



DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



Issue 44 Winter 2022

www.dcpog.org.uk



In this issue:

Demos by Rachel Woods,
Fiona Booy and John Masterton.

Book reviews

DCPG at St Albans Market

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Cover picture:
Rachael Woods from demo at our AGM



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Editorial Winter 2022



Ros McGuirk

This edition has been a joy to put together as we have returned, at last, to normal meetings whilst keeping our new outdoor activities going. Thus this issue has plenty to offer.

Thanks to all who have contributed. Please keep items coming as everyone benefits the more we share. If you would like to see new topics just put quill to parchment and send in your copy.

Running all our activities is just the same. If you would like us to organise more workshops, for example, you

might just have to step up and do it yourself.

Most of the committee members have been extra busy since early 2020 keeping going in challenging circumstances and would clearly welcome more support now, not least one more trustee.

I am writing this one week before Christmas, as the snow is melting. I expect your copy will arrive in early January, so I wish you all Very Happy Potting for 2023!



Notes from the Chair



Jackie Harrop

Halls have been decked, wine mulled, pies minced, bells jingled, Christmas jumpers retrieved to keep out the chill, and lots of festive glasses raised. Its beginning to look a lot like Christmas as I look at the frosted cobwebs outside.

In contrast the guild has experienced lots of warmth, good cheer and festive activities. An impressive momentum

has been maintained with monthly demos resumed at Kings Langley and a programme of socials bringing members back to meet face to face.

The market stalls resumed in December and despite the cold and cost of living crisis, the public enjoyed seeing and



buying the work of a hardy group of our members promoting the guild in their thermals and fleeces and selling lots of pots.

There was more excitement with successful raku firings held at COAM, as we tested out our kiln arrangements on the newly established site. A core group of enthusiasts have made huge strides in preparing the site and equipment which means this can be repeated in the new year. Watch out for opportunities to be part of the excitement.

A skeleton committee has done a terrific job of keeping things going for members throughout the last few challenging years, and we are still hopeful we can encourage more of you to support the

guild as we all juggle the conflicting demands of our lives. We would welcome backup for admin support, to the website, membership, organising and running events, and would love to be able to make use of the space generously made available to us at Kingsbury, for member workshops, sharing skills, ideas and preparing work for firings and kiln building. We can do all of these things with more help from you. If any of these areas appeal to you please contact me or any of the committee.

Plans are progressing for POD on 19th March at the Trestle Theatre with Keith Brymer-Jones as one of the demonstrators. Tickets will be available on Eventbrite so get in quickly when they go on sale.



Prize-winning Artist



Congratulations to Guild member Dorienn Carmel who has recently been awarded a prize by the Warkwickshire Advertiser and is to be made their Artist of the Year for 2023.

Dorienn lives in Elstree and joined the Guild last year. She is becoming well known for her creative ceramic figures which are beautiful caricatures for, and often of, her clients. She has been selling these for a good number of years, working up from Covent Garden market to galleries, and in September she caused quite a stir at our Kingsbury exhibition. Her other path to fame has been to enter every competition she can. So far she has won 10 prizes. Well done



Dorienn, you are an inspiration!


If you did not get to Kingsbury you will find images at: www.artdorgallery.co.uk and on our own website at:

<https://dcp.org.uk/>





Guild Programme of Meetings

 All to be held at Kings Langley Methodist Church Hall, WD4 8BR on Friday evenings at 7pm unless stated otherwise.

Fri 13th Jan 2023

Tom Knowles Jackson

Tom came late to ceramics via Throwdown.

He makes classic reduction fired stoneware with simple ash, celadon and tenmoku glazes. Beautiful!



