

January 2010

[www.novascotiapottersguild.com](http://www.novascotiapottersguild.com)



# The Dish

## CO - PRESIDENTS' MESSAGES:

Sharon and Louise

Greeting everyone! We've had a year where many of our members have experienced personal and professional growth.....and that's what we're all about. As Sharon will be mentioning a number of our members have worked very hard to enable the "*Shaping Space*" Exhibition and the Randy Brodnax workshop to be successful. Our heartfelt thanks to you. We've all benefited from your labours.

We'll be having our annual general meeting with all guild members and guests are welcome along with finger food, drinks on Sunday, February 14, 2010 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at Sharon Fiske's home at 7031 Fielding Ave. in Halifax. You may call Sharon or email her for directions. Her information is at the back of the newsletter. Here is a list of some of things we'll be discussing. If you have other ideas please forward them to me before the meeting to be added on the list.

- Privacy issues on NSPG web site.
- NSPG advertising in the provincial Guide publication and Halifax Art Map.
- Secretarial position.
- Guild submission for a future exhibition at the -
- Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo, Ont.
- Wood Kilns: Cape Breton invitation from Jane Herold
- NSDCC/NSCADU building of a wood kiln.
- Visiting artists/ workshops.

We look forward to seeing you there and getting to know you a bit better.

Till then, on behalf of Sharon and myself and all the Guild executive, we would like to wish you and your families a wonderful new year. Be healthy, peaceful and prosperous and may your next creations in clay be AMAZING!!!  
Happy New Year!

**-Louise Pentz**

Greetings to all, past, present and new members- we are now 75 members in the Guild. This is an increase that reflects the interest in our workshop and exhibition. The show, *Shaping Space: A celebration of Lantz Clay* at the Mary E. Black Gallery in September and October, brought recognition to many who submitted work to a curated show for the first time, as well as to those who already have had more exposure. The workshop by Randy Brodnax was a tremendous motivational success. Between Randy's sayings and his Texas ways he put on quite a show, enlightening us as to methods of throwing, decorating and firing never seen in these parts before!

Louise and I have to individually credit Judy Gordon and Carol Smeraldo for making these two events come to fruition. Judy worked endlessly on both the projects which even overlapped at one point. Our "Saint Jude" compiled the information for the catalogue and provided transportation for Randy and his friend Glen. Judy and husband, Dwaine, also fed and housed these two motley characters, making their home hospitality central. What fun we had! Thanks also to Carol and Art for making their home available to us, property, studio and Carol's pristine "Randy Brodnax Kiln" for all of us to use. Special thanks to these two outstanding members, and as well,

thanks to everyone who helped out by bringing food, moving wheels, cleaning up etc.

Our other major event was “*Shaping Space*” the Lantz clay show. Ray Mackie worked tirelessly -- using insight and a wealth of knowledge to make the overall theme of the show come together -- Historical to Contemporary. Our Editor, Susan MacAlpine-Foshay and our Graphic Designer, Nancy Roberts, both went above and beyond the expected. As Louise said, “The catalogue professionally documents the members’ work and will be used in the future to promote the NSPG to galleries and other ceramic events outside of the province.” Since the show, Louise has introduced us to the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo, Ontario.

The Guild is in good shape financially. We worked hard to obtain additional funding for the Lantz Clay Exhibit from The Shaw Group, NS Centre for Craft and Design, Atlantic Pottery Supply, and a discount from Halcraft Printers, as well as our grant of \$1,500 from the NS Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. Workshop fees covered most of the expenses for the Randy Brodnax workshop, and Carol and APS contributed their fabulous work spaces and materials at special rates. It was with great satisfaction that after two years of cooperative efforts these events were so well received by our members and by the public.

And now for a call to action: We need a meeting of wood firers to outline a strategy for reconstructing the NSCAD wood kiln. Email [clayworks@eastlink.ca](mailto:clayworks@eastlink.ca) if you are interested in getting involved and we will propose a date to get together. Let’s make this happen!

MJ is our notice/news letter person, so blow your own horn--send us notices of your events and reviews of your accomplishments. Don’t be shy, we want to know.

The Potters’ Guild will continue to schedule artist workshops and develop exhibition proposals if you tell us what you want. Voice your opinions and we will respond.  
Happy New Year!

**- Sharon Fiske**



## **Self Expression**

With the new year now upon us many of us give ourselves new goals and resolutions to start with...then fine a month or so later we’ve fallen back into our old habits. I think sometimes we expect things to happen more quickly than what we give time for. Every change and challenge we put to ourselves takes time and patience. Like in our creativity when we’re creating a new design out of clay, we never achieve it on our first try. We have to go back again and again until it looks and feels and carries our true expression of who we are. Imagine yourself like a pot that can be shaped and molded on the wheel. The wheel is life. It can go fast or it can go slow. You have the knowledge to create and shape your life like that pot. All you need is patience and always remember

*“Slow and Steady wins the race”.*

Happy New Year!

Communication Director and Editor.

**-Mary Jane Lundy**



## Joan Bruneau Teaching Adventures and more:

I was invited to teach and demonstrate advanced wheel-throwing and altering techniques through the Distance Diploma Program at the Glasgow School of Art in Scotland last spring and also at the Distance Diploma programs at Red Deer College in Alberta and the Australia National University in Canberra in 2007. Bill Brown, a master mold maker, is the department head of ceramics at Glasgow School of Art and while the department has a throwing room, slip casting appears to be the main focus for students. Unfortunately, the ceramics program at the Glasgow School of Art is slated to close within the next two years. The ceramics programs in Dundee and Edinburgh have since closed as well.

