

Saturday 8th March Raku Firing - Details on page 7 Saturday 29th Mar Pit Firing - Details on page 8

Look Out for...

Te Haunui Anagama Firing – 14 – 18 May **Talk by Adrian Orr – Industrial Ceramics Designer –** Wed 26th March "Establing Etabling" Coorse Andrews Workshop – hunge

"Fetching Etching" - George Andrews Workshop - June

If you wish to receive the Draft WPA Potter's Diary in pdf form by email each month prior to the Newsletter distribution please send your email address to the editor.

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The Next Newsletter:

....and we're back into it for 2008. So who has some stuff for me? If you have anything you would like to share with the club, then please send me whatever it is (as long as it is in text or image form) by the 25th of February for inclusion in the next edition of the WPA Newsletter.

Please send your articles, pictures, thoughts and ideas to; Hamish Trolove: Post:

Cover Photo: A selection of Anagama fired works (December 2007)

Photo: Hamish Trolove

WPA Evening Class Programme

All classes run 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Monday Evenings – Newlands College

Basics to Intermediate. 8 Week courses; Next course starts 18th February *Tutor: Ivan Vostinar* Enrol directly through Newlands College **Tel:**

Tuesday Evenings – Onslow College

Basics to Intermediate. 16 Week courses; Next course starts 19th February *Tutor: Ivan Vostinar* Enrol directly through Onslow College **Tel:**

Newlands and Onslow course costs include materials, glazing and firing.

Thursday WPA Classes – WPA Rooms

Throwing and handbuilding for beginners and beyond. 6 week courses run continuously; \$90 per course plus materials and firing costs. *Tutor: Rosemary O'Hara* Enrol through Rosemary O'Hara **Tel:**

Saturday WPA Classes – WPA Rooms 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Throwing and handbuilding for beginners and beyond. 6 week courses run continuously; \$90 per course plus materials and firing costs. *Tutor: Rosemary O'Hara* Enrol through Rosemary O'Hara **Tel:**

(**Special Note to members:** The Saturday classes will only need one table and a maximum of 8 wheels. Members are welcome to use the rooms at the same time as this class is on.)

Classes Co-ordinator – Jenny Shearer: email: Tel:

Welcome to 2008!

Happy New Year everyone. 2008 promises to be a year of great activities to be involved in with a line up of workshops, talks, different types of firings, club social get togethers, and gallery crawls.

So we look forward to seeing you out there taking part in all that the WPA has to offer.

Hamish



The Great Room Reconfiguration

Important Notice – Remove all belongings from the WPA from 15th Feb to the 25th Feb.

Due to the upcoming rearrangement of the rooms on the 16th on February it is essential that all members remove all their clay, work and tools from cubby holes, shelves, drying cabinets and glaze room. All your equipment can then be returned after the Feb 23rd working bee.

This will greatly assist the reorganization and clean up. If your work and equipment is not removed we cannot guarantee the safety of your work and/or tools.

We still require more volunteers for the rearrangement working bee in the 16th of Feb, it will be a great opportunity for you to have input into the organization of the rooms. Contact Ivan during the week.

Thank you and see you soon

Ivan



Thursday Gallery Crawls

Date: 1st Thursday of each month (starting March) **When:** 1:30pm

Where: Meet at WPA carpark

Starting on Thursday 6 March I'll be organising a monthly 'gallery crawl' to check out the latest exhibitions in town. We'll meet at the WPA carpark so we can car pool to save on parking costs and probably spend 1 1/2 to 2 hours exploring the galleries. If you've any favourite galleries, or would like more information please email me at

Hope to see you there, Cate (and Brya - who does the real 'Gallery crawl')

Hannibal Hornblower's Helpful Hints



No 28

Now before you go and get all excited, this is the Captain writing so don't go expecting the usual drivel that lunk-headed, bird brained, easily distracted excuse for a sailor usually puts out. I wouldn't even be doing this if it wasn't to settle a foolish bet I made when I was off me guard and three sheets to the wind after trying some of

Hannibal's health restoring SLIGHTLY fermented fruit punch. That man will be the reason I walk the plank voluntarily into shark infested waters with both wrist slashed.

But enough of my problems, a promise is a promise. The reason I am writing is that just before Christmas Hannibal received an e-mail forwarded from the editor from some halfwit who had heard from a bloke down the road who knew a chap that had contacts in Northern China that was reasonably, certain that this potter named Zhing Know Ho had discovered a recipe to make Dragon Glaze.

