



Pit Fire (This is exactly what it looks like)

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SOUTHERN OREGON POTTERS ASSOCIATION



CLAYFOLK
February 2021
Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE

As the Wheel Turns:

As the past president of Clayfolk, Michael leaves some big shoes to fill. I feel especially grateful for his leadership skills in guiding Clayfolk through challenging times and that he continues on the Board as past president, where we can draw on his experience and expertise. Clayfolk has a solid system for continuity with the vice president moving into the president office, and the past president staying on the Board. We have a willing and experienced Board to navigate whatever this year ends up bringing.

I have been with Clayfolk since the beginning... yes...since the mid 70's when a group of us started gathering for potlucks and sharing our interest and love of clay. I have done many different

jobs in this organization, but never president. This is a new experience for me, if you have questions, suggestions, or comments, I am a phone call or email away. This all-volunteer group depends directly on members to contribute their time, energy, and passion. And I thank everyone who has stepped up to volunteer. Whether you take on a big job or a small one YOU are essential to the success of this organization, which amazingly has been gathering for over 45 years...

This past month the workshop committee under the guidance of Carole Hayne designed a survey to assess member interest. I am very curious what the results will show and the directions the workshop committee will take this year. Also, I can't help to wonder what our show will look like this

year. Will we do a big show or smaller ones? I am sure Michael will have some ideas to share. So, stay tuned...read the newsletter, come to the next Clayfolk Zoom meeting, Sunday March 28th 2:30-4pm, and ask yourself how you can contribute to the remarkable organization that is Clayfolk.

New faces in new places include:

Janice Shenker is joining the Clayfolk Board as a member at large.

Bob Causey, Clayfolk's new Enews Chair is ready and posting!

Viviana Padilla is stepping up to the world of Library Chair 😊

2020 CLAYFOLK OFFICERS

President: Bonnie Morgan

president@clayfolk.org

Vice President: Sally Pursell

vicepresident@clayfolk.org

Secretary: Patricia Richey

secretary@clayfolk.org

Treasurer: Debbie Thompson

treasurer@clayfolk.org

Members at Large

- Kat Hackett

- Jim Nordal

- Janice Shenker

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Archivist: Ben Wood

archivist@clayfolk.org

Empty Bowls

- Jackson Co.: Polly Beach

- Josephine Co.: Bernie Delallo
and Janice Shenker

- Douglas Co.: Peppi Melick

emptybowls@clayfolk.org

Enews: Bob Causey

enews@clayfolk.org

Library: Viviana Padilla

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Newsletter: Michael McKinney

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Points: Patt Causey

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Scholarship: Betsy Moore

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Show Chair: Michael McKinney

showchair@clayfolk.org

Webmaster: Pat Richey

webmaster@clayfolk.org

Workshops: Carole Hayne and Peppi

Melick workshops@clayfolk.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Have you ever mused on the possibility of trying one of the many volunteer positions available in Clayfolk?

If not, maybe scan the list below just to be sure. If so, the following chair or chair trainee positions are open to interested Clayfolk members.

Sales Chair trainee: current chair Debbie Thompson

- *"Order supplies, oversee set-up and tear down sales area. Do a pre-show training of cashiers. Be team captain for a shift, train committee members."*

This is a Show specific position. Some prep work is involved but the position focuses on the Show; no year round tasks. This is a great opportunity for an out-of-town member.

Secretary (or trainee): current chair Pat Richey

- *"Take minutes and keep track of board and general meeting notes. Record attendance at meetings and give points to the Points Chair. Vote on board decisions. Provide meeting notes to webmaster. Be available to give members general information."*

That's it! A template is ready and waiting for you to just fill in with meeting notes. Editor's note: (If I wasn't doing this, I'd be all over it 😊)

For trainee positions and the co-chair position, contact these current members with any questions. To apply, send a note of interest to president@clayfolk.org. Include your "why", relevant skills that will help you be successful in that position and any other helpful details.

Complete job descriptions on the Clayfolk website at:
www.clayfolk.org/membership/position-descriptions/

Southern Oregon Clay Distributors

The pandemic and fires in Southern Oregon have continued to challenge and close many small businesses BUT luckily for all of us who depend on a local supplier Southern Oregon Clay Distributors continues under the steady hand of Felix and Johnathan.

Currently they are open afternoons by appointment Wednesday through Saturday. Orders are also available for curbside pickup. If you are an Amaco glaze user, Felix reports they have all the new ones in stock. They can be reached at 541-535-1311.



