



## West Street Potters Spring 2026 Newsletter

Dear All,

I hope that you have all had a restful Easter and are looking forward to the start of term next week. In the meantime, a roundup of news from the Spring term.

### Workshop News:

Over the past 12 weeks the workshop team have .....

Fired the **electric kilns 24 times** with a mixture of bisque, earthenware, 1220 and 1260.

The **gas kiln** has been fired **5 times** with fantastic results in reduction. We have noticed an increase in member's experimentation with the reduction glazes and have loved seeing the results.

Unfortunately, Stewart has been out of action the last few weeks due to coils needing to be replaced.

Thankfully, the Board have recently agreed to replace the Stewart kiln with a new Rohde which the workshop is thrilled about. The capacity will be larger allowing for faster firing times for members.

The legend that is Myra McDonnell (Monday tutor) has been imparting her expansive knowledge of glazes to the workshop managers. We have been learning essential knowledge about the WSP glazes spanning from earthenware up to 1260 and will be testing some new glazes in the summer term. These will be lower firing 1220 glazes, concentrating on our eco credentials and we have been specifically developing new colourways that are missing in the lower firing range. These will include a khaki green, rose pink and a vibrant light blue. We look forward to hearing your feedback.

The workshop team are always so inspired by the quality and variety of work at WSP. Unpacking the kilns is always the favourite and most rewarding part of our job. As seen in the cabinet, members have been encouraged to share their glaze combinations with other pottery members and we hope this continues, as we love seeing the results of our valued glazes.

One last note, our wonderful technician Libby is off on her exciting adventure to Japan to undertake a portion of her university course. We are sad to see her go but are looking forward to some amazing stories and bountiful knowledge on her return. (Update from Natty).

### Admin:

Thanks to all who have re-enrolled for the summer term. I know some of you cannot make all your sessions and look for others to stand in. Please do make sure that you run this past me as we need to make sure that anyone who is in the pottery, attending a class, is on a class register in the fire safety folder – this is a legal requirement.

### Available Spaces:

We do have some spaces available, so do let your friends know and spread the word. Available spaces are:

**Sculpture - Wednesday PM - 13.30 - 16.30 – 3 spaces with Nikki Hoffman**

**Pottery - Wednesday EVE - 18.00 - 21.00 – 1 space with Karen Bardell**

**Pottery - Thursday AM - 10.00 - 13.00 – 1 space with Kathy Mason**

### Important dates for your diary:

#### Summer Term:

Monday 13th April – Friday 22nd May (Mon 4th May bank holiday/ classes to be rearranged)  
*1/2 term Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May*

Monday 1st June – Friday 10th July

All other term dates can be found at [Term Dates - West Street Potters](#)



**AGM:** We had a good turn out at our November AGM with great presentations by Michael Hartz and Kirsty Giles, our recent Ann Watson Award winners. Our AGM this year will take place on **Friday 27th November at 17.00** and we hope to have another award winner to share their knowledge with us.

**Ann Watson Award** – This annual award is in honour of Ann Watson, a founder member of the WSP Board who served until 2022. It typically allows a member of WSP to participate in a piece of external ceramics training such as a workshop or course to the value of £500. We encourage all members to apply, wherever they may be in their ceramics' journey – the application form is attached and you can apply up until Tuesday 5th May. The recipient of the award is asked to share what they have learnt with other members at the AGM in November with a short presentation and a small display of work in the glass cabinet.

If you have any questions, please drop me a line. In the meantime, we look forward to receiving your applications – Good luck!

**Workshops:**

We ran a very successful workshop with Ruth Gibson earlier this term alerted by a WSP member who attended her screen printing on clay with Southern Ceramics. Working in porcelain, Ruth combines a love of photography, printmaking and ceramics, to evoke a sense of place, in particular the Shropshire landscape and the Welsh coast and mountains.



Ruth demonstrated screen printing onto clay, including mixing screenprint medium with underglaze. She then formed this into a bowl using a hump mould and built-up textured layers on the back. In the afternoon, we all had a go, using screens that Ruth had brought with her

with her iconic photos of thistles and birds. Ruth was kindly assisted by Julia Quigley as the rest of us grappled with the size of the screens, slabs of porcelain, underglaze and squeegees!! It was a fun day with some great results!





**Julia Quigley** ran another 'Handle Hell or Handle Heaven' workshop in March. Members brought along their clay and experienced familiar and unexpected ways of making handles. Julia showed them the range of possibilities other than pulling clay. They were able to try out rolling, cutting and slicing, as well as conventional handle pulling, hopefully leaving, feeling more confident about taking the plunge.



**What have you been up to in your classes?**

Lots of exciting things going on in our classes this term, here's a peak at some of the highlights:

Christine Bull's Tuesday evening class started the term with a teapot challenge. Some pictures of them at the drying stage and a couple that have already come through glazing. A couple also to be found in the glass cabinet.



Also, lots of colourful and exciting things from the kiln. Kath's sgraffito fish through underglaze and mono-printed sail boats. A sculptural wave and big piggy from Sheila (he only just fitted the kiln!). Some wonderful orange & blue mono-printing from Vanessa and Jane's



wonderful 'Candle Snuffs' in the kiln and down the garden!



Our sculptors have had a great first term of the year with members enjoying portrait sculpting with Katie and a nude pose with Rebecca, plus copying from our casts including a really great copy of the ear from Michaelangelo's David.



Also, some delightful spring animal sculptures and a speed sculpting session of heads.