Fri 10th Feb

Mel Chambers

Mel is a gifted artist, business woman and environmentalist based in Cornwall. She runs Alchemy Tiles making encaustic tiles. produced by hand carving and fine inlay work. www.alchemytiles.com



Fri 14th April

Peter Black

Salt glazed pots made mostly on the wheel. Peter is in the early stages of his ceramic career and is based in Kent. www.peterblack.uk



Fri 12th May

Lucy Baxendale

A ceramic artist, illustrator and community artist based in Herefordshire. Her drawings are often surreal, imagined, and feed into her ceramics. www.lucybaxendale.com



8 - 10th Sept

Guild Annual Exhibition at Kingsbury Barn.



DCPG Coffee Mornings and Walks



Wednesday 18th January

at 10.30am - 12.30pm
Waterstones bookshop,
8, St Peter's Street,
St Albans, AL1 3LF
www.waterstones.com

Thursday 16th February

at 10.30am - 12.30pm
The Three Horseshoes,
Winkwell, Hemel
Hempstead, HP1 2RZ
www.the3horseshoeswinkwell.co.uk

Monday 27th March - 10.30am - 2.30pm

Blackwells Cafe, 10 The Common,
Chipperfield, Kings Langley, WD4 9BS
www.blackwellschipperfield.co.uk

Tuesday 25th April - 10.30am - 2.30pm

Cafe on the Corner, Camphill Trust,
39 Catherine St, St Albans AL3 5BJ
www.camphillvillageatrust.org.uk



Thursday 25th May - 10.30am - 2.30pm

Sarratt Green Cafe, The Green,
Sarratt WD3 6AT

Monday 12th June - 10.30am - 12.30pm

Little Heath Tea Room,
Little Heath Lane, Potten End,
Berkhamsted HP4 2RY
www.littleheathtearoom.co.uk

Do come and join us.

Dates for your Diary in 2023

Mar 3 – 5 Collect. Art Fair by national
and international galleries.
Somerset House, London.

April 21 – 23 Potfest South East.
Glyne Place, Near Lewes, BN8 6SX
See www.potfest.co.uk

June 9 – 11 Potfest Scotland.
Scone Palace, Perth, PH2 6BD

June 23 – 25 Potfest By the Lake.
Compton Verney, Warks, CV35 9HZ

June 30 – July 2 International Ceramics
Festival. Aberystwyth Arts Centre.
Penglais, Aberystwyth SY23 3FL

July 28-30 Potfest in the Park. Hutton-
in-the-Forest, Cumbria, CA11 9TH

Aug 11 – 13 Potfest in Suffolk.
Haughey Park, Stowmarket, IP14 3JY

Aug 18 – 20 Art in Clay.
Windsor Race Course.

September British Ceramic Biennial
2023. Stoke-on-Trent

October Potfest in the Pens. Skirsgill
Auction Mart, Penrith, CA11 0DN

Oct/Nov Potfest in the Pens.
Melton Mowbray, LE13 1JY

NB Ceramic Art London was going to
be held in 2023 but in November it was
cancelled by the venue.

Some dates were unavailable at the time
of writing.

The theme for Fitzwilliam 2022 was 'Natural Forms' and the winner was Jackie Harrop with her magnificent bull, an amazing feat of engineering. It is now joined by the bison, perhaps the beginning of a menagerie.

In second place was Judi Tribe's piece reminiscent of fungi and old wood, with a pool of delicious turquoise blue glaze within a bowl.

Third was Jerry Seaborn's enormous shell, looking like an ancient submarine specimen.

Many thanks go to Nicole who has been organising this event for several years including making it work during the pandemic.

Pre-covid the competition was held at the AGM with our guest demonstrator judging the entries during the meeting. In 2020 none of this was possible so Nicole devised an online competition using photographs of the work sent in by the makers. The AGM was carried out on Zoom during which Nicole managed a zoom poll for all members to vote for the winners.

Last year we were still in a pandemic but were able to go ahead with the Kingsbury exhibition and it was decided to display the competition entries there. The challenge of producing a piece and the constricted timescale of making meant we only had a few entries (and one of those was sold at the exhibition and withdrawn from the competition). So, it was just a member's online vote to decide and an announcement at the zoom AGM of the winner and runners up.

