Diana Tonnison

Richard Pearson

Issue 17 Summer 2015

£2



**Diana Tonnison**

## About the Guild & the Newsletter

Membership of the Guild is open to anyone having an interest in pottery and sculpture and offers members many opportunities each year to see top potters and sculptors demonstrating their skills. In addition, an annual Open Day is held with demonstrations. Exhibitions, visits and workshops are also organised at various times.

### Membership Rates for 2015/16

**Single £28, Family (one address) £37, Student (full time) £20. Newsletter only: £10 per annum.**

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If joining after March, please phone for a reduced introductory rate.

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## Editorial

We've had a fine year with some excellent demonstrators/speakers at the very top of their field. Thanks to Ros for putting together such an inspiring and imaginative programme. I'm sure next year will be equally good.

We're now in the season of craft fairs and open studios. Many members take part in these, so if you do we'd very much like to hear from you. If you have opened your studio to the public or taken part in a craft or ceramic show, let us know about it.

Would you encourage others to do the same? What are the benefits? Any downside?

## Notes from the Chair Ros McGuirk

While the summer brings lots to do for the avid potaholic, it also gives your committee a chance to draw breath, especially now that Childwickbury is behind us. Childwickbury by the way went well for us, both the workshop and pot sales. Friday was very quiet and then Saturday was full on and Sunday was the same except that we had Kate's girls with us. They are real stars. They ran 'front of house' in the workshop area, which made a huge difference, and they also gave throwing demonstrations using Kate's kick wheel.

I now have to get on with fixing the new programme and John Higgins is busy negotiating an exciting new venue for POD next March, to mention only two of us.

The committee has grown over the last year and we are close to having all offices filled, which is very gratifying. We have welcomed four new members onto the committee; Fiona Booy, Emily Good,

**Lynne McGechie**

What are the 'dos and don'ts' for a successful show? Your experience and advice might help others put their foot in the water and encourage them to have a go, so do write a piece and let us know how you got on.

Speaking of shows, we have our annual Guild exhibition in St Albans on 3-11 October. I know Audrey Hammett, Judi Tribe and the planning team are hard at work preparing for it. It's an opportunity for Guild members to show and sell their work and it's going to be a great event!

See you in October.



Beccy Boxer and Jackie Harrop. Fiona comes from the world of IT and has offered to do the PR/advertising job. Emily is a professional musician and administrator who will organise the workshops we want. Beccy has left the world of marketing to set up her ceramics studio and has kindly offered to be deputy treasurer, and Jackie, who has retired from management in education and child services, came on board as an experienced trustee.

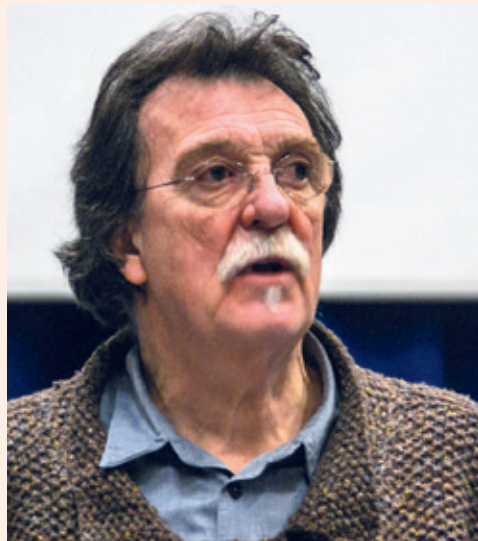
I am still on the lookout for a new programme secretary and also a vice chair, so if you have time to help, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Put the 9 October in your diary and watch your emails and the website for who will be coming to our first meeting which, as ever will include the AGM and the Stan Romer competition, which this year has the theme 'beside the seaside'.





## Potters Open Day 14 March 2015 **Andy McInnes** by **Mary Anne Bonney**



*"Would you like to exhibit at Art in Clay?"*

A combination of hot toddy and Andy McInnes' genial enthusiasm had us all optimistically sizing up the relative merits of the A, B, C and D stands Andy described.

Andy talked through the pleasingly straightforward guide to presenting work for consideration which Geoffrey Swindells had put together at his request: you need a simple support on which to position the backdrop, natural lighting, a basic tripod and camera as fancy as you can run to, but as the examples showed, a phone camera produced a perfectly acceptable image. Submit six photographs and a brief CV and, if your work meets suitably high standards of craftsmanship and originality, the stand could be yours. Prices of the various stands – mid row, end of row, corner or central island – are available on application to andymcinn1@yahoo.co.uk.