Pinhole Dilemma Part 1

by Bob Causey

Few things can shake your confidence like losing an entire kiln load of glazeware! Opening the lid of a freshly cooled kiln, seeing the beautiful colors of the glaze combinations is exciting and rewarding, until a closer look shows just about every piece is covered by pinholes. Reglazing and re-firing only duplicate the disappointment as the pinholes persist. What follows is a look at my investigation into the causes and hopefully a solution to the problem.

We fire using Skutt 1227 programmable and Skutt 818 manual kilns. Our pottery is made using store-bought clay and glazes. If you formulate your own glazes or use a gas-fired kiln and have pinhole issues, you will probably want to do a deep-dive into the literature for solutions. Bob Johnson provided the following resource links that are very helpful if you wish to research further:

- [Pinholing](#)
- [Glaze Pinholes and Pits Problems](#) and
- [Glaze Pinholing Exploration - Glaze Faults](#)

As I write this, we are bisque firing approximately 50, small test bowls. The bowls are made from the clays we normally use so that we can determine if the pinhole problem occurs consistently with all of the clays. The bowls are made from B-Mix, Trial Mix, White Salmon, G-Mix

Ellice T. Johnston Scholarship

Offering \$2000 to students
studying ceramic arts

Application deadline

May 15, 2021

www.clayfolk.org/membership/scholarship



and Speckled Buff. Once bisqued they will be glazed in a variety of glazes that we commonly use.

In researching the causes and solutions to this problem I consulted Christy Runyan, chemist at Georgie's Clay in Portland, read numerous articles online, researched using the Amaco Cone5/6 Exchange Facebook site and spoke with ceramist Camille Hoffman.

(<https://www.cshoffmanceramics.com>) The first things I learned made me feel better but didn't offer any real solutions. First, pinholes are the bane of the ceramics industry. If you haven't lost pottery to this problem yet, you probably will in the future. Next, the problem may have nothing to do with anything that you did. Pinholes could be caused by changes in the raw materials mined for glazes and clays. As Ms. Runyan explained, manufacturers often substitute materials as their resources run low. Therefore, the bowl made from the same type of clay one week may perform differently when recreated the next week.

In trying to solve the pinhole problem with Georgie's G-Mix and Northern Lights glaze, Ms. Lombard first suggested that I could be applying the glaze too heavily. To eliminate this possibility, I purposely dipped a bowl into Northern Lights glaze for a split second. The result was a very thin, translucent glaze with... you guessed it, pinholes. Since then, I've learned that glaze applied too thinly can also cause pinholes. It

seems like the more you learn, the less you know!

Next, she suggested changing the way we bisque fire. She believed that the organic material within the clay was not burning off completely and was instead being released during the glaze fire creating the pinhole "volcanoes". She suggested the following bisque program for a programmable kiln:

Three-Segment Bisque Firing Program

- #1 30° per hour to 200°, hold 2 to 6 hours
- #2 75° per hour to 1,000°, no hold
- #3 150° per hour to 1945°, no hold

Manual Kiln Bisque Firing

Fire on low for four hours, then medium for four hours before turning to high.

Surprisingly, after glazing, pinholes persisted even though we used the new firing program. In further research I checked out the Amaco Cone 5/6 Exchange Facebook site. There is a lengthy discussion of the issue and the following advice posted by Ms. Camille Hoffman regarding her solution to the pinhole problem.

Directions for ZERO pinholes

1. Wash your bisque really well of all dust.
2. I wear gloves when glazing, save my hands from the dryness AND so that no hand oils get on my piece.
3. GLAZE APPLICATION: When you apply your glazes, be discrete on how "thick" you get going. Water down your brush a bit between the strokes and limit your application to a good 2-3 coats, depending on the glaze. Super thick will cause pinholes, as the glaze will not heal and stay in the bubble.
4. Follow the kiln schedule I am posting.
5. I turn on my Envirovent as soon as I turn on my kiln.
6. IMPORTANT: I turn OFF my vent when the kiln is coming down into the cooling ramp mode, so, that means at 1900°F, I SHUT OFF the vent!!!! Let it cool S L O W L Y.