In 2022, we are nearly back to normal. But the enjoyment of the public in seeing



*Jackie receiving the bison from
Sylvia Fitzwilliam at the AGM.*

the competition pieces was considered a positive thing to introduce, and so the display at the Kingsbury Barn Exhibition was kept. The announcement of the Theme for the competition was given in January this year, so there was plenty of time to make, and the lifting of restrictions and opening up of communal kilns allowed potters to create and fire their pieces.

The result was an absolutely wonderful display of ceramics in a myriad of styles, shapes and sizes, but all with the Natural Form as their connecting Theme. There were 16 entries this year, which may be a record number of competition entries.

To engage the public with the competition entries and get them to look carefully at the work we held an informal Public Vote during the exhibition. There were 228 votes cast, no spoilt ballot papers and only one disregarded because the voter had voted for all the entries on their single piece of paper. Every entry received votes (plural) but there was one piece that was enjoyed more than others.

The votes were counted on a first past the post system and the winner of the PUBLIC Vote was: the Bull.

Jackie was given a certificate of acknowledgement and everyone who took part deserves a big round of applause!



Fiona Booy Demo

 Patrick Joyce

After a brief introduction DCPG member Fiona Booy started her talk with her approaches to reducing firing costs, a concern for many of us given the rising costs of energy.

We were shown glaze samples with borax added so they might fire at a lower cone than initially designed for.

Fiona then focussed on single firing as a possible approach, although it has its own pitfalls to watch out for including reformatting glaze recipes to include more clay, how and when best to glaze (leather hard or dry), the extra care needed with seams and attachments such as handles and finally the firing schedule.



This, of course, generated a lively and open discussion among the members about their own experiences with single firing, insulating kilns, modifying glazes, firing rates and all sorts of other advice.

Fiona runs the St Albans Pottery and gave us a good rundown of the sort of classes and services she offers from throwing lessons, an after school club, kits to make at home, clay projects on Youtube, a kiln firing service and her latest project – to set up a Duke of Edinburgh Award pottery skills course.

Fiona moved on to discuss her journey as a ceramic artist. It began years ago by falling in love with clay when taken to visit a potter in her home country, South Africa. Life then got in the way but clay came back when it was needed and she finally began her second career – as a potter. A course at the University of Hertfordshire was followed by studying at City Lit. She is now a fellow of Digswell Arts where she joined in a project making ceramics for a film set somewhere in space!

Her current work is sculptural in nature. She uses different coloured clays and textures created with organic inclusions from the kitchen cupboard such as chickpeas and raisins.

Fiona finished the evening with an entertaining demo of her building process for those variegated pots. She showed us how to add stains and oxides to the clay bodies and how to layer the results thinly before slicing, reassembling and re-stacking those layers. She added inclusions such as

grated porcelain clay and showed some of her formers, including a waste paper bin and a cooking bowl. Once refined the work is dried, fired and polished.

www.fionabooceramics.co.uk

www.stalbanspottery.co.uk





Rachel Wood demonstration

 Mary Anne Bonney

Inspiring and practical, Rachel Wood was the perfect person to launch the season's programme of demonstrations.

Rachel's journey in ceramics began with a BA Hons in 3D Design (Ceramics) at Loughborough College of Art and Design as a mature student, having previously gained a degree in modern languages, a subject that served her well in her later travels as a potter. She likened her studies to being suddenly let out of a box: art college opened her eyes to a different world.

She enjoyed the puzzles presented by throwing and, from early on, she embraced asymmetry and subsequently incorporated the torn rims, visible fingerprints, and tactile dry surfaces which feature in her work today.

Rachel described her physical response to a developing pot, the excitement she felt as a pot achieves its potential. Her message to us all was to trust our gut feelings.

A spell spent as assistant to Robin Welch, with whom she shared a passion for the Australian landscape, introduced Rachel to a looser way of working and to the physical challenge of making large works.



