



The Barnet Collection

of

# Ceramics & Art

<http://www.thebarnetcollection.org>

Issue 31, October 2018

**Welcome to the October 2018 newsletter. A big Thank you to all of you who contributed to this edition, and also to the success of this years events.**

As a newbie to this group, I feel that I ought to introduce myself first. I am a 42 year of mum of two, and I have been living in Barnet for almost 10 years. 10 was also the age when my mum introduced me to pottery. I must have caught the bug straight away, because I have been working with clay ever-since. I am mainly self taught and the only training I have ever received was in City Lit London. I am a hand-builder and get most of my inspiration from nature. I love experimenting with coloured clay and frayed edges. In 2017 I decided to quit my fulltime job and take my pottery to the next level, SolidagoCeramics was born. I got my own kiln in March 2018 but unfortunately, my dining table isn't big enough to work from, neither is it safe for all involved. This and other family reasons is why I have decided to move to West Yorkshire. We recently agreed a sale on a new house and I will have my own pottery studio. So I cannot be part of this lovely group anymore and I will miss you all. Its been a fantastic year and I have learned a lot, so a big Thank you to all of you.

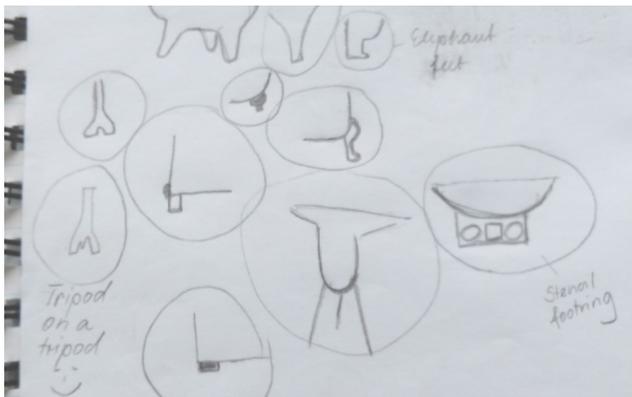
This newsletter edition is all about our recent events and stories from this year and a little preview to future events. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Nadine Blakemore

***Here is a quick review of the events since the last newsletter:***

### ***Trip to the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge:***

*Honestly, I cannot remember the exact date of our trip, but I do remember that we had a lovely day out. Traffic wasn't so bad and thanks to the excellent organisation we all arrived there with no problems. The museum itself is home to a wonderful permanent ceramic collection from Europe, Middle & Far East and the United Kingdom which is worth a visit. I was most fascinated with this part and here I can share with you some of my sketches and how I used them in my pottery over the past month.*

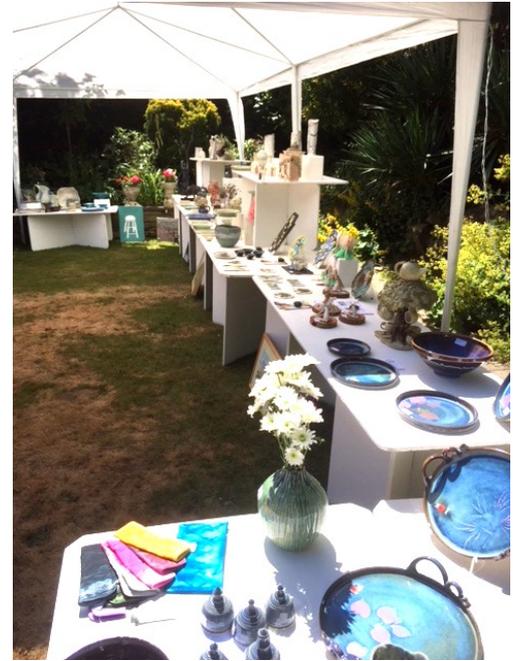


*Upstairs the museum dedicated space to the "Things of beauty" exhibition. I believe there was something for everyone to see and here is a link with information and pictures for all of you who could not make it there in person:*

<https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/calendar/whatson/things-beauty-growing-british-studio-pottery>

**Summer Fair:** *What a sweltering hot weekend and although footfall was lower than expected, sales have not disappointed. Thank you to our host and all of you who helped organising, setting up, running and taking down.*

*Please see some photos of the display on the next page:*



*A Big Thank you to all of you who came to the sale. We look forward to seeing you again.*

**Summer BBQ:** *Despite torrential rain, once again we had an enjoyable BBQ hosted by Annie and Stephen.*

### **Upcoming Events:**

**Next Workshop:** *Saturday, 10th November 2018 from 2pm—4 pm at Pennefather Hall, Christ Church, Barnet, St Albans Road, EN5 4LA*

