

SASKATOON POTTERS GUILD FALL 2011 NEWSLETTER

EDITORS NOTES

-Bonnie Gilmour

This newsletter is driven by the members of the Saskatoon potters guild.

Thank-you to those that took the time to contribute to the newsletter this fall. The committee chairs and members were asked for ceramic information as content for this newsletter. Three members and 2 committee chairs found the time to forward pertinent information. The other information that you will find in this newsletter was initiated by the newsletter editor. I hope that content for upcoming newsletters will be more forthcoming in the future.

Please do not hesitate to send me pertinent information that you would like published in the newsletter.

INPUT

For the benefit of all the members, the following questions were asked of all committee chairs.

What is your committee?

Who are the members of your committee?

When does your committee meet?

What is your committee presently working on for the fall?

What is your committee working on for 2012?

What are the highlights of your projects?

What is it you like best about being the chair of the committee?

Health and Safety Committee

Teresa Gagne –Chair. No other members on this committee

There are no meetings.

A highlight coming up this fall... A presentation by the safety specialist from Acklands Grainger is being arranged and will take place in November. We will be shown how to choose the correct respirator and cartridges, check the ones members already own, etc.

Date and time of presentation TBA.

Teresa says that safety is important, and helping people to be informed about what's beneficial, is what she likes best about being the chair of Health and Safety.

Library Committee

Lesley Morey- Chair. No other members on this committee.

There are no formal meetings, though Lesley says that she will take inventory a couple times in the year, and at the end of the year, spend her budget on new materials. ... and more ceramic DVD's are on her wish list.

Lesley enjoys the independence of being the sole member of the Library Committee, and would like the membership to know that the library is a very rich resource of materials.

Clay Coordinator

Teresa Fisher

She is the liason between the SPG members and TREE for members clay orders. The SPG membership enjoys a reduced rate on clay when purchasing through the SPG/ Clay Coordinator.

No meetings, but she has quarterly deadlines; fall winter spring and summer. Once notice has been sent by Teresa to the members, they specify to her what clay they would like, make out their cheque and leave it for her in her mailbox at the SPG. When the clay arrives at TREE the members go and pick up their order there.

Website Coordinator

Charley Farrero is co-chair with *Norma Fairbairn*.

The committee meets informally on the internet via email.

They gather information monthly from the committee chairs or executive.

Presently working on the 15th of each month as deadline for submissions to the SPG website in order to have the information online at www.saskatoonpottersguild.com by the 1st the following month.

Their fall projects involve re-vamping the website, with current SPG information, and removing old content, adding the SPG newsletter to the website and perhaps other topics such as a members corner.

The website's 2012 projects depend on the committee chairs to forward timely information of their events/news/happenings.

Charley Farrero's highlight of being on this committee is discovering the excellent relationship with Shawn J. Magee the web site provider.

The best part of this committee is that "we are just 2 people, and co-chairs- action can be directed in a much more timely, thorough manner. I only have to consult with one other person; Norma. And vice versa."

Education Committee

Cec Cote-chair.

The education committee has not had a meeting as of yet, as some of the committee members were out of town, but the goal of the chair is to meet every couple of months.

Fall workshop with Rusty and Ron Kurenda was cancelled due to lack of registration. For spring 2012, the committee is planning a workshop on April 28th and 29th. Mark your calendars.

Archives

Thelma Howard-Chair

Lorraine Sutter, Charlene Pound and Elaine Gusta are committee members.

The committee does not meet that often.

Each member of the committee collects material ie; Elaine is documentation, Lorraine is photos.

They organize, compile and file SPG archival material by collecting material from the different committees.

This fall they are working on the Exhibitions album from year one, 1966 to 2011 by making CD's printing pictures, and putting them in the albums. Every single photograph is numbered and described.

The Education/workshop Album #7 for the members. It is a work in progress. There is room for one more workshop in that album.

Into 2012, they will be working on album #8 for Education, and album # 4 for Exhibitions.

As Thelma Howard was out of town at the time of newsletter deadline, Lorraine Sutter had a few words on what she likes best about being on the committee. "I pay to work!"

The history is interesting to me. It's great to go back and see what was going on back then and who's still alive!"