From Alan Peascod she learned the technique of throwing forms upside down which he had developed in the heat of Africa where rims quickly became too dry to work on. The exposure to an international community of artists, as a result of her travels to ceramic fairs, events and residencies, including at the Sturt Craft Centre in

Australia, has been invaluable to her - allowing her to experience different ways of working and to exchange ideas, taking her out of her comfort zone and while providing her with a welcoming environment in which she can develop and experiment with her work.

Rachel's showed slides of the places where she finds inspiration: she is drawn to edges and layers: the overlap between one landscape feature - bracken, say - and the next - grass, or rock or sky perhaps - the juxtaposition of surfaces and indistinct boundaries. This is reflected in her work when she sets herself the challenge of making different elements fit together. Rachel looks to the landscape for its colours and, having been prompted to move away from the greens which characterised her early pieces, used a residency at Rufford to expand her palette to include earthy shades inspired by the Derbyshire landscape near her home.

A quick digression here to say that Rachel works on the Welbeck estate (<https://www.welbeck.co.uk>), which together with the Harley Foundation Studios where she is based, sounds well worth a visit.



Rachel began her demonstration with a pinch pot which was to form the base of one of her smaller bowls. She works with premium craft crank, which she finds good for hand-building, throwing and coiling. As she pinched, she rotated the pot in the palm of her hand, keeping it fairly solid and retaining a thick rim so that she would be able to build on it later, while shaping it to retain lightness and liveliness.

Having flattened the base on her banding wheel she twisted the piece off, turned it over and, with a tool, formed a 'hint of a foot-ring'.

In the studio, Rachel works on half a dozen pieces at a time, to ensure that each one is in exactly the right condition for the next stage, when she builds up the walls with coils, rolled - always from wrist to fingertips and in her case with her left hand.





The coils are slightly flattened and gently squashed, narrow edge on, onto the rim of the bowl. She smooths them down inside with her thumb and pulls the clay up on the outside with a kidney or similar - on the night of the demonstration she used a stone from the garden at Kings Langley - always working right from the base to the top and gently rotating the pot. On a smaller piece, she does not use slip and remarked how she always teaches students to score and slip the joins, on the basis that it is only once you have mastered the rules that you are in a position to break away and develop your own ways of manipulating the clay.



On larger pots which have perhaps dried a little more she will use slip where she needs a solid wall, but also allows holes and tears to remain where they fit the piece. She enjoys the challenge of fitting sections together and seeing traces of the challenge in the finished work.

Rachel next showed us how she starts her larger vessels with a thrown base.



She flattened 3kg of clay on the wheel and having centred it, made a hole down to the wheel-head and, working with the wheel at a steady speed, pulled the clay out then up into a closed dome shape the top of which she flattened with a tool before angling the foot with a rib. On completion, she wired it off, and would then leave it to dry, wiring it through a second time when it was touch dry. Moving on to a base she had made earlier,

now turned the right way up, she tidied the rim and, with the wheel still spinning, checked that the walls were even and sturdy enough to withstand the next stages and angled the rim out to receive the coils.

Rachel stressed the importance of standing back to take in the whole piece at regular intervals, and of centring it which she did by spinning the pot on a precarious tower of two banding wheels, gently patting inside and out with a paddle.

While always working the clay up from the base meant she sacrificed interesting marks on the way, the integrity of the pot as a whole is paramount.

This consideration of the entire form extends to decorating and glazing. Rachel gently 'slaps on' slips she has made herself, coloured with oxides including red iron, manganese, copper and vanadium, allowing layers to



overlap and textures to show through, and, after biscuit firing, brushes or pours glazes, again paying attention to boundaries and textures.

Her work is fired in an electric kiln.



Rachel's demo was packed with practical tips and, in stressing the importance of going with your gut feelings, I am sure she encouraged many of us, to be a little more daring.