7. I then, let the kiln cool down on its own. This will take a good 24 hrs. BE PATIENT!!!!
8. I turn on the vent again at around 300°F to help a little bit of cooling. Wait for it to drop another 25°F degrees. Then shut it off again and leave it off.
9. I open all my peeps, I crack the kiln with a 4" post. I LEAVE IT, DO NOT OPEN!!!!
10. I let it cool for another 12 hrs at least.
11. I open WHEN I CAN TOUCH the pieces with my bare hands. REMEMBER folks, the kiln shelves retain heat, therefore, the pieces are still WARM!!!! The ambient temperature can shock the pieces. I know there are a lot of potters who unload with gloves, etc. BUT, I don't, and I DO NOT have ANY pinholes.
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Ms. Hoffman has also posted the following "ramp-hold" glaze firing schedule developed by Skutt that should eliminate the pinhole problem:

Segment	Rate	Temperature
	Hold	
#1	0	200°
#2	0	400°
#3	0	180°
#4	0	300°
#5	5min	120°
#6	30min	125°
	Envirovent off	

She suggests that if you would like to fire a little hotter, you can increase segment number 5 to 2180°F with a 5 min hold. Also, the use of witness cones on each shelf will help you understand the actual firing temperature of your kiln.

From the comments I've read, this ramp-hold firing schedule should allow the molten glaze to seal any pinholes as the temperature slowly ramps down during the last segment. I had a very nice conversation with Camille Hoffman and I

promised to let her know how the test firing comes out and how (hopefully) the pinhole problem is now in the rear-view mirror. I will share the results of the test firing in part two of this report in the next Clayfolk newsletter.

Wish me luck!
Bob Causey
bobatetsy@gmail.com

Empty Bowls Jackson County: Update!

Peace House is rescheduling the fundraiser for September. This is in hopes of having an in-person event. We have until August to make our donations. Peace House is happy to accept other clay art besides bowls. These art pieces will go on an online store or auction while the bowls will be used for the traditional event. Pack your donations for travel and please add your name.

Contact: Polly Beach

ancestralmud@gmail.com

ancestralmud.com

Happenings...



The pit fire is back! Debbie and Bill Thompson are preparing to rekindle the annual (well, used to be annual) Pit Fire. Targeting a date in late April, this event open to all Clayfolk members. Similar to many of our prior events/workshops, gauging interest is a key piece to effective planning. IF you have any interest, curiosity or desire to attend, please share your interest with them at cftreasurer@yahoo.com.



A fine example of what can happen in a pit fire!

Tips to get you started!

1. Use a cone 5 to cone 10 clay body. The color of your clay will affect the color of your pottery.
2. Because your piece will be fired in the ground; large, thick pieces tend to crack. Pottery can be made using the wheel, slap, pinch or coil.
3. If you want your pottery to have a shine, when it is leather hard, burnish it with a smooth stone, rubber rib or other smooth object over your pottery. You can put it on the wheel also to burnish it. This pushes the grog into the surface of your piece.
4. When your pottery is bone dry, you can burnish it a second time. Smooth salad or olive oil onto a small section of your pottery before it dries burnish it again with your smooth stone or other object, your pottery should develop a high shine. You can also polish your piece with a piece of plastic bag or chamois.
5. You need to Bisque fire your pottery at cone 020-018, to reduce the risk of blowing up. If you bisque fire your pottery at too high a temperature, it will lose its shine when the grog resurfaces. Your pottery will still be fragile, so handle it carefully.
6. You can bring organic material to place over your pottery. Some people bring dried manure, dried banana peels, straw, seaweed or other interesting material to see how it colors your pottery. You may also place copper wire on your pottery. Wherever your pottery touches the sawdust on the bottom on the pit, it will turn black, so be sure to request how you want it placed.

Go online and check out Eduardo Lazo for comprehensive instructions on preparing your pit fired pottery: www.eduardolazo.com/pitfired.html.

Trouble For Big Events In Oregon 2021?

Important rule changes to events in Oregon are being quietly proposed by OSHA. These proposed changes may impact large events such as the Clayfolk Show and Sale. Find the complete proposal here: [Text of Changes to Oregon OSHA's Proposal on Rules Addressing the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in All Oregon Workplaces](#)

Some highlights that could mean changes to our Show **Appendix A-3 Mandatory Workplace Guidance for Outdoor And Indoor Markets**

Application: This appendix applies to employers who operate or who provide goods and services in indoor and outdoor markets and street fairs.

- Indoor and outdoor markets means indoor or outdoor spaces where agriculture products, food, merchandise, or services are sold by vendors, generally from booths or tables, and vendors may pay a fee to participate.
- Indoor and outdoor markets may include but are not limited to farmers markets, flea markets, craft fairs, and other markets that do not include interactive rides or exhibits.

A. General Operations. Employers operating indoor and outdoor markets and street fairs are required to implement the following measures:

1. Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly. Increase air circulation and ventilation as much as possible by opening windows and doors. Fans should be used indoors only when windows or doors are open to the outdoors in order to circulate indoor and outdoor air.

