

# Otaki Potters

APRIL 2016



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OTAKI 5512  
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[www.otakipotteryclub.org](http://www.otakipotteryclub.org)

## Management Committee

**Patron:** Grant McNab

### President:

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rodgraham@xtra.co.nz 027 4457545

### Vice President:

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### Secretary

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### Treasurer:

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### Assistant Treasurer:

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### Committee:

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Jeavons Baillie 04 905 0144

Russell Kitto 04 293 3349  
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### Others with responsibility:

Club Library & Rooms	Kaye Stead
DVDs and Enrolments	Margaret Hunt
Orientation	Jude Whitaker
Newsletter Editor	Caitlin Taylor
Website	Biz Hayman
Cleaning Bees	Stephanie Tidman
New members	Stephanie Tidman
Property Maintenance	Russell Kitto
Clay	Jenny Turnbull
Keys	David Simmonds
Festival of Pots Convener	Brent Craig

Greetings!

It's been a great summer but now the feel of autumn is in the air, so better get those winter woollies ready. Thanks to extensive research that Jeavons undertook the heat pumps should be up and operating in the rooms by the first week in May.

It was decided to install two heat pumps; one in the glaze room and one in the main room. Both will be on the wall above the sink benches. ( Jeavons has sent in a report - see p.3)

The installation of the new switchboard and associated work required to enable us to fire more than one kiln at a time is due for completion in early May.

Two new slab rollers have been assembled and installed in the rooms. Please follow the operating instructions. We do not want to damage or get clay on the rollers. Kaye is cutting and over locking new canvases. We have an extra long canvas for those who want to roll larger slabs; you just need an extra pair of hands to help.

Both the old slab rollers have been sold to members who tendered for them.

As part of the Festival of Pots review the committee agreed to invest in additional plinths. Congratulations to Maureen Hunter who took an idea from Russell Kitto and developed it into an innovative multi-functional design then got a builder friend to make them. Alan landed the job of filling the holes and sanding the edges and we now have 17 new plinths stored in Kaye's shed ready for painting. If you want to do your two-hour cleaning bee painting plinths please let me know.

The new plinths are not available for borrowing but members are welcome to use the older plinths for local exhibitions; please contact Kaye.

The cleaning bee on April 16th did a great job. Thank you to Stephanie and the team.

The next cleaning bee will be on 9th July.

The gas kiln will be fired on April 27th. The next firing is scheduled for Wednesday 25th May. Please remember to label pots with your name and the glazes used as this will determine their place in the



## Dates to Remember :

Term two begins	2nd May
OPC Classes resume	9th May
Vivienne Rodriguez workshop	14th - 15th May
Next Gas firing	25th May
Cleaning Bee	9th July
Raku	? July
Pit firing	Spring

kiln. There is a list of gas fire glazes that can be used together on the wall in the kiln room.

The Children's Holiday workshops were oversubscribed and a hive of industry. Thank you Paula.

The committee intends to review our Health and Safety practices in terms of the new Act. If you would like to be part of the subcommittee, or make suggestions, please contact Caitlin.

Joy Snaddon has stepped down from the committee and newsletter distribution. We thank Joy for the years that she has served on the committee and her valuable contribution to the club. We look forward to seeing Joy back on Club Days when she is feeling better.

Some of you will remember Jack from Elecfern who came down from Auckland to install our kilns and provide training. Sadly Jack died in November after a short illness.

Rod.



Graham Rockett working on a tall coiled pot.