More than 280 people applied for the 180 stands at Hatfield this year so, as Andy emphasised, you should not be disheartened by rejection. Having put together your portfolio – and of course the body of work – you are well prepared to apply for other shows, where you can refine your display stand – a few slides of exhibitors with their work at Hatfield showed a variety of presentation options, all designed to complement the work and make full use of the space allocated. Eddie Curtis was one of those featured and explained how he aims to create a space which is comfortable for the viewer to enter, while he is on hand to engage with the visitor as appropriate.

A stand at Hatfield may be unrealistic for some of us, but it was impossible not to be fired up by Andy McInnes' energy and dedication to creating opportunities for experts, amateurs, collectors, students, suppliers and even just passers-by to indulge their passion for ceramics.

Almost as a passing shot he mentioned that aspiring participants can get involved at Hatfield as volunteers. The volunteering handout paints an enticing picture of helping established and emerging ceramicists with their stalls and demonstrations, camping and ensuring that exhibitors and visitors have a good experience of the show. Again, details are available from andymcinn1@yahoo.co.uk.

Many thanks to Andy, our own John Higgins whose stand also featured as an example of how to put together a good display, Eddie, and Geoffrey Swindells for getting POD off to a great start.



## Potters Open Day **Eddie Curtis's Blast Series** by **Sue Lines**

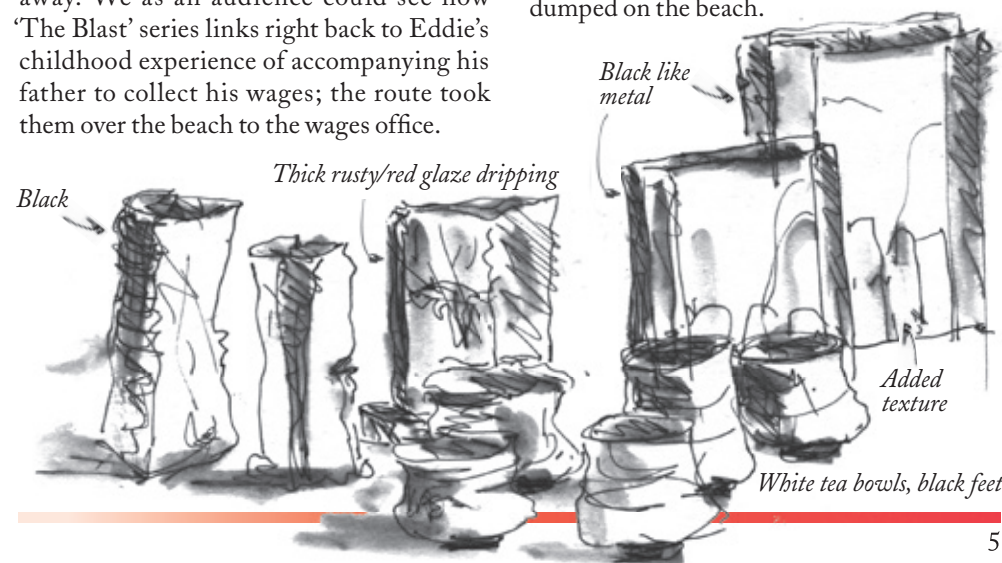
I was asked to assist Eddie Curtis at POD. Great, I thought, I won't postpone any longer, I will get an early view of Eddie's fabled copper red pots. My mouth must have dropped and I suspect we were all surprised when Eddie's work was unwrapped and displayed. A few very large, magnificent copper red pieces, well out of my price range, but which belonged to Eddie's former making. Here laid out was an incredible assortment of encrusted hand built pieces. This was my introduction to 'The Blast'.



Seaham is an old mining town in the middle of the Durham coalfield where Eddie grew up. His father was a poorly paid miner accustomed to back breaking work that motivated his desire for Eddie to get away. We as an audience could see how 'The Blast' series links right back to Eddie's childhood experience of accompanying his father to collect his wages; the route took them over the beach to the wages office.

The beach, locally called 'The Blast' was named after the blast furnace that was part of the industrial buildings. The beach was already a dump for the mine tailings, left to form lagoons of strange coloured ooze, the beach joining with the mine effluent to create strange forms.