B. Physical Distancing Measures. To ensure appropriate physical distancing, employers operating indoor and outdoor markets and street fairs are required to implement the following measures:

1. Abide by any applicable gathering size or capacity limitations imposed by the Oregon Health Authority;
 2. Ensure customers, staff and vendors maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from other individuals who are not part of the same party. A distance of at least 6 feet must be maintained between parties;
 3. Implement one-way flow with marked entrances and exits, but do not block egress for fire exits. Use signs to direct one-way flow of traffic;
 4. Use signs or markings on the ground to maintain physical distancing while waiting for cashiers;
 5. Assign one physical distancing monitor per 50 people to ensure physical distancing requirements and gathering capacity limits are maintained at all times for both indoor and outdoor spaces, including at entrances, exits, restrooms and any other area where people may congregate;
 6. Determine seating and configuration to comply with all physical distancing requirements;
 7. Do not combine parties or allow shared seating for individuals not in the same party;
 8. Remove or restrict seating and standing areas to facilitate the requirement of at least 6 feet of physical distance between parties; and
- Prohibit people in different parties from congregating in any area of the facility, both indoor and outdoor, including in parking lots. Note: Employers operating indoor and outdoor markets and street fairs are encouraged, but not required, to take the following additional steps to encourage physical distancing and minimize contact.
- Consider placing clear plastic or glass barriers in front of cashiers or customer service counters, or in other places where maintaining 6 feet of physical distance between employees and customers is more difficult.
 - Provide separate entrances/exits for employees and/or vendors, if possible.
 - Consider offering alternative order ahead and pick up options, such as curbside pickup, as appropriate and applicable.

From the Ceramic Research Center, Arizona State University Museum of Art

Upcoming Masterpieces at Midday conversations:

Thursday, March 4 at 12 p.m.

Join us on Zoom for **Masterpieces at Midday: Behind the Scenes of the Collection at the CRC** with Assistant Registrar Ariana Enriquez.

Zoom link: <https://asu.zoom.us/j/81058606401>

Spring - Summer Clayfolk Meetings:

Month	Meeting type	Meeting location	Host	Time
March 18 (Thursday)	Board	Zoom	President	6:30 p.m.
March 28 (Sunday)	General	Zoom	TBA	TBA
June 17 (Thursday)	Board	Zoom	TBA	NA
June 26 (Saturday)	General	Reinhart Memorial Park, Grants Pass	Michael McKinney	2:30-4:00
August 12 (Thursday)	Board	TBA	TBA	NA
August 22 (Sunday)	General	TBA	TBA	TBA
October 14 (Thursday)	Board	TBA	TBA	NA
October 24 (Sunday)	Show Chairs	GP Museum of Arts	Michael McKinney	12:30-2:00 Reports
October 24 (Sunday)	General	GP Museum of Arts	Carole Hayne	2:30-4:00 Booth Pick
TBA	Show and Sale	TBA	Show Chair	Show and Sale
Check Clayfolk calendar for updates at clayfolk.org .				

Workshop Survey **results**

Thank you to the 51 members who completed the survey. About 2/3's of our responding members **are** interested in online workshops, about 33 of us. Most of **these** 33 members are interested in 2.5 hour online workshops and about half (15) would be interested in a 2.5 hour follow-up session the following weekend. This would provide an opportunity to have a hands-on project. A quarter of the 33 members (8) would take a 4 hour workshop; **probably** not enough for Clayfolk to provide one. **There is** definitely not enough interest in longer workshops to pay for them. Members are equally interested in demonstration workshops with slightly more interested in a hands-on workshop. Interest ran high **for** functional work like cups and mugs but really not much different than sculptural or decorative work. I did not do a good job on this question, or we love to make everything that can be made with clay.

As for which presenter **would be** most likely to pull in the most members to an online workshop, I took the total of very interested members and added that to half of the somewhat interested members for each of the presenters. (I did this in my head so not so perfect) I figure that interest in the presenters Lisa Naples and Deb Schwartzkopf (close to 23 members) indicates that we could draw close to 20 members to a workshop by either of them. Lucy Fagella (close to 18) and Amy Kline (close to 17) indicate closer to 15, also doable for a workshop but Lucy Fagella's workshop would be quite expensive as she charges almost twice as much and we would have **fewer** people. Another consideration is that we've had a workshop by Amy Kline in the recent past. I am seriously considering Lisa Naples as she is in Pennsylvania and Deb is closer in Seattle (less costly transport).

Thank you again for your participation.

Carole Hayne, Workshop Chair.

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