## THURSDAY NIGHT CLASS - places available Sculpture and Handbuilding

Tutor - Duncan Smith

7 - 9pm 4 places available

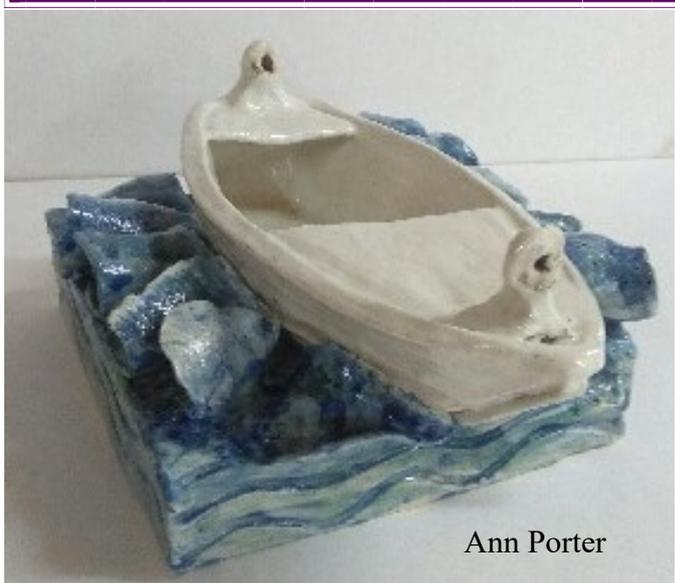
Duncan offers a low-key and personalised mentoring approach for hands-on sculptural and potting ideas and construction.

If you are interested please contact:

Margaret Hunt 063648053, mhunt@xtra.co.nz



June Hogan



Ann Porter



Margaret Hunt

Lynne Corkin



Linda Mikkelsen

## \* Visiting Tutors

We are often looking for places for visiting tutors to stay when they are here holding workshops for the club.

If you can help please contact Margaret Hunt.

## Progress report on improved heating in the club rooms

The Club Committee has opted for heating the rooms with 2 heat pump systems: one each for the Work Room and the Glazing Room. The Work Room unit will also warm the Drying Room.

A few options were considered before we committed to heat pumps:

- (1) conventional resistance type wall or ceiling mounted fan units,
- (2) wall and ceiling type radiators and
- (3) wall mounted heat pumps.

Resistance type heating is very expensive to run and takes a while to heat up the space. The heaters can be controlled with on/off thermostats. All fan units need regular maintenance to keep the coils clean if they are to be efficient. That is one reason our present heaters do not work as well as they might. The present unit near the door is not designed to be maintained at all.

Radiators are useful in hard to heat buildings with a high stud. Their effect is immediate but varies very much with distance so in a building with low studs like ours your head might get too hot while the floor and your feet would still be cold. They do not work primarily by heating the air so their benefit is localized.

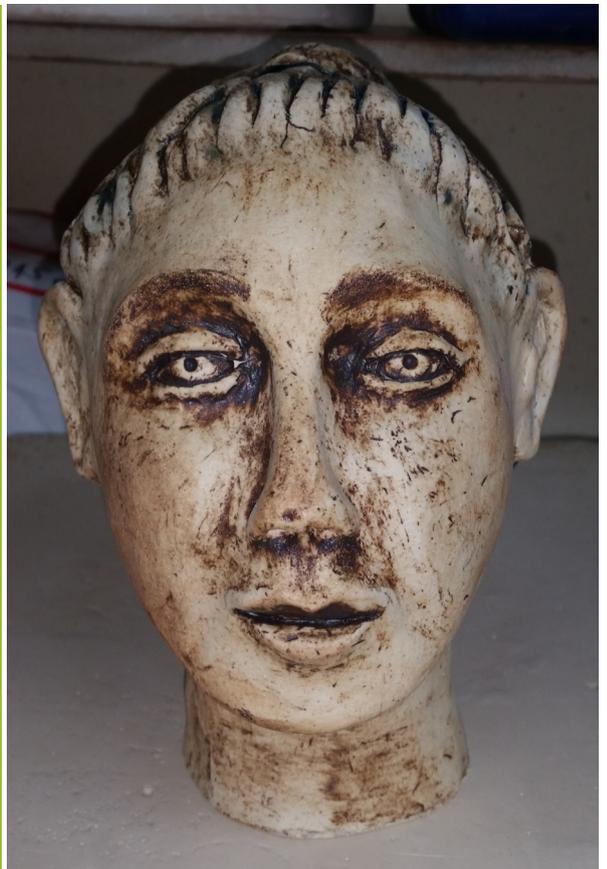
Heat pumps while expensive will be 4 times more efficient than resistance heaters. Like resistance heaters they work only by heating the air. When first turned on ours will produce over 18 kW which means the rooms will heat up very quickly and the 7-day timer will allow us turn the heating on before anyone arrives for a scheduled event, courses, club morning or any other regular happening over seven days. The system keeps the rooms at the desired temperature by running at the power level appropriate to the demand not by going on and off all the time.