With the arrival of new technology and coal cutters, the mine's production increased massively; the spoil now was too great to be dumped on the beach.





It was dumped out at sea, but much of it returned to land - the coal dust making the sand dark and marking a black line along the top tide line. When the mine closed in the late 1980s metal structures from the blast furnaces joined the debris on the beach creating what many would consider an eye sore.

When in 2010, Eddie returned to the beach, on a day lit by bright sun, he saw the possibilities for a new direction in his work.

He observed the fabulous natural patterns, the crackle and crazing of materials drying and shrinking, the rusting crust of old machinery bursting out of the ground, unsightly litter here took on compositional qualities, the astonishing colours of the effluent, the clay that the sea washed over the uneven surfaces behaved like slips. What he liked, he took into his imagination.

The marooned lake, the iron inclusions in the limestone cliff leaching out, the iron encrustations of once buried machinery all are re-imagined; not used photographically.

Eddie doesn't want to replicate but rather to capture the feeling of the beach in this series of work.

Using Scarva's "Earthstone", a stoneware hand building body, Eddie builds his wrap vessels by hand, starting with a bowl to set up the base. His wrap vessels bring out the sensed textures from 'The Blast' beach. They metaphorically ooze and spew their absorbed effluent and polluted beach.

Each piece contains some surprise, created by the build-up of surface, from bands of textured and coloured pastes contrasting with clean white bands of white shiny and runny chino glaze over matt porcelain slip, subtle pinks graduating through other subtle tints.

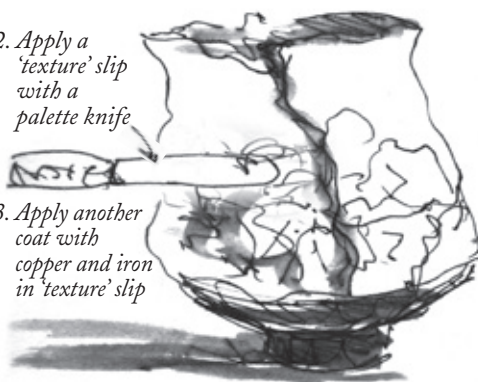
Eddie was happy to demonstrate the making of the wrapped pots but the make-up of the textured pastes is Eddie's secret. A secret well worth protecting.

Thank you Eddie for an absorbing talk and demonstration.

1. Cover with porcelain slip as base coat

2. Apply a 'texture' slip with a palette knife

3. Apply another coat with copper and iron in 'texture' slip



4. Use heat gun or flame to dry top coat and make it shrink and crackle

## Potters Open Day Mike Dodd

by Jackie Harrop



### Mike Dodd Quotes

*"Translate your vitality into the pot"*

*"Pottery is putting something around nothing and making nothing special"*

*"Thomas Merton - the extent you get out of the way, you get to know the truth"*

Mike started his presentation with slides of his early days setting up his workshop in Cornwall - he began with a Swedish wheel and built his wood fired kiln covered in wood ash clay and wood wool including making the bricks by hand. The kiln had a slow start up to 1000°C and required very little wood.

He then spoke about his visit with Connor Talbot to Harry Davies's pottery (who set up the Crown Pottery in Cornwall) in Oxapampa Peru. The book 'The Kiln Built by Harry Davies' written by his wife May, describes this in more detail. Local people crushed materials to make glaze.

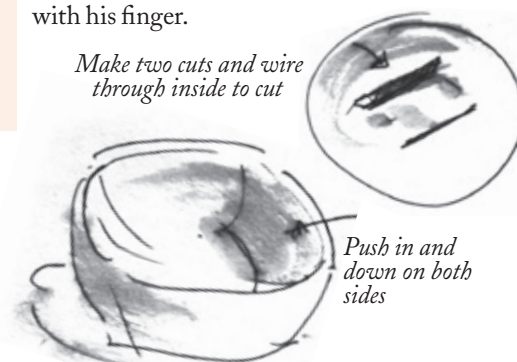
After its first firing up to 1200°C they realised they needed to increase the height of the chimney, but this didn't stop them celebrating with Chicca a local beer. Mike's work was also influenced by the vitality of Don Potter and Michael Cardew.

Mike demonstrated a number of techniques used in his pots.