Volunteers Required



Your Guild Needs You

We are an open group that supports potters and ceramic artists at all levels. With our focus on support and education we are organised as a small charity running ourselves with a committee whose members include our trustees and other officers.

We have adapted to the difficulties arising over the last 3 years using technology very successfully to overcome lockdowns and we have run open air events in the warmer months. This has been a learning curve for all of us.

We are now in desperate need of more help in running the Guild. With more help we could run several workshops a year rather than just one. We are happy about job splitting and sharing and would love to have more working our website and social media to ease the burden of keeping up to date. We need more help with the administration, in particular a minutes secretary on committee, a website manager and a membership assistant. Some of these are off-committee and all are done in your own time.

Most committee members have been in post a good while and have more years of experience between them than the Guild itself! Yet we still get requests for help that we cannot provide.

It will be our 50th anniversary within 3 years. Please help us keep going so the Guild will still exist in another half century.

Simply contact Jackie, Mary Anne, John Higgins or any committee member for further information and find out what you can do. Every little helps.

Below are suggestions.

Posts to fill

1. Minutes secretary
2. Assistant membership secretary
3. Workshop organiser
4. Events organiser x 2
5. Social media team co-ordinator
6. Website organiser x 2

It was a very cold and frosty December evening but the church hall at Kings Langley was positively glowing with the rich red reduction glazes that John Masterton brought with him.



These made for very tempting Christmas presents. After hot drinks and greetings John started his talk with slides and told us his story beginning with his background as an electronics engineer/designer.

He fell into ceramics after a very memorable trip to Art in Clay where they were actively firing work.

He signed up for evening classes, quickly progressing to a two-year art foundation course. By then he was committed to ceramics and went on to become a student on the degree course at Harrow where he did "everything" including tin-glazing and more conceptual sculptural pieces. At the time among his tutors was Daphne Carnegie, a specialist in maijolica, and Professor Nigel Wood a leading expert on oriental glazes.



Whilst a student at Harrow John got very involved in kiln building. He built several kilns with teams of around six students. The bricks were recycled from one year to the next with the first job being dismantling the previously built kilns.

Kilns built included down draught and cross draught designs; a small train kiln was also shown. Whilst at university a high firing porcelain kiln was donated by a retiring potter from Aldermaston and rebuilt at Harrow. After graduation in 2008 John focused on his love of oriental glazes and developed his work further in this direction, layering celadons, tenmoku

and copper glazes all in flame fired kilns to produce the reduction 'oxygen starved' effects. He started selling his red porcelain bowls through the Conran Shop in London.

John went on to talk about his involvement in the impressive Anglian Potters, a group around with 500 active members. Over the last three years they have relocated their annual kiln camp. This offers members the opportunity to learn how to build, pack and fire various kilns and they can bring 30/40 of their own pots to fire during the camp. The first step was to secure the use of a site on a pottery friendly fruit farm and then start with a kiln shelter and glaze store. Steered by a core committee the work was carried out by the members, all volunteers. A great source of waste wood was found at a local Cricket Bat factory. The kiln camp runs multiple firings at the same time, including a pizza night in specially built ovens! The Anglian Potters aim to develop the site further and create a useful base where other workshops can be organised throughout the year.



John finished his talk with a demo on the wheel expertly throwing a porcelain (Royale) mug and bowl forms concentrating on the inside shape and giving us tips on turning and avoiding stress cracks.

Thank you John for an informative and interesting talk with lots of practical tips to be gained.





Ceramic Canopic Jars!

 A short info-story by Mandy English

I was lucky to visit Egypt this November and spend some time in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo where I discovered these and thought I'd share the rather gory details with you: 'Canopic Jars' are Vases of pottery or stone which the ancient Egyptians used from the Old Kingdom onwards to keep the human viscera extracted from the body during the process of mummification.

There were four jars, containing the liver, lungs, stomach and intestines. They were placed under the protection of the four sons of Horus - Amest, Hapi, Duamutef and Kebehsenuf.