The fan units need cleaning weekly during the heating season and can be part of the cleaners duties. The inside and outside units need annual maintenance to completely remove all dirt from the coils. Because there are no doors between the work room and the glazing room it will be best for the equipment if both units are always turned on - not just the one for the room you are working in.

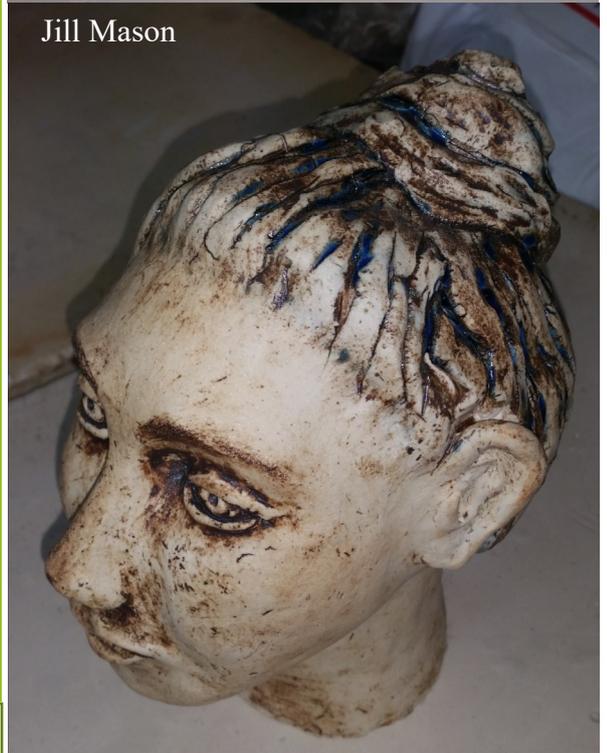
Installation in the Work Room is expected to take place on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> April with the new main electrical panel. The heater in the Glazing room will be installed in the first week of May.

When both systems are installed it will always be best to use both together but it will be alright to use the one in the Work Room as soon as it is ready until the second unit is working.

JB



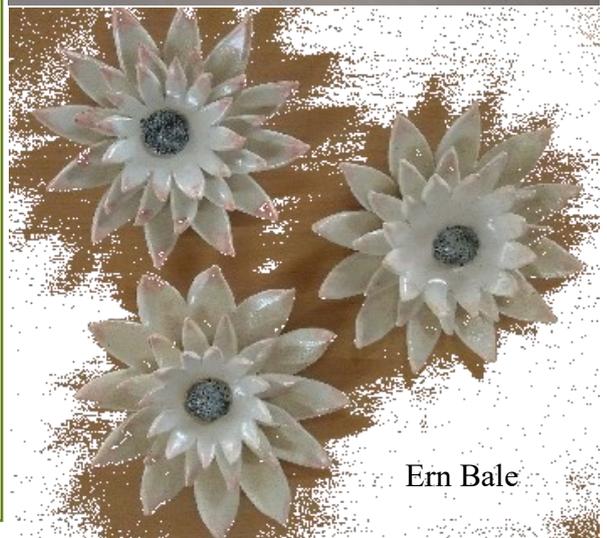
Jill Mason



## CLUB RAKU & PIT FIRING

*We are aiming for a Raku firing in July and a Pit firing in Spring.*

Time to start planning and creating your work now



Ern Bale

# Safety in the club rooms.

The committee discussed setting up a team to look at the safety practises in the club rooms. Concerns have been raised regarding the handling practices of materials and safety procedures in the rooms.

Please note that all members are required to take personal responsibility for their own health and safety when in the club rooms. That is donning gloves and mask when handling toxic material. - Become familiar with what you are using.

Here are a few notes I have downloaded on a couple of the oxides .

**Manganese dioxide** mixed into glazes is a fine, powdered material that can be more easily inhaled, etc; not the granular chunks in 112 and other clay bodies. Dangerous in 112 -- no; but, if you have sensitivities/allergic reations to certain raw materials, it always makes sense to find out what is in you clay body, glazes, whatever.

**Barium**, like manganese dioxide, is toxic and most community studios no longer use barium in glazes due to toxicity. That is not to say that, under strict conditions and amounts, some barium is not useful and helpful.