### Oblong or 3 cornered baking dishes,

Leave on batt, make two cuts at an angle, using a wire under each cut, moistening with slip or water, lift/ push sides in and overlap, pressing clay down on the batt. Smooth over with a kidney and leave overnight. Turn over, forming the outside edge using wood or a modelling tool to form the base. When turning the base of the lid, push in the middle of the base and turn excess. For the handle on the lid, Mike would pull a flat handle and squashing middle to start, lifting the centre with his finger.

*Make two cuts and wire through inside to cut*

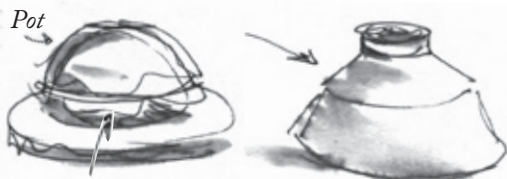


*Push in and down on both sides*

### Turning without using a chuck

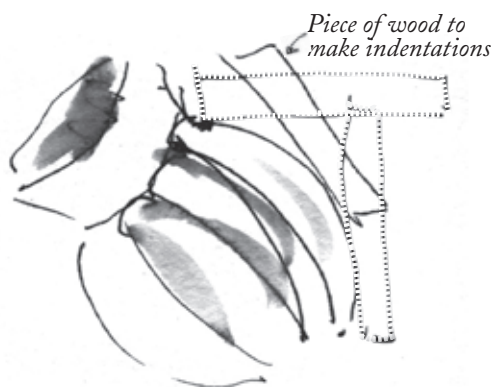
Mike showed how he would dampen the batt to get clay to adhere to hold without adding additional clay to stabilise. Instead of using a chuck, he also showed how to use a dome of wet clay, covered with a damp cloth eg jay cloth or old t-shirt, and placed the pot on top.



*Cloth over chuck of soft clay***Mike's tips for making teapots**

Use the body of the teapot as its own damp cupboard for the spout, putting the spout inside the teapot so it didn't dry out quicker than the pot.

Mike's signature vertical ridges were made using a square piece of wood to make the top indentation rolling into a line down the pot, from top to bottom creating sections.



To make the holes for the spout, he used a pen nib. For a good pour, narrow the hole and don't open up too much.

When glazing, take the glaze off the edge that pours. Joining the spout, taper, cutting the side away, leaving some thickness and pull to extend the base of the spout, pressing the top edge out. Push the spout onto the body of the pot, positioning is a balance between practicality and aesthetics.

When making the lids, make the hole and have a low centre of gravity so doesn't slip out.

Handles; pull, wet and join, then pull on the jug itself, keeping the top of the handle thinner than bottom. Once positioned you can lift and alter the shape of the handle, if it is pulled in position.

**Crackle vase**

Mike threw a tall slightly rounded cylinder, using a smart knife to create textured lines down the body of the vessel, he wet the outside and used a mixture of 50/50 China clay and ball clay to press into the wet clay giving a fairly even covering, patting and removing the excess. The size of crackle varies depending on whether water or slip is used to adhere it to the pot. He widens and shapes the pot from the inside, leaving the exterior untouched. The glaze used mustn't contain too much clay or it will pull the powdered clay off the body.



We took advantage of the London Potters' offer to visit the Grayson Perry "Who Are You?" exhibition and have an illustrated talk by one of the National Portrait Gallery curators beforehand.

This exhibition brings together all those items made by Perry for the 2014 Channel 4 programme of the same name, and incorporates some new works. These items include tapestry, painting, ceramics and a bronze sculpture and were made by Perry to reflect the identity of various people and groups.

It was really useful in having the curated talk as, though I saw some of the television programmes, it refreshed my memory and showed items I had not seen before. The talk was quite lively with much interaction from the floor.

Also there was a review of Perry's personal journey and discussion of his alter ego 'Claire' and his teddy bear Alan Measles

In the original programme, the items that Perry made for each person or group were displayed in the National Portrait Gallery and they remain in those positions for this Exhibition. I think that what comes over when you see these items close up is just how much detail and work goes into them.

I know he gets help with a lot of the pieces, especially the tapestry, but there is still a very large, imaginative and diverse range to his work. Did I feel that he had captured the identities of his various sitters?