Need I say more, that far away look settled on his weather beaten fizog and he became so distracted that he was a menace to all within 100 nautical miles. He then proceeded to badger, me day and night about going in search of this recipe until I could stand it no longer and agreed to drop him off in Macau for one month to begin his pie in the sky search. The man will not listen to reason, grrrrrrrr!

Anyway I am supposed to give you three potting tips and since I know nothing about clay, I have decided to give my own tips.

- Never become the Captain of a small cargo vessel.
- Never try to trim matted hair from around a female cats tail without a full suit of Armour and plenty of health insurance.
- Never pick up a pot fresh from the kiln to admire it without A) heat resistant gloves, or B) check with the potter first as to whether the pot is slightly cooler than the surface of the Sun.

There I have fulfilled my promise and now I can go and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of a Hannibal free ship, mind you it is eerily quite.

The Captain Mario Celeste 123E 023N

Committee Member Profiles

Continuing on from our October issue where we started running a series of indepth and thoroughly revealing profiles on the various members of the committee, we have been lucky enough to finally catch up with Roger Pearce and convince him to write his profile without brow beating him too much.

Roger Pearce

Once Upon a Time, long, long ago I spied a beautiful young woman* sitting at a Potters Wheel spinning magic from a piece of wet clay. Oh, how my fingers itched to have a go but, being naturally shy, I hesitated to ask her to let me try. Instead, I took myself off to night school where another beautiful lady called Vera was teaching ham-fisted yokels like me how to become master potters. I took so long to learn that it was gently suggested I should leave the class (to free up the wheels for others) and join WPA where very talented and tolerant folk could maybe help me. And so it came to pass that they did. Evening classes of valiant beginners tutored by the



redoubtable Gwynne Williams on 6 electric wheels squeezed into the basement of 130 Grant Road together with glazes, the library and two old kilns. And I managed to throw a pretty mean pot even though I say so myself. That was around the second half of the last century and I am still trying to master the art and craft.

There is so much to learn, so many techniques and I confess I am not yet sure which I like best: the satisfaction of throwing a good pot (when it happens - very occasionally), coiling a bigger pot (than I could throw) or building with slab. Glazing gets me going, especially when I find something really interesting in a glaze book or experiment with local materials. I am particularly interested in making glazes out of Papa rock from the central North Island.

When working I like to have music in the background: Abba, Beetles, Blues, Beethoven, Mozart, Sibelius, etc. Coffee should always be enjoyed in a favourite mug; mine is a wood-fired mug by Paul Melser.

My current role at WPA is to help Ivan, our President and Rooms Manager by getting the towels laundered and the toilet rolls topped up.

*my daughter Helen

Roger Pearce

Editor's Apology.

In the November 2007 edition of the newsletter I wrote an Editorial that started with a note explaining that Roger was unable to write the President's Pages due to him being busy cleaning up the house for the AGM. Jan has pointed out to me in no uncertain terms that Roger wouldn't know one end of a vacuum cleaner from another and that I should get my facts right before making such spurious and misleading statements.

I therefore apologise for any false impressions about Roger that my statements may have given readers and undertake to find out the truth before making up excuses for other people. *Hamish Trolove*

Coming Events

"Fetching Etching" - George Andrews Workshop

Saturday 14 – Sunday 15 June 2008

(Note: Date for this has changed from what was circulated in the Potter's Diary Email edition)

We are lucky to have George Andrews running a workshop again in 2008. This time the process will involve image transfer to clay and etching to turn the image into a relief.

More details to come.



Raku Firing

Raku Firing Master, Mike Atkins will be conducting another raku session at the clubrooms. Bring your pots to give them that magic touch of fire. Feel free to pitch in and give a hand. Raku glazes will be made available.

Saturday 8th of March 9:30 to 4:00pm All Welcome

BYO Lunch

\$10 per person



Pit Firing

Saturday 29th March Subject to Weather.

Bring along one or two pots for firing. Pots need to be bisqued (burnishing can help bring out the best in a pit firing). The preferred clays are Abbotts White or Red, and stoneware clays. Paper clay and porcelain are not suitable for pit firing.
We will be building and loading the kiln at 10:00am. Finished pieces will be unloaded late in the afternoon. A more accurate time will be decided on the day.



Cost of \$5 for each person to cover material and firing costs. There may be a small extra charge for larger pieces.