We just need to take time to learn about the materials we use and act safely. There is too much "folk knowledge" and misconceptions out there, too; so find good sources. Maybe a New Year's resolution for all of us -- **become more curious about what we use in the studio.**

The real potential issues are from the FIRING of manganese containing bodies.

Manganese likes to "fume" from high fired wares. Fumes are typically misunderstood by many potters. They are not gases..... they are actually very tiny dust particles. So tiny that the molecular vibration of the air molecules will keep those particles suspended in even still air for 24 hours or more. These escape into the kiln atmosphere. If that kiln atmosphere escapes into the studio rooms, then some manganese fume is going with it. THESE particles are highly respirable, and therefore represent a high toxicity concern.

The second issue with the firing side of using granular manganese in clay bodies potentially applies to the CONSUMER.

Granular chunks of manganese concentrate a lot of the material in one place. When you then put a glaze OVER this little spot, that MnO<sub>2</sub> bleeds into the glaze lying right over it and colors it. Nice.... great visual texture. However that large saturation or OVER-saturation of manganese in the glaze at that point likely is at a level that will not hold all of the MnO<sub>2</sub> in solution during the cooling phase. So if you look at those lovely little speckles under a microscope, you'll notice that the surface is often micro-crystalline....with some Mn stained alumino-silicate forming on the surface. This manganese is NOT bound well into the glaze melt... and can easily leach out.

How much this amounts to as a potential toxin for the user of the wares is impossible to predict. It depends on so many variables and factors. The particular clay body and how much manganese granules per square inch are on the surface, the nature of the overlying glaze, the thickness of application of that glaze, the firing cone, other colorants present, and so on. The only way to accurately assess if this is an issue is a routine of sampling of the production and actual lab testing to KNOW the answer.

The comment above from bciskepottery ( <http://community.ceramicartsdaily.org/user/2190-bciskepottery/> ) about KNOWING your materials is probably the MOST important comment in this thread. It is very easy to take 2 or 3 pottery classes, buy some equipment, and set up and start making and selling pottery. It take YEARS of study and experience to actually know what you are doing.



## Cleaning Bees 2016 .

Cleaning Bees will be held on:

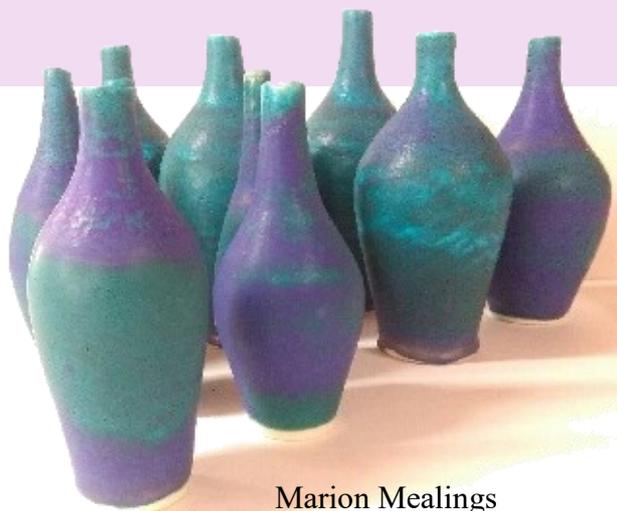
09th July

24th September, 10th December

Each full member is required to do 1 two-hour cleaning bee or pay \$30.

\*Please see lists on the notice board.

For an exemption you need to apply in writing to the committee.



Marion Mealings

# Festival of Pots & Garden Art 2016 - Conveners report

The committee consisted of:

Brent Craig (Convenor)	Caitlin Taylor ( Secretarial )
Rod Graham (President)	Ann Porter ( Treasurer )
Marion Mealings ( Reception / front desk)	Diane Irwin ( Publicity )
Paula Armstrong (Café / catering )	Colleen de Vere ( Demonstrations )
Dr Biz Hayman ( Website design )	

The planning started in late July 2015, with all the elements clicking into place as everyone's skills began to put it all together.

The owners of Anam Cara (Shona & Robyn Hartendorp ) once again graciously allowed us to hold the Festival on their Otaki Property.