Some I thought he had and some I didn't. My particular favourite is the three ceramic portraits of the Fat Lady Tribe. These are absolutely brimming with life and vitality and in no way demean the subjects. Jennie found the pot illustrating the Alzheimer's couple, a very moving piece. The original programmes are still on Channel 4OD, but the exhibition has finished.

Many thanks to the London Potters for arranging this talk, to which they also invited the Kent Potters.

Copy deadline for the Autumn edition of the newsletter is Saturday 31 August.

Please send articles accompanied with high resolution images to [lynne.mcgechie@btinternet.com](mailto:lynne.mcgechie@btinternet.com) and to [bipin@thedcpg.org.uk](mailto:bipin@thedcpg.org.uk)



For his recent television comedy series 'Pompidou', the comedian Matt Lucas and the BBC descended upon West Herts College and completely transformed the ceramics studio into a film studio.

On my arrival at 8am, most of the equipment and furniture had already been removed to the corridor outside and the rest rearranged to make way for a myriad of film equipment. A hive of activity with around fifty people crammed in the studio, each following their roles meticulously with military precision. Cameras, bright lights, huge reflectors and monitor screens to accompany the obligatory director's chair with another for his pretty young blonde lady assistant, clip board in hand!

Along the corridor, other classrooms were also commandeered. One for the film production unit with their video playback and editing equipment, another for the production staff, and a third, furthest from all the commotion, the 'Green Room' for the actors. Very quiet, seemingly with an unwritten rule of 'keep out'!

I was greeted by David the project manager who introduced me to Adam, the floor manager. The man who would call 'Action' throughout the day. *'I hope you are prepared for a very long day. You will have a lot of pots to make for us today. Good luck!'*

Err... thanks, gulp!

So much for my stereotypical image of actors turning up late whenever they felt like it, being stropky, throwing tantrums etc., not a bit of it.

Adam called over Matt Lucas and the other actors to meet me, *"Without Bipin we wouldn't be able to shoot today."*

All ready with full make up and costumes, they must have been up for hours. With a shake of the hands, *"So nice to meet you, nice name, Bipin"*, said Matt. Then rushed over Amy, the props girl, *"Oh, thank god you are here. I don't have a clue about clay and what tools you would use"*.

I was left to my own devices for a while to prepare some clay and tools, still not knowing what really was required of me.

To my horror I noticed the studio was in a real state of mess with some dirty towels and tools lying around. When I began to tidy up, *"No, no, leave it. This pottery is meant to look scruffy all round"* shouted Amy!

Within all the organised chaos and noisy humdrum, *"Now Bipin, show us how you make a pot on the potter's wheel"*. Suddenly, in an instant, everyone stopped with a deadly silence. A roving film camera and lights aimed at me with the actors flanked either side of me. After only a minute or two, *"Right, they've seen enough. Let's go, everyone to their stations"* bellowed Adam. *"But I need to show you the rest"* I pleaded, to no avail.

Of course, the actors didn't need to make any pots at all. Highly professional as they are, they only needed to learn a couple of key hand gestures which they would replicate. I was the one to make all the pots.

*"Would you mind appearing in the background working in the studio for some authenticity?"* I was asked. I was promptly given to wear a wonderful yellow apron with drawings of dogs on!

There followed relentless rehearsals and countless take after take. The same scene acted over and over with cameras shooting from different angles. Then at 1pm on the dot, with a military like precision, the entire entourage of over a hundred people disappeared for lunch.

Having ascertained the story line for the next scene, which involved the potter's wheel, I declined their invitation to join them for lunch and set to at the wheel.

Knowing some would be 'accidentally' destroyed, I threw around sixteen bowls in varying stages of making. Thank goodness

for interchangeable wheel batts! Some bowls for the 'teacher', but most for the 'student' that would 'accidentally' collapse.

The afternoon wore on rather tediously. Rehearsal after rehearsal, take after take. Some strictly following the script, others with improvisation from Matt Lucas.

The final short scene, where the 'teacher' brings out the fired bowls from the kiln room, was thankfully short. (The bowls were actually made of moulded plastic!)

With the shooting scheduled to end at 7pm, Adam yelled out 'final wrap' and once again with military like precision, the whole entourage with all their equipment had vanished, leaving no traces behind. Only roadies left to replace back all the furniture and equipment, following my directions. Amazingly, by 7.45pm, it was as though they had never been there at all!