Amest protected the liver, Hapi the lungs, Duamutef the stomach and Kebehsenuf the intestines.

Simple heads became human headed - Amest kept his human head, while Hapi was represented with a baboons head, Duamutef with that of a jackel and Kebehsenuf with that of a falcon. These jars were kept in a chest which was placed in the tomb, near to the coffin with the embalmed body.'

Interestingly, due to modern technology, Egyptologists are trying to establish more about the causes of death of various Pharaohs due to DNA sampling from organs in canopic jars.

I find this incredible to think we can obtain these insights and learn from ancient civilisations living over 3,500 years ago.





Le Marche des Potiers at Ceret

 Jackie Harrop

Like most regions of France, Occitania, the most southern part of the country, has a plethora of artists including potters of all persuasions. One centre is Ceret, renowned for its Museum of Modern Art, the home of Picasso and Dali pots.



Each year the Tour D' Argile organises an annual Marche des Potiers where local potters and those from further afield can show their work and get together for a few days in August. This year was the 20th exhibition and whilst there were some established potters, there were newcomers too.



The 30 potters show their work for 2 days in a market setting, which moves from Ceret to Banyuls for a further 2 days, as well as having gallery space in the Sant Roch gallery in Ceret. It is quite a challenge setting up and dismantling and the days are long, from 10-19 hours every day so needs a fair bit of endurance especially in the heat, but with large number of tourists and very reasonably priced pots, sales are usually brisk. There's a demo space and pottery tools and glazes on sale.



I found some lovely raku work, interesting printed pieces, a few sculptural pieces and lots of functional ware. It is clearly an opportunity for the potters to network and support each other.



Books on Cone 6



Ros McGuirk

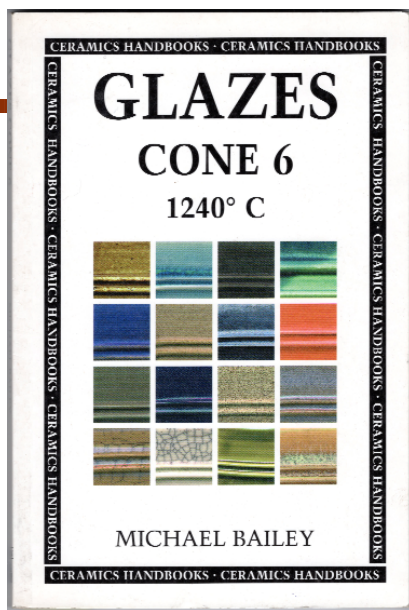
Cone 6 glazes are also called 'mid-temperature' and 'low stoneware'. They mature when cone 6 is bending over, at around 1220 – 1240C, and some a little earlier (cone 4-5). Stoneware is fired to around 1260 – 1300C, and that further rise requires a good deal more heat and fuel. To save the extra expense and, in many cases, prolong the use of kiln elements, firing to cone 6 is becoming an attractive proposition.

This is relatively rare in the UK and the literature is sparse. Andy Mason who specialises in raku, has been firing his tableware to 1200 - 1220C (cone 5) for years. He came to demonstrate to the Guild in 2004. Look at the archive on our website for more about his methods, including a couple of glaze recipes. (Newsletter Autumn 2004.)

A good glaze reference book will mention these mid-temperature glazes but there are a few that cover the whole topic really well. Here are three of them.

'Glazes, Cone 6' by Michael Bailey, published by A & C Black in 2001 is one to look out for. It was one of that excellent series of pottery handbooks which are sadly out of print, due to the publisher being taken over by a big American company with little interest in small production runs in a niche market. So if you come across any, and this one in particular, rescue it from obscurity! Someone will thank you for it. (Or you could try Amazon which has been advertising 3 used copies at £99.95 each!!).

It is easy to use in the workshop, is



clearly laid out with simple graphs, plenty of recipes, and a good bibliography. You can use it as a recipe book or a guide to your own research. It also references the internet as a useful resource.