After teaching in Glasgow, I spent a week in Istanbul visiting the many mosques clad with stunning Iznik tiles as well as other famous sites like the Hagia Sophia and Mosaic and Islamic Museums and Turkish baths. I highly recommend visiting this city for its many historic sites, and rich cross cultural influences from Roman to Byzantine to the Ottoman Empire.

In July I taught a summer workshop at Peters Valley Craft Center in New Jersey. Peters Valley is one of several Craft Centers in the US that like Haystack, offer workshops in all craft disciplines.

What I loved about being there besides the physical beauty of the area (rural, lush parkland in the Delaware Water Gap) was meeting artists working in other disciplines and visiting the other studios. For instance there was an amazing young metal-smith/sculptor, Evelyn Beer teaching Blacksmithing and a 7th generation Navaho Weaver teaching a fibre workshop.

Fusion, the Ceramics and Glass association of Ontario hosts an annual conference in Ontario. I will be presenting a demonstration and lecture along with potter, Sam Chung at this year's conference in Ottawa from May 28-30. The Fusion website as well as Fusion magazine will have information on the Conference.

[www.clayandglass.on.ca](http://www.clayandglass.on.ca)

**- Joan Bruneau**



### **Congratulations Joan!**

Lunenburg Ceramic Artist, Joan Bruneau, was awarded the 2009 Established Artist Recognition Award (\$5000) from the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Alliance on Saturday, October 24 at the Creative Nova Scotia Gala in Yarmouth.

Over the past fifteen years Joan has developed both a national and international profile as an inspiring teacher and innovative studio potter while maintaining her full-time studio, Nova Terra Cotta in Lunenburg and regular part-time ceramics faculty position at NSCAD University.

Joan has maintained a regular exhibition record in public and private galleries across Canada and the U.S. Her work has been featured in ceramics books and periodicals and is in the permanent collection of The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Sykes Gallery in Pennsylvania and Jingdezhen Ceramics Institute in China.

### **Congratulations Louise!**



Louise Pentz has an exhibition at:  
Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery,  
Waterloo, Ontario  
January 17th-March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

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people, to be able to enjoy using them every day. There will be some hum-dinger pieces that make a grand statement on someone's coffee table, and wedding platters and baby plates, but I hope most of my pots will end up on kitchen shelves, and an integral part of someone's daily routine. Nothing makes me happier than hearing from someone who drinks their tea, or eats their cereal, every day, from one of my mugs or bowls.

If you're in the area, please stop by this coming summer 2010 and say hello, and if you'd like to be part of the first firing, in August, send me your name and I'll let you know what we get organized. You can see my work and writings at my website: [www.janeherold.com](http://www.janeherold.com)

**- Jane Herold**

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## Randy's Bonanza Workshop



**Photos by Suzi Cameron**

For a great end-of-summer get together, about 20 members of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild gathered for the *Throwing/Firing Bonanza* with Randy Brodnax [www.iflyfish.com](http://www.iflyfish.com) from Dallas, Texas. This enthusiastic big white-haired guy with Louisiana roots is a life-long potter and educator with a gift. He entertained and involved every one of us in this valuable learning experience. An uncertain weather forecast prompted a change to the schedule, so on Friday and Saturday we glazed, decorated and fired at Carol Smeraldo's lakeside studio in East Preston. Then on Sunday, we descended on the studio at Atlantic Pottery

Supplies for a daylong elbow-to-elbow throwing session.

On the first day, bright and early, we arrived with bisqued pots, tongs, glazes, stains, brushes etc. for one of the most hands on workshops I've ever had the opportunity to attend. Like Judy said, "Randy is like Santa—" on this occasion in a ball cap. He inspired the spirit of exploration, and had a gift for seeing what each of us could use to help us move forward. His good humour, enthusiasm and laidback spirit were infectious. Randy's generosity was equalled by that of Carol and Art who welcomed us to their beautiful property and into their home and studio.

We were all inspired and excited by the new information we received and by the variety of surface effects achieved. For the raku firings, White Crackle or Lo Temp commercial glazes were applied, the kiln stacked, heated until the glazes flowed (visible through the spy hole, about 1750 degrees Fahrenheit), and then the real magic began. Hot pots were lifted from Carol's front-loading kiln, sprayed with a dilute solution of Ferric Chloride (1/2oz +7oz water in a Preval sprayer), producing rich and immediately visible lustrous surfaces. Then, with a wrap in two sheets of news print paper and a damp towel the pots were allowed to reduce in their individual smoking chambers. I so love my golden pots!

A completely different process was the tumble stack sagger firing. Pots were decorated with Ferric Chloride at full strength for pink to red colours, and horsehair, baking soda and rock salt were used for pattern and resist. Each piece was wrapped securely in two layers of tin foil to create individual saggars. All of the ware was piled in and the kiln heated quickly. Temperature was reached when the foil looked like tissue (about 1100 degrees F) and the kiln cooled overnight. Then the pots were cleaned and sprayed with Polyurethane Gloss to seal the inside.

Saturday was more raku and a demo of the Copper Matt Reduction process. The firing portion of this workshop ended with a cone 6-oxidation firing—Lichen Glaze over Alberta Slip Glaze and a light spray of warm coloured stains—that produced great colours and pretty amazing crawly glaze surfaces. While the kiln heated the cooks got busy. After the firing we feasted on a Cajun Cook-up of Chicken Gumbo and Dirty Rice. As well, we were treated to an impromptu drawing