I was never a fan of Little Britain, the show that catapulted Matt Lucas to fame. Not that I ever watched it. The trailers I saw were enough not to make me watch a single episode. Every week seemed to have the same puking up joke, and jokes about people disabled and wheel chair bound... not my cup of tea.

Perhaps I am being unfair having only watched 'my' episode, but I certainly am not a fan of Pompidou either. Maybe because they cut the scene of my close up.

Or is it because they didn't let me keep that fabulous dog print apron!

Never the less, it was a very interesting and enjoyable day I will never forget.

*"All right Mr DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up!"*







Peter Hayes comes across as a lovely man; the sort of man whom you would go to a pub with at 6pm and still be talking with at 3am; a man who immerses himself fully in whatever he is doing and his pots in whatever water is around; a man full of yin and yang and not wanting perfection as there is nowhere to go once it is achieved. With that the flow of his talk was then interrupted by battery failure on his laptop!

As a 10 year old becoming clay monitor at school set him up for a life in ceramics, moving onto Moseley School of Art, completing a Foundation course and then onto Birmingham Art School. Whilst there one of his major introductions to ceramics was digging Neolithic Iron Age and Roman Samian shards on archaeological digs somewhere in Wales. Running away to St Ives with his girlfriend whom became his wife, he eventually set up a pottery in an old cowshed in St Mawes making ashtrays trying to earn a living.

An opportunity to set up a pottery in Lesotho beckoned so they set off with two young children for 18 months and did not

return for 10 years. The pottery had started with eight wheels in an old brewery which he then built up to a modern production facility with 28 potters in a factory unit. Women ended up carrying out most of the potting as they were much more flexible in their approach to the work. The stoneware clay came from South Africa, which was also the main market for export.

With the pottery running smoothly he started to going out to the outlying villages where river clay was used to make large burnished pots. Peter encouraged the best potters to raise the quality so he could export to galleries in New York through a co-operative. The beautiful surfaces produced by the village potters, using only limited technology and basic tools, was a big influence on his future work building up layers of textured clay combined with burnishing and polishing of surfaces. On returning to the UK he set up his studio in The Old Toll House above the river on Cleveland Bridge in Bath where he remains to this day.

From slide to slide Peter expanded on the range of his work and on his approach to ceramics and life in general. Basically for him it is important to have fun in the making of pieces (some of which he says will be rubbish), to use clay as a canvas to add to and to subtract from, to have 20 to 30 pieces on the go at any one time so you can take time to re-evaluate any piece and never try to make a masterpiece. If you have a perfect pot just break it, as never will you achieve it again!

Peter is interested in the contrast of textures of smooth from burnishing and polishing to the rough from ripped clay sometimes embedded with sawdust or other

combustible material and in the limited range of colours of black to white. From moulds the familiar shape of his pieces are repeated but treated individually by using mixtures of commercial and local clays and a range of finishes. From his work in raku and in the mixing of different clays within a piece both of which produced a high percentage of cracks and broken pots, he developed techniques to stitch and glue these pieces together again using copper wire, resin, copper, iron and gold.

From there it was a short step to actually break a piece either deliberately with forethought or just letting it drop onto a hard surface, all to be re-assembled sometimes after a further raku firing. Apparently there is an old Japanese custom that if a pot made by a lowly potter is broken it should be repaired by a craftsman of the highest order.

One of his well-known processes is to mix iron and copper oxide with wall paper paste which is applied to the ceramic pieces before they are submerged either in the river or in trenches in the sea from three months to many years. This leaves traces of the metals across the surface of the piece. Needless to say he admitted up to 80% of losses on these pots either never finding them again or they being smashed by waves!

Peter also showed slides of his large works including five metre high pylons at Liverpool Street station, raku water columns, 2.5 metre high solid clay sculptures with gold in the crevices, very large figurative pieces, bronze 'peopled' benches and the large blue resin split ceramic discs on a base. Other works shown included large square pillars topped with cubes of glass and Perspex sculptures which glow at night.

Over the years whilst travelling extensively he has met and been influenced by many indigenous craftsman and currently he is finishing a commission for a large family group of pieces installed in an Indian home, which has taken over three years to complete. Firstly making polystyrene mock ups and then continuing the work in India with two helpers to cast the work in bronze. This has introduced him to other local craftsmen and enabled him to work with a range of different materials such as glass, marble, stone and Damascus steel; examples of which were on show.