Newsletter Committee

Bonnie Gilmour-Chair & Editor

Charley Farrero committee member

The committee meets quarterly, approximately one month before the newsletter publication to review newsletter submissions.

Fall project is to get a fall newsletter out to members by November 1st and have the newsletter published online at www.saskatoonpottersguild.com.

Ongoing project is an open request for members input for general ceramic topics, tricks, tools, recipes, residencies etc.

Ongoing project is an open request for all committee chairs to provide input for the newsletter regarding the functioning of their committees.

2012 projects are a winter, spring and summer newsletter.

Highlights are getting members to volunteer information without reminders.

What is best about being the chair of this committee is being able to share ceramic information.

Studio Manager

Lois Klaassen- Chair

Peter Stanley committee member

This committee meets when they are in the SPG studio together.

They have not really talked about project for fall 2011, or upcoming for 2012.

They have been working on general upkeep and maintenance of the SPG studios.

The highlight of being on this committee for Lois is when all the kilns are working at the same time!

What she likes best about being the chair, is being able to get repairs and maintenance done in a timely manner...and now is learning to repair kilns.

Community Outreach

Judi Whiting-Chair

One person committee.

Judy meets as the pilot project dictates

From time to time the Guild receives requests from individuals or groups who cannot afford our class fees. In May, 2011 members passed a motion to pilot in 2011-12 the provision of an after school pottery class in a Saskatoon community school.

Liaises with a community school(s) for the pilot project.

The Studio Committee

Peter Stanley-Chair

Committee includes all working members of the S.P.G.

We meet on the first Wed, every other month. The Committee is responsible for responding to the needs that effect the working members in regards to the operations and equipment for the work room, glaze and kiln rooms and issues that do not affect associate members.

One of our biggest projects this fall was the Test Tile Project. A team of members including Thelma Howard (project lead), Norma Fairbairn , Alexis Harvey, Ginette Lebel and, Judi Whiting made over 900 test tiles to display 18 glazes on three clay bodies: 340, 370 and 390. Lorraine Sutter, Louise Studer, Deanne McHaffie, Dorothy MacPhedran, Leslie Morey and others contributed time and effort as well. Once the display is set up all SPG members will be invited to view the results.

In August, Veronica Campanucci organized a major kiln shelf cleaning project getting almost all of the shelves cleaned.

Last winter, the air filtration system was installed. The installation was overseen by John Perkin.

Being in the Chair of the Studio Committee has given me the opportunity to work and learn with a lot of great people.

MEMBERS INPUT

Simon Leach on You Tube (sleachpots)- *Submitted by Pete Stanley*

Simon Leach is the youngest grandson of Bernard Leach and the son of David Leach. His brothers are John and Jeremy Leach.

Simon has produced 733 clips on You Tube covering all aspects of pottery. What is remarkable about them is while he may not be as good a potter as other members of his family, he is an excellent teacher. His clips run up to 30 minutes and include his disasters as well as his successes. One series of clips cover a gas firing he did in Spain with Seth Cardew (son of the great Micheal Cardew). During the firing some of the shelves collapsed and the results were quite spectacular, in a lesson learned sort of way. It is nice to know that even the best make mistakes.

While some of the presentations cover the fundamentals, there are nuggets of gold throughout, and, honestly, who among us is above revisiting the fundamentals.

The most valuable lesson he teaches is his mantra..."Keep Practicing."

The Role of the Pyrometer in Raku Firing

Submitted by Jeff and Judi Whiting

This past summer we had the opportunity to attend Mitchosin International Summer School of the Arts (MISSA www.missa.ca) and Judi took a raku course with Robert Piepenberg who is a well-recognized expert in the world of raku ceramics. <http://www.piepenburgstudios.com/piepenburgstudios.com/Home.html> In addition, the class was also attended by Steven Forbes-de Soule, who has taught the course four times at MISSA, and came for a vacation (he likes BC and MISSA). Steven provided not only a dry sense of humour, but also a lot of technical expertise to his peers at the course. <http://www.stevenforbesdesoule.com>

One new experience was use of a pyrometer during a raku firing. Both Robert and Steven say they never fire without one! We have tried it twice out at the Nayar site. We used the Guild's portable pyrometer and our own digital read out one which we have for our outdoor bread/pizza oven. We also watched the glazes mature and attempted to see if there was a match between what the pyrometer indicated for temperature and what we were seeing in glaze maturity inside the kiln.