Paula led her team of Michelle Reed & Kaye Stead at the Café producing an outstanding array of refreshments with hard work & a smile.

Marion organised the rosters & made sense of the front desk & reception, under some pretty trying conditions. Kevin Haste was there nearly every day, taking the money with a smile.

Maureen Hunter worked her magic once again as curator of the indoor display & spend long hours ensuring that everyone was fairly represented and displayed.

Sheryl Julian came in every morning and vacuumed & cleaned the venue (including the toilet block).

Colleen organised the demonstrations & also made a sterling effort in raising public awareness about the Festival on the local radio station.

Jenny Rose did the data entry & Ron Knox (a past member of the Club) arranged the accounting programme package.

Ann Porter was there most days sorting out the finances, and also doing her bit on the reception desk. She had the unenviable task of deciphering all the hand written sheets & relating them to the banking & accounts. She checked every entry, and spent more than a week 24 / 7 sorting it out so we could all get paid ASAP.

Diane managed to get us publicity in magazines and local newspapers.

Allan Hunter, Rod Graham, Ern Bale, David Simmonds, Russell Kitto & Kevin Haste provided the "manpower" for delivering & moving tables, screens & plinths.

Special thanks must go to all those exhibitors who took part (63) to make it such a colourful event. 1777 paying public attended.

Nick Ward was a guest Auctioneer & did a great job on Opening night, entertaining the guests & selling Fiona Tunnicliffes beautiful creations.

And extra special thanks to all those Club members who gave of their time & skills to make it all happen. It was a long week. It was fantastic to see you all working with such a positive attitude. I know that you joined the Club to further your Pottery craft & not to work on such a "commercial" undertaking. But I think you all realise that we now have the healthy financial freedom to improve Club facilities & keep our Subs down without any further financial burden on members.

A debrief has been held and all suggestions & ideas for improvement will be considered by the next committee.

The Festival of Pots & Garden Art 2017 will be held at Anam Cara: 20th Jan – 29Jan 2017

Brent H. Craig  
Convenor / Vice President  
Otaki Pottery Club Inc.



## Childrens workshops

— Terracotta planters —

— Tuesday 19th April —

Magical creatures

Thursday 28th April

10 - 12.30 pm

\$20 per person per session

Contact Margaret Hunt 364-8053



# Notices

- **We are looking for a kind person willing to host a tutor** (Vivian Rodriguez) who will be holding the next workshop at the club rooms on the 14th & 15th May. If you can help please contact Margaret 06-3648053 - [mhunt@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mhunt@xtra.co.nz)
- Please **don't leave stools in the glazing room** as they are a hazard.
- **Adult classes for term two** start the week beginning 9th May
- **People who fire their work at home but want to use the club glazes** will need to weigh their pots. The cost is \$3.50 per Kg , and part thereof. This then needs to be entered in the Kiln Book folder in the kiln room.
- **Minute taker** - if you would like to be a little more involved in the club and think this role would be of interest please contact either Caitlin or Rod

## Workshops:

### Vivian Rodriguez:

### Sgraffito Workshop



14th and 15th May. Fee \$80  
Shared Lunch

18th and 19th June Fee \$80  
Shared Lunch



**FULL**  
if you are interested please let  
Margaret know

### Bruce Walford:

### Making Waka using moulds

20th and 21st August. Fee: \$80

If there is a lot of interest we will ask Bruce if he would be happy to hold a second workshop



All information will be put on the wall behind the wheels or you can contact:  
Margaret Hunt 063648053, [mhunt@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mhunt@xtra.co.nz)

If you would like to do your cleaning bee painting the new plinth's or cleaning bottles please contact Rod or Stephanie.  
(contact details on front of Newsletter)

## Clay Pot Irrigation Saves Water, and Helps Plants Thrive

- A time-honoured way to water plants
- Saves water, saves time and keeps plants healthy

Simply "plant" this terra cotta vessel in the ground and then fill it with water. The porous material allows water to seep through. Plant roots will grow toward the irrigation pot where they'll get the water they need to thrive. Less water is lost to evaporation and runoff compared to surface-watering techniques. The root-zone watering also helps control weeds by reducing the surface water some weed seeds need to sprout.



Kathryn Ennis