Francesca's pitfired pots from Ceramicus07. Photo: Hamish Trolove

Bring something for a shared lunch.

All members and families welcome.

For further information phone Francesca.



Ikebana pots

The Wellington Ikebana Club has invited WPA members to make some pots for a display of Ikebana flower arrangements to be held in September, quite possibly in conjunction with our own exhibition. The pots can be for sale and will of course be of interest to the Ikebana members. All sorts of containers are suitable: vases, jugs and flat dishes, usually in a plain 'natural' style with no decoration. Wood fired pieces are especially appropriate.

A poster showing a dozen different styles of Ikebana is on display at the rooms.









NZP report – November 2007

It seems like years since Christmas. Lots of things happening.

NZP memberships are now due. If you're not a member, it's a good time to join. Forms can be downloaded from the website, or I can send you one.

Also time to decide to go to the *Canta Clay* convention, in Christchurch, 28-30 March. Again, all the info is on line. There is a discount if you register before 5th Feb. Canta Clay includes the National Exhibition, receiving is 28th March. The AGM will also be held then. Nominations are called for President, Vice President, and your local RCM. Give it a thought.

Closer to home, the regional NZP exhibition, *Elements 09*, will be held at Pataka, 26th March - 27th April. Receiving at the Woolshed Potters, Okowai Rd, Porirua on the 18th March between 10-4pm (note there will be no one there outside those hours, so if you can't make that time, get in touch with me for other arrangement.) If you have not received an entry form, call me. The opening of the exhibition will be on Wed 26th March, from 3-5pm. All welcome.

The latest Claynews includes a survey. Please fill it in so that the council gets feedback. Spare copies will be available at the rooms, it would be good if even non-members filled these in. But if you're not an NZP member, why aren't you??

www.nzpotters.com

Must get on with making those pots!

Aimée McLeod, Wellington RCM

The Big Cleanup Day

Saturday, 23rd Feb: 9:00am to 3:00pm

It's that time again. The WPA clubrooms are in need of a bit of TLC. We require help with a number of jobs including.

- Clean the kiln/glaze room
- Empty the sludge buckets
- Dump junk from the storeroom and around the place
- Weeding and planting
- Fix up the entrance roof and ceiling
- Patch the roof



Ancient Egyptian Potters clean up their club rooms.

To opt for jobs or just be involved, please contact Ivan. All offers of help are greatly appreciated.

BBQ to follow!

Glass in the Kiln

In October last year I attended the Wellington High School Adult Community Education class "Glass in the Kiln", run by Mike Atkins. I had so much fun I've signed up for the next class in March! Mike teaches the basic techniques of moulding and casting to make a kiln-fired glass object; the classes run for 3 Sundays, with a fourth session of a couple of hours to pick up the final work.

The glass used is a special coloured glass from Gaffer Glass in Auckland (the same firm who provide glass and firing for Ann Robinson); a wonderful range of vivid colours and effects to choose, from opaque white and black, to transparent colours that change colour in sunlight.

The first session involved carving out plaster moulds, and I thoroughly enjoyed this part, as I've made quite a few moulds in the past and can successfully "think backwards". Mike was very patient with those who had difficulty with the concept, though, and everyone got there in the end!



Class work from the first session, produced from the plaster moulds

Also at the first session we carved ready-prepared clay tiles, so that the carved recesses could be filled with glass; the tiles were all dried and fired during the week, so that at the second session we could glaze the tiles, and then fill the recesses with the glass colour of our choice.



At left is the bisque-fired and glazed tile with recesses filled with glass ready to be fired in the kiln; at right, the finished tile (a dark green glaze on the body of the tile, and pale blue and green glass in the dragonfly body, wings and sky). The glass has "flashed" the glaze so that it has a lighter ring where it is next to the glass. At the second session we made models out of wax then poured plaster over them to create moulds. At the third session, Mike demonstrated how to steam the wax out of the mould, and then estimate how much glass would be needed by pouring water into the resulting hole in the plaster mould.



At right is a picture of just some of the class work produced in the third class (glass in moulds and in pre-fired tiles), waiting to be fired. Everyone was very impressed by how many glass pieces we came away with; work was produced at all 3 sessions, with results ready to take away at the second, third and fourth sessions, and we all had pieces that we were very impressed with.



Below just some of my pieces produced from carved moulds; geckos, shells, fish, and curled-up cats.



I can't wait until the next class!

Elaine Marland

Photos: Elaine Marland

How to Develop a Professional Looking Potter's Nod.