Below is a rough guide of what we've learned from the pyrometer. One important consideration in firing to avoid pot breakage is 'quartz inversion'. Here's one explanation of this phenomenon: "After dehydration, the next change that happens [in a firing] is Quartz Inversion, which happens at 573 degrees C (1064 degrees F). At this point, quartz crystals rearrange themselves into a slightly different order. A slight and temporary increase in volume occurs at this point. This is why you always need some space around pieces during firing, as they will expand somewhat. Firing should proceed slowly during this Quartz inversion. A large percentage of ware that is cracked during firing happens from fast firing through this stage." Source: <http://www.lakesidepottery.com/HTML%20Text/Tips/Clay%20drying%20and%20firing%20process.htm> cited 10october 2011

First Firing of the Kiln

Kiln Temperature		Action
C	F	
	0	Turn on propane with about a quarter turn
260-315.6	500-600	Turn up another quarter to half turn. Hold turn ups until the quartz inversion temperature has been passed. If you only do a quarter turn, you can make another quarter turn if the kiln appears to stall, but do not do any turns up when you are in and around the quartz inversion temperature.
648.9	1200	Begin a rapid turn up of kiln
1037.8-1065.6	1900-1950	Glaze maturity. We usually fired the kiln at MISSA to 1960, but we had two burners. At Nayar's it can be done, but needs ideal conditions.

Much to our surprise, we found that the kiln temperature only decreased to 1300-1400 F when we opened the kiln, removed pots, reloaded and closed. This led us to alter the turn ups for the second and subsequent firings, see below. We presume, the longer the kiln is open, the faster the temperature may drop. Without a pyrometer, you may actually be turning on your second firing close to the quartz inversion temperature and unknowingly ramp up the temperature too quickly and risk pot breakage.

Second and Subsequent Kiln Firings

Kiln Temperature		Action
C	F	
		Turn on propane with about a quarter turn. Note kiln temperature. Unless the temperature has dropped below 500-600 F, do not do any further turn ups for 30 minutes.
		After 30 minutes, begin kiln turn ups. As our kiln was always > 1200F we came up with the 30 minute wait to allow the pots to warm up to the kiln temperature without any sudden rises in temperature If the kiln temperature is <1000 F when you close the lid, you may have to revert to the method described for the first firing. We have not tried this as it was not needed. The most important variable seems to be avoiding turns \pm 100 F of the quartz inversion temperature.
1037.8-1065.6	1900-1950	Glaze maturity

Using this method, we did not have any pot breakage. We did pre-heat pots for the second, and subsequent firings, on top of a hot kiln.

Neither Robert nor Steven, plunge their pots into the water bath after removing from the reduction pot. You might want to try this as well.

If you are using a clay body without grog eg porcelain, Robert said he adds 30% kainite (35 or 48 mesh) to the clay body. He wedges it into the clay and then the clay does not crack during firing. I have not tried this.

If you try out the use of a pyrometer, let other Guild members know about your experiences so we can all learn!

Check it out: *Submitted by Teresa Gagne*
http://www.ceramicstoday.com/articles/why_throwing.htm

Members websites

Teresa Gagne www.tgagneceramics.com
Teresa Gagne blog <http://goingtopot.blogspot.com>

When I do things without any explanation, but just with spontaneity... I can be sure that I am right.

- *Federico Fellini*

For Sale

I have a Brent b wheel for sale. The motor has quit and will need replacing, the rest of the wheel is in great shape. Asking \$200.00 or best offer. A new motor will cost \$350.00 plus taxes and fees.

I also have an old motorized kick wheel. Great for display and the motor on it is good.
Please call Dolly (306) 384-6866 in Saskatoon or email wdbeaudry@shaw.ca

Contact Newsletter Editor

Bonnie Gilmour bonsfire@sasktel.net

Charley Farrero charleyfarrero@sasktel.net

Next deadline for Newsletter submissions is February 15, 2012 for March 1st publication