2025 JUNE

OTTAWA GUILD OF POTTERS

Fired Up!

Monthly Newsletter

Next Meeting: June 10, 2025
Time: 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Location: Hintonburg Community Centre
1064 Wellington Street West, Ottawa

President's Message

Happy Summer!

This is the last Newsletter for the OGP, 2024/2025 . It made me look back on the year, and it was a busy one.

There were three multi-day workshops this year. Starting with Richard Gill's workshop in October, Eiko Mada's Nerikomi workshop in February and Keifer Floréal's Throwing Large workshop and demonstration, along with his Artist Talk at our March General Meeting.

There were also two hands-on workshops at our General meetings. Emily Lim's photography workshop helped members with lighting and cell phone settings and editing images. I led a hands-on workshop making and attaching pulled, extruded, and strap handles to pots. (I have some ideas for future workshops at meetings, think Surface decoration techniques. Stay tuned).

In October, Amy Jane St. Denis had a beautiful Solo Celebrating Clay Exhibition. The Annual Juried Exhibition never ceases to amaze me. Both the Holiday and Spring Pottery Sales were sold out and eclipsed sale totals from the previous year.

As part of your membership, the Guild has provided you with access to the Ceramic Arts Networks. This includes Ceramic Monthly, Pottery Making Illustrated, Ceramic Recipes and CLAYflicks!

This year our membership has grown from 144 members to 187 members. Welcome new Members.

OGP bursaries sent Jennifer Lerus and David Bynoe to the New Clay Conference in October 2024 and Liang Dong and Bernadette Lapierre to Fusion Conference in May 2025.

Great Bowls of Fire raised over $18,000.00 for the Ottawa Food Bank. Thank you, Jackie Lyons and your team, along with the many volunteers.

The Annual General Meeting will be on June 10, 2025. Along with the election of new Executive members, with gratitude, we must say farewell to those who have fulfilled their roles and are stepping down. Join with me in wishing a heartfelt "thank you" to our outgoing Treasurer Michele McDonald and Exhibition co-chair Elizabeth Davies.

The Pottery Garage Sale will start after the business meeting, at 7:30 pm. If you have items for the Garage Sale please bring to Hintonburg Community at 6:00 pm so that we can organize and price the item. E-transfers to treasurer@ottawaguildofpotters.ca is preferred or cash.

Have a happy healthy creative summer.

Next meeting Tuesday September 9, 2025.

Thank you

by Liz Fournier

Exhibitions Committee

Happy June, everyone!
Exhibition Catalogues are in the process of being printed. If you ordered one, it should be ready for pick-up later this month. We'll send an email out to those who ordered and will coordinate pick-up times.

There will be Pot Talk later this month, hopefully in person! We're waiting for confirmation that a room at the Hintonburg Community Centre has been booked for June 22nd, 2-4 pm. We'll send out another message once that's been confirmed.

If you'd like to present your work, please email us at **exhibitions@ottawaguildofpotters.ca**. Otherwise, the theme of this Pot Talk is My Favourite Piece. Please bring in your favourite piece or photos of it, and we'll discuss what makes it work so well.

Finally, in October we'll have another Celebrating Clay opportunity. If you're interested in exhibiting your work in a solo exhibition, please send us a note.
Have a great summer, and hope to see you at the Pot Talk!

Elizabeth Davies, Joanna Richardson

Membership Committee Report

With two new members in May and more renewals we have 187 members. Of those 187, 130 have renewed their membership, leaving 50 who have yet to do so.

Please welcome the following new members:

Pam Clouthier
Artist Bio: I am an amateur potter who started working with clay 30 years ago but stopped because of family commitments. Now I have my own studio in an old milk house where I can go and play. I love making functional pieces that are beautiful but always practical.
Artist Inspiration: I am inspired by the ocean and love carving into clay. I love experimenting with shapes and texture to make unique functional pieces.
Studio Name: Milk House Pottery.

Susan Fried
Susan works at Capital Pottery Studio.

by Carol Holmes-Kerr

Standards & Education

How do you ensure glaze stability and safety of the pots you sell, if you are using glazes made and fired by someone else?

That's not an easy question to answer. Nowadays, it's not unheard of for potters who sell to the public to get their start potting in community studios. These settings, staffed by people who are knowledgeable in technical matters, make it relatively easy to produce serviceable pots for your own use and to give to your family and friends. But even with willing recipients lining up for your pots, they begin to accumulate. When your skills have developed far enough along that you begin to make high quality work that is individual to you, you may think about starting to sell your pottery. Before you get to this point, it's time to start reading about glazes and firing, even if you're not doing it yourself...yet! Once you get there, it's essential that you make a commitment to learn more about the types of glazes and firing schedules that you use at your community studio. Meanwhile, take courses in these technical aspects of your craft wherever you can find them. If you continue to make pots for sale, you will eventually want to fire your own work.

The discussion below offers an overview of the topics you should be conversant with if you plan to sell pots which are being finished with glazes made and fired by someone else. Ultimately, it is still your responsibility to ensure that your work is, and will remain, free of defects.