Michael worked with Steve Mills at Bath Potters, nevertheless you notice some of the glaze materials are imported from North America and hence are more expensive. That is why this system is uncommon over here and the norm over there. Americans have a range of natural low firing feldspars to hand; Gerstley borate, Colemanite, Custer feldspar, Wollastonite. Also, many of their materials are produced as frits. This is done to make a toxic material safer to use, or to make a fairly soluble material work in a glaze mix, and it will also lower the melting temperature of that mix.

The fluxes required for cone 6 are different to stoneware and also tend to be more pricey. There are the more stable alkaline earths such as zinc oxide and calcium oxide or the more reactive

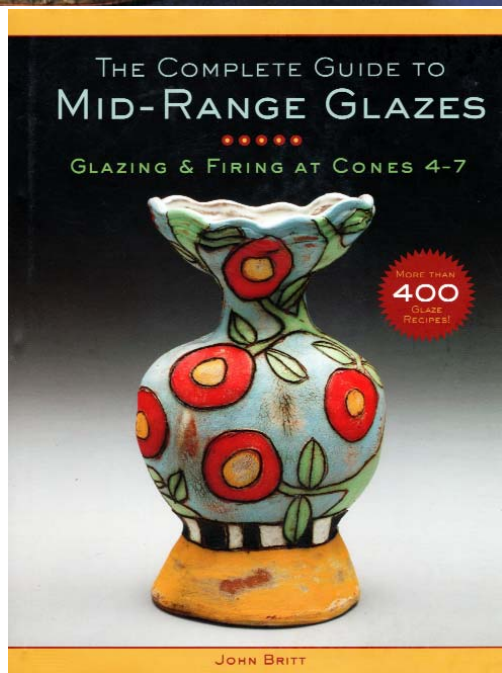
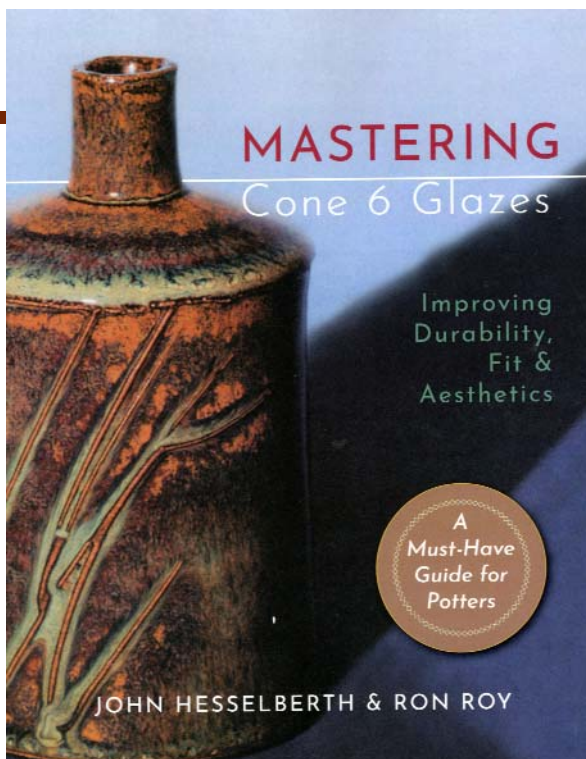
alkalis – lithium carbonate, potassium oxide and sodium oxide.

This handbook is well illustrated with photos of test tiles and a scattering of pots.

In summary – an excellent place to start, compact, easy to use and packed with lots of information for further research.

‘Mastering Cone 6 Glazes. Improving Durability, Fit and Aesthetics.’ by John Hesselberth and Ron Roy, published by EPBM, 2002 and 2020. Available online from Waterstones etc.