Practical lessons for better pottery.

You will all have seen a professional potter at work and admired the dedication to their craft and their attention to detail. The intensity of their attention to detail is strongest while they are refining the shape of their pot on the wheel. And they watch it...intensely.....as it goes around,.... and around,.....and around. And there it is, the essence of the Potter's Nod. You've all seen it at the convention, at workshops, even at WPA BBQs practiced by the more established professional members of the WPA while they stir their coffee, or eat their dinner.

A word of warning, a potter's nod will obviously not apply to slabbers, pinchers, and moulders, and the motley bunch of other types of clay workers. We advise against using any form of potter's nod while working on a slab roller, press moulding a form, or just pinching up a bowl, as it looks terribly daft and your credibility as a serious potter will be sunk forever. If you are caught using a potter's nod while doing handbuilding, we would suggest that pottery is not for you and you should take up embroidery or something safer where eccentricities are less noticeable.

So...if you want to look professional in your pottery (wheel work only¹) even if you have just started, it is essential to develop a good and extravagant potter's nod as early in your career as possible. A potter's nod is quite easy to develop, but initially will take some training. There are two critical components of a potter's nod; motion, and timing. Expressions and face pulling are optional embellishments to your potter's nod, but if overdone can detract from the professional look and end up just making you look a bit mad.

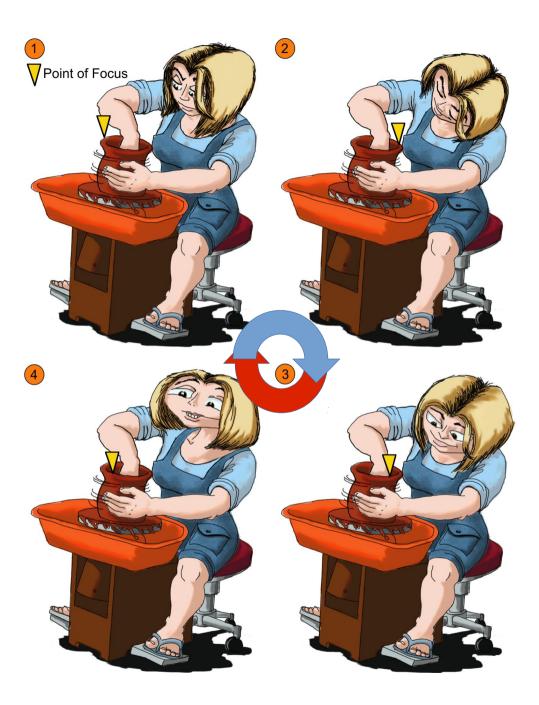
<u>Motion</u>

The images on the facing page show the basic motion. It is a rotary motion that follows the rotation of the wheel.

In the early stages, to help with developing timing and correct motion, attach a peg or some such obvious object to the rim of your pot. Watch this intensely as it goes around, using movement of your head to follow its motion rather than just your eyes. Do not break your concentration. To really impress people and demonstrate your mastery of the technique, talk in depth on a completely unrelated topic while watching the edge of your pot go around.

To develop you potter's nod, lean over to one side with your head on its side so that you are looking across the top of your pot. Now watch the peg or some detail on the side of the pot as it goes around. Once you have the basic motion sorted out, exaggerate it. If nobody can discern your potter's nod from your normal nervous tics and quirks you are not exaggerating enough. Remember big and bold.

¹ Obviously not handbuilding for the reasons already stated, and the fact that only serious potters use a wheel.



<u>Timing</u>

Good timing is the difference between looking good, and looking like a fake. Your potter's nod must match the rotation of the wheel. Any faster and people will know you're just putting it on. Any slower and people will think you're a retard or just nodding off to sleep at the wheel.

Warning: Serious injury can result from trying your potter's nod while centering or initial shaping of your pot. The wheel is turning much too quickly to attempt a potter's nod. The potter's nod should only be used while refining the shape and detailing when the wheel is turning at no more than one revolution per second.

Stretches

Make sure you warm up before your start any pottery session where you think using your potter's nod is a possibility. The exercises to loosen up the neck are very simple.