Kiln schedules and practices:
When kilns are fired in community studios (at community centers as opposed to cooperative studios, which are a completely different matter), their firing schedules may not be in line with those of a potter who is getting ready to sell their wares. The approach at most community studios is one size fits all. With ceramics, this is not always true, especially when you are trying to create work that is uniquely your own. Knowing what temperature your studio bisques and glaze fires to is important to your finished product.

...continued

Perhaps you are using a commercial glaze which specifies that your ware be bisqued to cone 04. If your studio bisques to cone 06, that's a part of the process, you have no control over. If you choose to use a clay that has a lot of organic material that doesn't burn out fully until 04, you may have glaze problems that you can't resolve when you bisque your work at 06.

The other thing you should know about the bisque firing is whether it was a fast firing or a slow firing. If your piece requires a slow firing (due to thickness or size) but every other piece in the kiln can be fast fired, your piece may have to wait on the bisque shelf, or it may get fired in a kiln that is not optimal. These are things you should understand so that you can make work of the highest quality possible for the given firing conditions.

Whether the glaze kiln is fired fast or slow, where and when there are holds in the schedule, and the time taken to reach temperatures along the way to the top temperature, all affect the glazed piece and have an impact on the durability and stability of the glazes.

Know your clay:
Even manufactured clay has flaws from time to time. Maybe a batch of normally grogless porcelain becomes contaminated in the mixer following a batch of heavily grogged clay. Maybe there are other contaminants distributed throughout. Clay recipes can change over time due to the scarcity of the ingredients needed to make that clay. As the clay changes, qualities may change too. When flaws in the clay are translated to the finished piece and result in blemishes, the pots are a write-off (or they're yours…"collection of the artist").

All clays are not created equal. If you are having problems with cracking or warping in your finished products, it could be that your clay is not well suited to your process. All of us have experienced flaws that we have unwittingly introduced into our work, whether it's cracks on a handle or the slumping of a piece that didn't get enough support during making. Those pieces should not be sold …they too are "collection of the artist"!

Know what liner glazes are and use them:
Every functional potter should have a few consistent glazes that apply easily and offer a smooth hard surface. Most community studios will have glazes that fit the bill. They should not contain much in the way of oxides. In addition, these glazes should resist abrasion by household utensils and should offer resistance to acidic or basic foods and not prone to crazing.

They should also be tested to see how they perform when heated, frozen, or put in the dishwasher. Liner glazes should also be tested with each glaze you plan to use on the outside of the pot. Sometimes the glaze fit between the inside and outside glazes, and the clay will cause problems. Testing will tell you whether you have to worry or not…before you sell the pot!

Know the limitations of your glazes – test:
Be alert to changes in the glazes you are using. Raw materials change over time. Community studios have to change recipes as ingredients become expensive or scarce. Last year's "Pearly Green" may not be the same as this year's. This means more testing is required.

Get in the habit of testing the pieces you bring home from the studio for acid and heat resistance. Put them in the dishwasher. Use pieces yourself. Do they chip? Do the glazes change over time, with use? Sort out these flaws before you go to market!

When you finally decide to offer your ceramics for sale through the guild, you are warranting that you understand the matters covered above. Becoming a member of a guild such as the OGP is a logical step along the way to that understanding. The guild brings together potters and ceramists of widely differing backgrounds and skill levels. Finding effective ways to share our knowledge helps us all. Hopefully, this series of articles will help you understand some of the complexities involved in the parts of the process that you may not be responsible for right now. If you have questions on these topics that you'd like to have answered, feel free to send them to me at jocelynjenkins1@gmail.com.

by Jocelyn Jenkins

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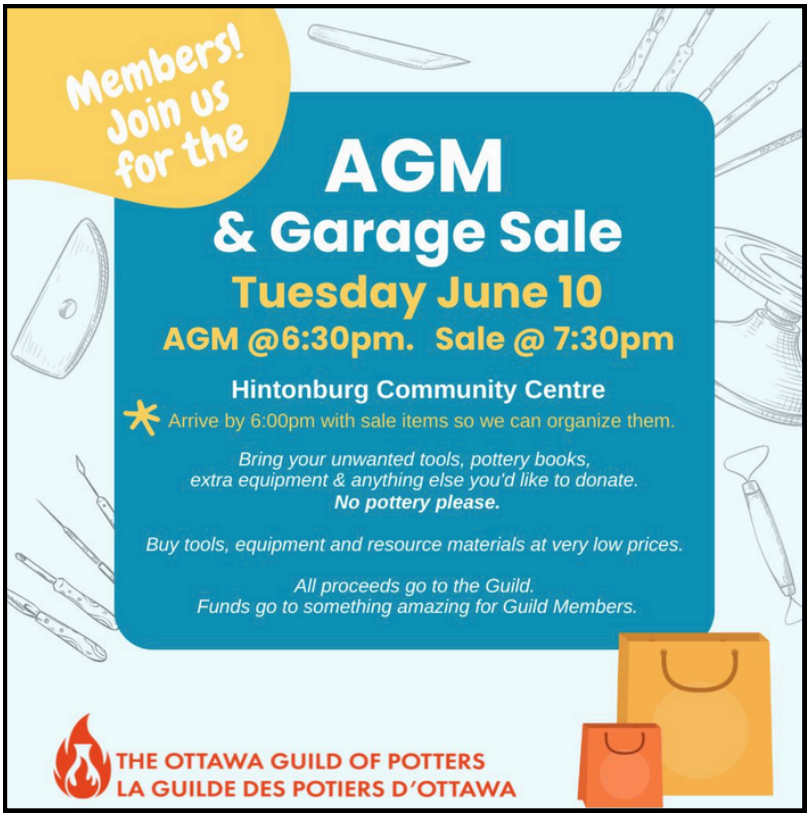
Activities & Programs