This is a spacious book, relying mostly on a friendly text with a smattering of photos and graphs. This is definitely one for the functional potter, the near beginner and the explorer. One is led gently through all the processes to teach best practice in great detail. There is a marked focus on safety everywhere, from the studio to the kiln and the kitchen. There are warnings about toxicity and leaching and useful information about how to run your own glaze tests to check for the release of toxins over time. For those who have done one of Tim Thornton’s courses, it is familiar territory. Being American authors they use lots of those materials we have to pay more for, so it is good to find out here that some of them are best avoided!



Nevertheless there are some stunning glazes among the recipes which will catch your eye and there is plenty more information in the glossary and appendices.

There are only about a dozen recipes here, but they are presented as the first step on your journey of research and development.

Summary – a great book to learn how to develop your own glazes without damaging your health nor poisoning your customers. “We believe that potters are not in the food supplement business.”

The Complete Guide to Mid-Range Glazes by John Britt, published by

Lark, 2014. Bought from Ceramic Review, £25.

This is almost the coffee table version of Michael Bailey’s book. It is easy to find the information you want and there are lashings of photographs of luscious glazes on beautiful pots, all by American potters. There is plenty of information here but it is so attractively presented that the most tech-averse will not be put off. The chapter on firing illustrates nine different firing schedules by means of a graph each, yellow for oxidation and orange for reduction. Brilliant! There is a short glossary at the end.

Buy it and drool... then get going.

Enjoy!



DCPG Officers for 2023.



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Potters return to St Albans market in December

 Ros McGuirk



Not the warmest time of the year, December offers some of the best selling opportunities as shoppers rush around getting ready for Christmas in good time.

This year it turned out to be one of the longest spells of cold weather in a long, long time, so our potters required the kind of hardiness developed only by years of market trading. Well done to all 10 of you!

The first slot was taken up by Jackie, Vivienne and Dorianne, on Dec 3rd. It was very chilly. Jackie writes: "We put on our thermals, filled our flasks and packed our crates and card readers hoping for a few sales. We met at 8am to struggle with our ancient gazebo and set up our stall outside Marks & Spencer." [Ed: how did you manage to get that pitch?] "Its a terrific pitch with high footfall especially with Christmas shoppers. The market was busy and there was plenty of interest in us and also enquiries about classes and lessons. Our flyers disappeared quickly.



It was Dorianne's first time and she struggled with her card reader and then, happily, the Vodafone shop got it all sorted. She sold several pieces including a lovely mermaid that had been raku fired at COAM. Her clever trick of placing a piece of carpet under her chair kept her feet warm all day, in contrast to her hands!

Vivienne's ceramic dishes were very popular, also her paper clay decorations. I was surprised how many people wanted bowls and dishes and managed to sell more in one day than at the whole of the Kingsbury exhibition.

It was getting dark by 4pm so we packed up, wrestled the gazebo, and all went home very happy with our day."

On Dec 10th it was mostly bright and sunny but after 2 days of hard frost it was close to freezing. Amanda, Nancy and Jane set up the stall. Amanda reports that once again there was a lot of interest in the pots and they all made sales. There was plenty of interest in the Guild, too, with more flyers given out. It was Nancy's first time selling and she really appreciated the positive feedback from customers.

By Dec 17th we had had a week of snow and ice, pavements could still be icy and off the main routes the roads were treacherous. Traffic in the town was log-jammed and shoppers streamed towards their last shopping targets with determination.



Some folk were still browsing as there was plenty to look at that day. Fiona, John and Bev, and Jill with John stoically manned the stall where I found them at 3pm, still cheerful even though it had been a long day.

Everyone had one box less to take home. Success!



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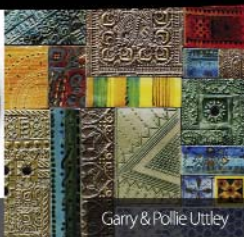
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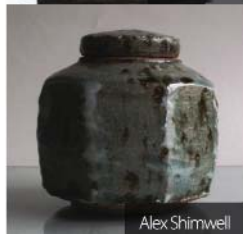
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