Next term we will have Katie and Carmen modelling plus a session on slab building figures. (update from Nikki Hoffman)



FROM THE MEMBERS OF WATTS GALLERY ARTISTS' VILLAGE.  
AN EXHIBITION IN RESPONSE TO WOMEN OF INFLUENCE: THE PATTLE SISTERS  
TRICIA HARRISON  
CORSET I



Some of our sculptors, Nikki, Christine and Tricia also took part in an exhibition at Watts Gallery on the seven Pattle sisters

Karen Bardell's classes have produced great work this term, including a tulip vase by Vron, a project that included joining several forms together. A puzzle jug, also by Vron, part of this term's project exploring handles - it works too! Richard's resist leaves and more handles. A gorgeous resist swallow's vase from Shirley, a pot family by Judith and an exploration of glazes and tile making by Michael.



Following Kirsty Giles' inspiring presentation at the November AGM, Kathy Mason's Thursday and Friday classes tried their hand at the slip decoration technique, trying to get their heads around positive and negative space!



## Community:

Julia has ever been busy as a tireless spokesperson for WSP and following our involvement in the innovative workshop with Ruth Gibson, one opportunity lead to another. Over the summer holidays, Post 19 (a charity that offers creative space to those over 19) and WSP are collaborating on a 'Two for One' project funded by the South Street Trust, who generously awarded £793 to WSP to run the project, printing tiles using screens processed by Post 19 and clay provided by WSP. In future Post 19 will be able to process screens for WSP and hopefully include workshops involving clay. A benefit that keeps on giving.

Another idea came about through Farnham Craft Town open weekend, visiting Post 19 and the Kiln Photographic Centre and evolved into making pin hole cameras out of clay tubes that could be recycled. This project centres on the circular economy. Everything used could be reused or recycled. Eileen White, who would run the workshop, uses plant-based developers. The whole sequence - taking photos, developing and printing and how the 'clay cameras' are reused or recycled could be recorded and displayed at the November exhibition. Photos and explanations will be available to explain the exciting possibilities offered.

Another contact through Farnham Craft Town brought May Read, from Woolmer School to visit and discuss a week's work experience in July. Even expecting her to take on Clay recycling, cleaning floors and grinding the kiln stilts didn't put her off! The Technicians are delighted to share all the best jobs! (Update from Julia Quigley).

## Coming up summer term:

We have some exciting things planned for this term:

**6th June:** Porcelain paper clay workshop with **Adele Goulty**

**13th or 20th June:** Adult beginner throwing with **Karen Bardell**

**4th July:** Pin hole camera workshop with **Eileen White**

**Dates tbc:** I am working hard to get some much loved **Raku** in the diary

**Dates tbc: Summer sessions** – following these successful open sessions, we will continue them over the summer so that people can keep up with their work over the long break

## Coming up Autumn term:

Looking forward, so that you can plan your diaries:

**17th October:** Kintsugi Workshop with **Richard Walker** from **Water Gild** (you even get to break some ceramics at the beginning of the workshop – this was enough of a hook for me!)

**TBC 3rd week October:** Farnham Craft Town, Open Studio Weekend – like last year, we hope to have the pottery open to the public with the participation of members

**13th -15th November: WSP Winter Exhibition** in the Fancy Loft, The Farnham Pottery

This is your exhibition and we encourage all members to take part, from beginner to more experienced. I would also like to get a team together to help with the organisation of the exhibition and am looking for anyone who could help with:

- Photography / graphics to create a flyer that we can share on our social media platforms and locally.

- sourcing awards prizes or raffle prizes

- volunteers to distribute flyers

- exhibition weekend volunteers to help set up and take down as well as invigilate

It is a great way to get to know your fellow members at WSP, **so if you would like to get involved (in any way, shape or form I would love to have you on board) or would like to know more, please just drop me a line.**

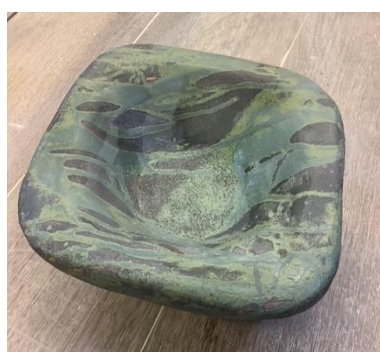
**Feedback:** What would you like to see more of at WSP? Would you like more workshops, mini skill classes? Last June we had a lovely summer evening get together – is this something that you would attend if we organised another? If you have any feedback, do let me or your tutor know so that we can try and make it happen. I will also leave some feedback forms by the Zettle. Any ideas, just jot them down and post in the green letterbox so, I can pick them up.

## Apply now!

I had an email from Love Productions this morning, who produce 'The Great Pottery Throwdown'. They are looking for their next group of brilliant potters for the show. WSP has some amazing potters and sculptors, so maybe your challenge this year would be to apply and who knows win?! Be Brave and go for it! See the poster with details on how to apply.



Some photos of the work that I have seen in the workshop this term, including some cheeky Golems that are wreaking havoc in the glass cabinet!! What is a Golem, I hear you say? It is mythical being crafted from inanimate material—typically clay, earth, or mud—and brought to life through mystical rituals, so watch out, they could be tinkering with your pots and the kilns!! (thanks to Ann Bridges (Friday) for these wonderful beasts!)



Lastly, thank you to our tutors and techs who work hard throughout the term helping get work from lumps of clay through bisque and glaze and thanks to you, for your continued membership and making West Street Potters a great place to be creative.



Have a great rest of holidays and see you next week.  
Elizabeth x