A talk to inspire us all to go out and have fun with clay!





Rather conversely, we were hoping for rain on the May Day Bank Holiday. Not because we are party poopers and we wanted the Kimpton Fun Run to be a wash out, but we thought it was the only way to encourage the crowds to venture into the school hall and discover our stall.

This year was the first time the Kimpton Festival had organised a craft demonstration day and we were invited to run our have-a-go sessions as well as give guild members the opportunity to sell some pots.

Parked between the wood turners, upholsterers and soap carvers (who all very wisely gave us a wide berth) we were set up and ready to go by 11am. As things turned out, there was not a cloud in the sky and Kimpton was looking at its best, fully immersing itself in May Day festivities. All very well, but not for us - or so we thought.

It took a while for things to warm up, but once the fun runs were over and people started to explore what else the festival had to offer, some inquisitive faces started to appear.

As soon as people saw how much fun others were having getting their hands mucky, we had queues of people wanting a go and from then on, the wheels hardly stopped spinning. It was very rewarding to see the pleasure on little faces (the youngest to have a go was three years old) exploring clay for the first time and parents wanting to see if they could do any better.

A special thank you must go to Ruby Sharp and Sue Eglington who worked flat out on the wheels and hardly had time for a cup of tea and sandwich, let alone a chance to get some sunshine!

The festival committee did not hesitate in inviting us back for next year and were very pleased with how it all went: *"Thank you very much for the contribution of your potters to the above event, which I am pleased to report was a great success. People seem to be fascinated by the potters' wheel... I was pleased that you seemed to have a good response from visitors and certainly the children were delighted to take away very acceptable results of their efforts."*

I think it is safe to say that a great day was had by all.



Gunizi was born in 1949 in a small town near the west coast of Turkey. She grew up and studied dentistry in Izmir in Turkey but later met and married a London based medical practitioner Dr Ibrahim (Ian) Amirak and settled in London.

Gunizi was a very warm, loving and gentle person, filled with inspiration and always with a lovely smile. She had a beautiful personality and always wanted to give and please others

She started pottery as a hobby and attended various evening and part time day courses where she met Daphne Carnegy with whom she later became studio partners. Having received City & Guilds Certificate and BTEC Professional Awards in Pottery and pre Diploma in Art and Design she proceeded to do a degree course and received a BA Honours degree in Ceramics and Art from the University of Westminster, based at the old Harrow School of Art.

Her practice was mainly based on thrown, functional and decorative slip wares. She had her own distinctive style with simple lines and very pleasing, luscious warm coloured glazes.

A newspaper article describes her work as *"Ceramics with colours from earth to skies"*. She aimed to achieve simple, practical, thoughtful pots which have been comfortable in handling and tactile in nature. Her jugs had cutaway spouts to which she has been always attracted.



In her own words: *"Use of cutaway spouts dates back to 2500 BC of Yortan Culture in Western Anatolia. The cutaway spout looks simple and elegant but in fact is a complicated structure and requires a skilful mixture of throwing and assembling."*

Gunizi took part in countless exhibitions, gained a well-deserved popularity and won the "Best Trio of Work" Award at the London Potters Annual Exhibition in November 2010. Sadly she was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma (Bone Marrow Cancer) a few weeks later, in January 2011.

Gunizi battled with the cancer bravely for four years but lost her fight and died at the Hammersmith Hospital on 17 March 2015. She was laid to rest in her birth town Odemis near Izmir in Turkey on 23 March 2015. She will be terribly missed by everybody who knew her. May she rest in peace.

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## Diana Tonnison & Richard Pearson **Talk and demonstration**



*Bed Linen Design for  
Bill Gibb*



*Fashion Illustration  
1976*



*Diana's fashion in  
Vogue 1977*



*St. Martin's School of Art  
Graduation*

This was a fun and light-hearted evening led by two very different members. Diana brought the colour and glitz of the fashion world and a fascinating story, rather brushed over in her rush to fit all she had to say into only one hour. We were treated to grainy black and white photos of her college days and of many of the big designers of the '70s, as we discovered at least some of what she got up to working with the likes of Bill Gibb and Kaffe Fassett.

Right from the start she was a hands-on craftswoman, designing and making her own knitted fabrics which were the basis of Bill Gibb's designs. Diana had brought a rail of fashion items with her including several of these ranges and even her own 3-piece wedding outfit which she had knitted herself. (In a rich buttery cream striped with warmer hues.) She set up her own business and went on to work in New York as well as in London.