Plans for the upcoming workshops and activities will be announced in September.

We'll be sending a survey this summer to get your ideas and input on what we should do in the coming year, stay tuned!

As always, I'm interested in your ongoing feedback and ideas – you can reach me at activity@ottawaguildofpotters.ca.

by Carmen Gervais



Follow us on social media: **Instagram @ottawapotters**
Facebook @ottawaguildofpotters

Happy June!
While our main events may have finished until the fall, we will be hard at work over the summer, using the quiet time to improve our sale & festival signage, and some other fun things.

Facebook Members Group closed
The Guild members Facebook group is now shut down. Guild Forum and our social media channels are what members have been using to communicate, so the time had come to say goodbye.

Website redesign
Over the summer, we will be working away on our website redesign, editing and curating every piece of content to ensure accuracy and purpose. We will have much more to report on this in the fall!

Looking for new Comms team member(s)
We always need new people to step forward to help in Guild committees, and Comms is no different. Our team chairs are well into (or past) their 3-yr mandate. We need one or more people to help with social media, for our events and to maintain an engaging presence.

We use Canva to create posts, but no experience is necessary– it's easy and fun to use!

If you think you'd like to help, drop us a line. We've become a well-oiled team, and we'd love to have you join us.

Nancy Riggs, Lisa Butter & Dawn McLeod

Thank You!

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Ottawa Guild for the opportunity to attend the 2025 Fusion Conference – Women in Clay, held May 7th & 8th in Kingston. It was a wonderful experience to connect with like-minded individuals and be part of such an inspiring event.

The presenters each brought their own unique perspective and energy to the conference, making it a truly enriching experience.

Naomi Clement, who works from her home studio in Stratford, Ontario, shared insights into her virtual learning platform, The Maker's Spark. As a member, you gain access to a library of past workshops, a new workshop every month, and a live monthly Q&A session. I've taken two of Naomi's workshops over the past year and found both to be incredibly valuable—each introduced new techniques and approaches that have enhanced my practice. It was a real pleasure to see Naomi demonstrate her work in person.

Candice Methe, now based on the coast of Maine, creates her pieces using coils and the pinch method. Watching her build her vessels, slowly and intentionally using this method, was a captivating experience. Her ability to shape such elegant forms was truly impressive.

Grace Han, who trained in South Korea and now lives in Canada, captivated the audience with her processes. She wedges large amounts of clay on the floor while squatting, creates thick coils that she hoists over her shoulder, and stretches slabs by repeatedly throwing them onto the floor—again, often while squatting. Her wooden kick wheel, powered by her own feet, was another fascinating aspect of her traditional process. Her demonstration left many of us in awe of both her strength and artistry.

Thank you again to the Ottawa Guild for making this experience possible—it was an unforgettable and inspiring event.

by Bernadette Lapierre

Summer intensive workshop at the Ceramic studio: La Fab sur Mill, Chelsea, Qc.

CLAY SCULPTURE WITH RAYMOND WARREN, July 21-25

Bilingual clay workshop led by Raymond Warren, where form meets innovation.

Participants will design dynamic sculptures using a custom-built armature—an elevated support system that unlocks new possibilities for suspended and vertical forms.

Registration closes July 17 or when sold out. Spots are limited.

More info: https://lafabsurmill.ca/event/summer-intensive-clay-sculpture/

submitted by Martine Campeau

Jordan Danger completes her year-long residency with the City of Ottawa's Waste Dept

Jordan Danger, guild member and long-time professional artist in multiple mediums, is completing her year-long position as the Artist in Residence in Government with the City of Ottawa. She has spent the last year embedded with the City's waste department.

Her solo exhibition, "Airspace", will be on display from July 8-18 in the center of City Hall. There will be four gatherings during the exhibition, including a special talk for artists who are looking to incorporate salvaged and upcycled materials into their works.

Several of her pieces for this project incorporate ceramic clay work with salvaged multimedia. If you'd like to be informed of the dates for the vernissage and artist talks, email Jordan at jordan@dangercreative.com or join her mailing list by clicking here: https://mailchi.mp/65346fe5c22d/danger-creative-newsletter . You can also learn more on her website: www.dangercreative.com