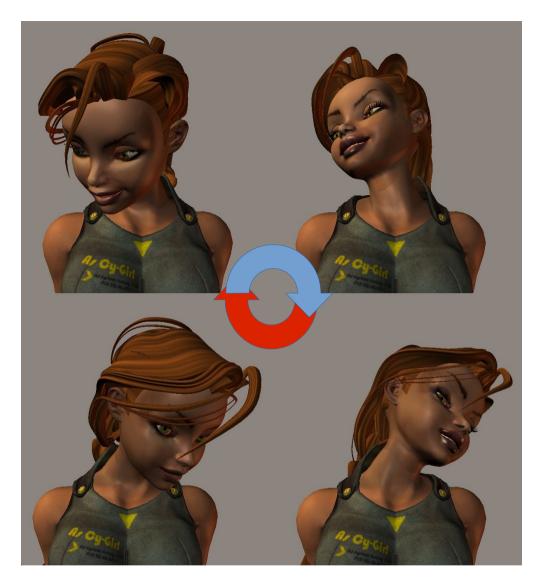
First, start your stretching routine with some gentle stretches. Look to your right first, feeling that stretch. Hold for a couple of seconds and turn your head to your left. Repeat this slowly five times.



Just lay your head to the right for five seconds, then to the left for five seconds. Repeat this three or four times.



Now let your head drop forward to stretch the back of your neck, hold that for five seconds, then roll your head back so that you are looking at the ceiling. Observe the cobwebs on the lightshades for five seconds. Repeat this three or four times.



Finally roll your head around in a big circle clockwise then anticlockwise slowly while counting to ten.

Now your head and neck should be supple and strong enough to feel comfortable with even the most rigorous session of potting.

Have fun.

Hamish Trolove

Te Haunui Anagama: Wicket Away



In my previous article, written after the third firing but before the kiln was opened. I observed that it was a bit like a sports journalist writing an article about a sports event and submitting it for publication before the outcome of the event was known. However, I avoided making any predictions about the success or otherwise of the firing. I needn't have had any concerns. With the removal of the wicket (door) all was revealed. The firing produced some outstanding results, importantly throughout the length of the kiln. Our pleasure in what we saw as we unloaded the kiln in advance of a BBQ to celebrate the opening and acknowledge the huge contributions to the club made by Roger Pearce. Mal Sole and Val Schultz was confirmed by the obvious delight of those who attended the function.

The other noteworthy feature of the firing was fuel economy. Substantially less wood was used than in each of the previous two firings.

As you know two major technical changes were made to the kiln for this firing: the "sutema" wall was modified and a new firebox was built by lowering the floor of the existing firebox creating a pit in which a latticework of bricks was installed to allow the entry of air to encourage the fire and create a draught. These changes and other factors ensured that the kiln performed very efficiently, so efficiently, in fact, that it had to be restrained as the temperature began to rise too rapidly.

Little use was made of the chimney dampers. Also very early in the piece the firebox air vents were closed to dampen the all too efficient suction. What conclusions can one draw about the importance of factors contributing to the kiln's efficient performance, namely the:

- Condition of the pine firewood.
- Modified "sutema" wall.
- Stacking (a mixture of tight and loose).
- Stoking regime.
- New firebox.
- Weather.

Of these six factors, the new firebox and the weather were probably of least importance. To restrain the kiln the firebox's air vents were actually sealed for most of

the firing. However, we intend to retain this type of firebox for the next firing. The weather, fine and as I recall generally still, probably played little part in the success of the firing. Wind, of course, does have an effect on the draught, so the absence of fluctuating wind was advantageous. The absence of rain, too, might be seen as advantageous but, interestingly, Shoji Hamada apparently always tried to fire in the rain. There is much more to learn about firing this kiln.

A well-attended debriefing session was held on 18 December 2007, while memories were still fresh. Some of the points arising from the debriefing are:

- Graeme and June Houston, and Andy Hope were thanked by acclamation for their major contributions to the success of the firing.
- Given the success of the third firing and quantity of un-used firewood, another firing should be held in April or May.
- Margery Smith's shino glaze worked well.
- It was suggested a "book" of suitable glaze recipes be created and glaze tests be done in the next and subsequent firings.
- Wellington Potters Supplies has ordered a quantity of an Australian wood firing clay that achieved good results in the firing.
- On a cautionary note, avoid driving if possible if very tired after a firing shift.
- A display of photographs and pots (if people are prepared to loan them) from the firing be mounted in the rooms.

In response to popular demand the next firing will be held in May. The firing master will be Andy Hope. The timetable is as follows:

- Receiving pots at the rooms: Sunday 4 May.
- Transporting pots to kiln: Monday 5 May.
- Loading kiln: Thursday 8 Saturday 10 May.
- Firing: Wednesday 14 -- Sunday 18 May.
- Cooling: Sunday 18 Friday 23 May.
- Unloading: Saturday 24 May.