After her children were raised she looked for pastures new and worked as an interior designer where the wonderful world of ceramics soon tempted her, and before too long her sketches and paintings were being

done in three dimensions, in ceramic. There were also photographs taken in India of cloths and clothes of the brightest colours, silks embroidered with gold thread, a wedding party, religious celebrations, and so on. Diana's paintings of old carved wooden doors with coloured panels, and other scenes, provided a clue about the inspiration she gained from this heady mix.

Diana the artist continues her creative journey... she is fearless in her pursuit of new materials and of all the technology and skills required to work with them. I wonder where she will go next!

Thank you Diana for bringing and showing us your beautiful ceramic wall pieces, with all their colour, texture and patterns. Perhaps you might have time to run a workshop for us one day. And many thanks indeed for bringing such treasured clothes and allowing us to handle them.

We all admire beautiful clothes and as many of us are of the generation that were taught how to sew at school, I know that I was not the only one blown away by the excitement and vibrancy of your story and your work.

**Friday 15 May 2015**

**Ros McGuirk**



It looked as though Richard would have quite a job to gain our attention, after all that. However he simply sat at our Shimo wheel and, with a bag of clay to hand, started speaking.

He is a great raconteur and really enjoys teaching throwing, so we had an excellent lesson in what exactly is going on between the hands, the fingers and the clay, once the wheel starts spinning. It took a while to get ours spinning, though, as the fuse had slipped slightly within the electric plug. Fortunately Richard had a screw driver in his kit and the problem was quickly sorted.

Richard's theme for this talk was about learning and moving on and he had brought a few pieces, including the first pot he had

ever made, to show how he learned his craft and to encourage others to follow. He is happy to throw away the pots that do not work as he wants and cut through all that he made for us – which was instructive, too.

As he worked on to make a fluted bottle that was thrown gently from inside only, we learned about his experiences teaching woodwork, making furniture and window frames, about how he learned about pottery – which was by teaching it – and his bible – the handbook by Mick Casson – and about his current guru, Kevin Millward.

He recently retired from teaching at Sudbury Prison – ceramics and bricklaying, among other things, and now life is full and there is a kiln to build on the steep hillside that is his garden.



## Richard Pearson **Continued**

Richard hails from Derbyshire and was little known within the guild. He only ventured this far south for our soda firings and Open Day. Well, now that has changed, perhaps more members will follow Colin's example and take a trek towards the hills to have a throwing lesson with Richard.

Good luck with the kiln, Richard, and thank you so much for coming so far to be with us. It was a revelation.



## Diana Tonnison **Ceramics**

*Nine Spratts*



*Fruit and Veg Market Boxes*

*Box of Sardines  
(Detail)*

*Plaice and Whitebait*

*Images courtesy Diana Tonnison*

## Guild Annual Exhibition

**St Albans October 2015**

Saturday 3rd October to Sunday 11th 2015, open daily from 10.00am to 4.30pm. Please put these dates in your diary and come along and see Guild member's ceramic work being shown in The Old Courtroom at St Albans' central Town Hall.

"Meet the Potters" on Saturday 3rd October 10.30pm - 1.00pm. This is a special opening day event when you can come and chat to all the exhibiting makers and enjoy coffee / tea and cakes.

We look forward to see you there.

**Judi Tribe & Audrey Hammett**  
**Exhibition Organisers**



## Members' News

**By Bipin**

### Vivienne Rodwell-Davies

Vivienne has for sale two of her much used and long cherished potter's wheels. A Leach-type kick wheel for £200, and an ex Ian Godfrey momentum kick wheel, offers invited. Also various wheel heads, tapered and screwed, sizes 8", 10", 12" diameter.

Contact Vivienne on 020 441 0904.

### Arthur Ball

Arthur says "Some of us Guild members are getting on a bit, and I'm 97 and 6/12th years old now! I don't want to leave it all for my daughter to clear up after I die. Come and visit me for a nice cup of tea, and you can take away a bag or two of stoneware clay for free. Donate something to the Guild, if you wish".

Arthur also has equipment for sale such as a pug mill, potter's wheel, gas kiln, kiln shelves, kiln bricks, glaze materials, and lots more. Contact Arthur on 01707 260471.

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