*An afternoon with Matt Davis—pushing clay to new limits. Matt Davis’s work marks society in the information age with physical artefacts that look like virtual reality. Combining digital design with handmade construction, he aims to challenge perceptions of traditional ceramics and to further dialogues concerning humans vs technology in regards to the creation of craft.*

**Christmas Lunch:** *Please save the date: 5th December, more details to follow.*

### **Stories from the workshop**

#### **Salt in glaze and a silly cat**

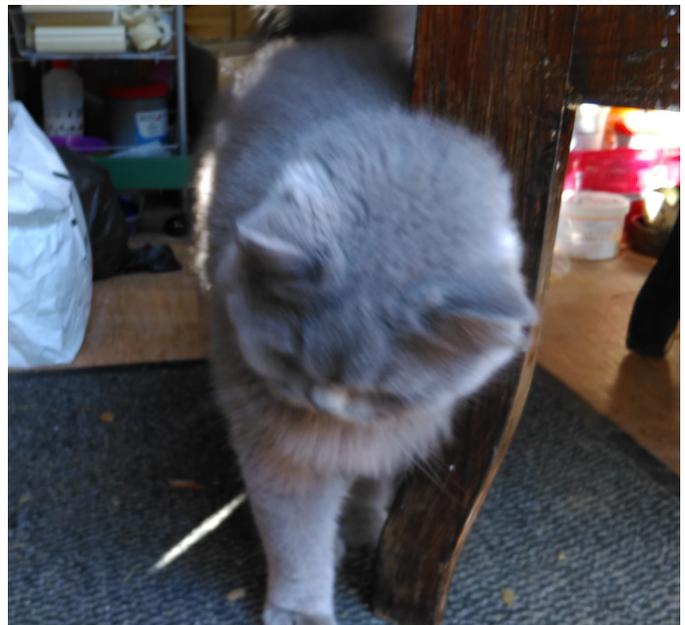
This edition’s story actually happened on my patio in my back garden rather than the workshop, which is somewhat important. It’s about my discoveries with transparent glaze and Booboo, my neighbour’s cat. Before I dive in, I must explain that for a few days in September Booboo had been visiting. She is an attention loving, fearless and wonderfully fluffy grey longhair female, who decided to temporarily move in with us to enjoy time playing with the children. And although, we did not let her stay in the house, she was determined to make the garden her own. So, what does this all have to do with pottery, I hear you ask?

So here is the background: For the last few years, I have mainly used brushing glazes but decided that dipping would be the better approach for my agateware porcelain and stoneware pieces. Since I only started out with this, I had bought all new equipment, mixer paddle for the drill, a new bucket, sieve, 5 kg glaze powder and I spend a few hours reading books and watching “how to” videos on YouTube. For the water I used my outside tap.

So far so good and mixing and sieving the glaze all went well, since I followed the instructions from the supplier (I used 350g water to 1kg glaze). However, when I dipped my first tester piece, I ended up with roughly 1 cm of glaze on my delicate porcelain plate. I decided to call the supplier, who then reassured me that I need to find “my own ratio” so I kept adding another 2 kg of water until the tester piece looked alright. I then left the glaze overnight, ready for my glazing adventure the following day. The next morning and to my big surprise, I found my glaze had settled rock-hard on the bottom of my bucket. This was not supposed to happen according to the supplier. I was told that something must have contaminated it. Although, I thought that I can rule that out as I had all new equipment. What a mystery!

It could be worse I thought, and confidently brought out the paddle and the drill again. That should make easy work of this – Yes? Well, no, it didn't. The slurp was so hard that the paddle broke off and a split second later the broken steel bit went through my bucket leaving a hole for the glaze to leak out onto my patio (see pictures). Now, this is the moment when Booboo comes in. As you can imagine, I was rather busy trying to rescue my new glaze and my patio, but did the cat care? No, of course not, she was far too busy purring around my ankles, ignoring all the spillage and walk it all over the path. Oh dear, patio and cat paws covered in transparent glaze. So, I quickly poured the glaze into a fresh bucket to avoid more mess and then ran to wash the cat under fresh tap water. Normally cats hate that, not so Booboo. I got the feeling, that she rather enjoyed the attention. At this point, I decided to get a nicely cleaned Booboo out of the garden via the gate and get a bucket of fresh water to clean up. On my return, well you guessed it, Booboo was back in and walked through my glaze mess again. I wanted to cry at this point.

Luckily for me, Booboo was quite calm, which also helped me to stay calm and together we got on with some serious cleaning. When I was finished, I found Booboo sleeping in a cardboard box under my kiln. She stayed there all day and we enjoyed each other's company. Since then Booboo has been visiting a few times and her owner twice knocked on the door to get her back home.



So here she is.... Isn't she gorgeous?