Volunteers to participate on firing shifts and other preparatory work will be sought nearer the event. The cutting of additional firewood is already underway.

Alan Ross



Te Haunui Anagama standing ready for it's next firing. Photo Alan Ross.

Wellington Potters' Association Newsletter February 2008

WPA Library Reviews

JOURNALS RECEIVED, Jan 2008 -

selected contents.

These journals are presently reference only in the Library, and can be borrowed when the next issue arrives.



Ceramics Monthly, volume 55 no.9, November 2007

- Seven artists who work and think big share their approaches to clay on an architectural scale; Jason Green, Fred Spaulding, Ian Dowling, Berry Matthews, Ole Lislerud, Clare Twomey and Bruce Breckenridge.
- Brick as Metaphor; using bricks for architectural sculpture
- Katey Schultz
- Junya Shao: Blending traditional Yizing training with contemporary western influences.

Ceramics: Art and Perception, no.170, December 2007 – February 2008

- Duckworth & Eastman in Heidelberg
- Ann Roberts: Ceramic Sculpture
- Michael Geertson: White-Glazed Earthenware with Decals and Metallic Decoration
- Madeleine Child & Philip Jarvis, by Moira White (NZ)
- Marie Strauss: Handbuilt Stoneware with Slips & Glazes (NZ)
- Japanese & Western Mingei
- Islamic Ceramics of the Middle Ages
- Maryann Webster: Basins showing Nature using Ceramic Glazes and Glass
- Edmund De Waal 2007 Exhibition

The Log Book, no.32, 2007

- The Beauty of the Beast: a hybrid Olsen fast-fire with power and flexibility
- Anagama in Lithuania

Pottery Making Illustrated, volume 10 no.6, November/December 2007

- Borrowing Tools from Cooking and Sewing
- Using Roulettes to Roll on Texture Helps Dress up a Ceramic Box
- Glaze Room Starter Kit
- Making Music: Whistles, Flutes and Ocarinas

Elaine Marland, Librarian, 22 January 2008

WebWorx



Elaine has brought to our attention a website that has great browsing potential. The website is;

www.matapihi.org.nz

Here you will find a vast collection of items from the various museums around new Zealand. A search on "pottery" will result in 99 items coming up, all with something to do with pottery, be it a photo of someone of significance with a piece of pottery, or items of pottery from the collections. You will also find familiar images from some of the old potter's magazines together with relevant information about the images.



Ostrich (Barry Brickell) -Photo Steve Rumsey

The image presented here is from the TePapa Collection, and features Barry Brickell carrying out an emergency cutting-a-hole-in-the-base operation on one of his pots prior to firing.

The photographer was Steve Rumsey, and was taken in 1971.

Through the <u>www.matapihi.org.nz</u> website these images can be ordered, and good prints obtained. The website presentations have an image viewer that allow you to view the images in high detail by zooming in.

Hamish Trolove

Editor's Notes:

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition of the WPA Newsletter. If you feel that you would like to contribute to the Newsletter we are always keen for new writers and original material. If you go and see something art related that you would like to send a short review for then please feel free to pick up whatever media suits your fancy and send us a copy. Also if you know someone who may be able to be bullied into writing something – by all means, please bully them as much as possible so that they get off their butts and send me stuff. I always like to receive material for the Newsletter no matter how much coercion, blackmail, and anxiety has been involved in its creation.

Finally, several of these articles are designed to provoke outrage and indignation. If you feel outraged and indignant after reading some of the content, please feel free to write in. Several pages of outrage and indignation would be ideal.

Tah

Hamish

Who's Who in the WPA

President	Ivan Vostinar	
Secretary	Alan Ross	
Treasurer	Robyn Connolly	
Kilns	Richard Stratton	
Unloading Kilns	Robyn Connolly	
Glazes		Volunteer Required
Newsletter Editor	Hamish Trolove	
Librarian	Elaine Marland	
Raku Matters	Mike Atkins	
Buying Clay		Volunteer Required
Borrowing Plinths		Volunteer Required
NZP Delegate	Aimée McLeod	

Email address for the WPA-

As a club we try to keep our fees down while still covering costs. If for financial reasons you feel excluded, please contact the President, (Ivan Vostinar), or the Treasurer, (Robyn Connolly).

