

## 2021, a hopeful New Year ahead

### It's February already

We have been back in the studio for nearly a month now. It has been quiet with COVID still on our minds and log-ins with QR codes mandatory!

### Our Annual Exhibition

This will be a bit later this year - just a week before Xmas in mid-December. Should be a good time for sales and exposing ourselves to the public?!

Plenty of time to get your best work ready for display and sale.

Last years' mixed market and exhibition worked very well for us and hopefully we can do it again.

### BVAC in 2021

In April we will be participating in BVAC's (Brisbane Visual Arts Community) Open Weekend event. This will give us a chance to show the public what we are about and support BVAC. We have been members from the start and participated in all their events, pop-ups etc.

Speaking of pop-ups, the first will be a Xmas in July event which we can work toward. All things going well it will be back to the original formula of BVAC handling marketing and sales.

### Raku with the Redcliffe Potters

We have been invited, and accepted, to join the Redcliffe Pottery Group in a joint Raku.

This will take place in the cooler months and will be a great opportunity to network with another like-minded group and check out their excellent facilities.

### In the studio

Highlights of the year will include installation of a new kiln in March. The Woodrow 85L should be a great size to allow for some experimentation - lustre anyone? - and for smaller loads when the need arises.

Just a reminder of our studio times:

- > Tuesday and Wednesday mornings
- > Thursday evenings
- > Saturday mornings

The first workshop for the year will be throwing with Anthony on **Saturday 20 February**. If you don't know Anthony, he has a great knowledge of ceramics - beginning as a production potter followed by study and years of experience. Always a worthwhile experience from beginners on.

Other workshops will include lustres with Judy, decorating with Gai and bas-relief carving with Derek.

We have a wealth of knowledge within our group and urge you to take advantage when available.

David Bartholomew  
President  
Western Suburbs Clayworkers

### Stay well and busy



Anyone who has ever left something on the stove for too long knows the intimate pain of struggling to scrub burnt remains off the bottom of the pan. Depending on how badly it went, it can even be tempting to just toss the whole thing in the rubbish. Luckily for a group of archaeologists, 3000 years ago someone living in what is now Denmark decided to do just that ... read more:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/archaeologists-find-ancient-pot-traces-3000-year-old-burnt-cheese-180960475/>

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Done anything interesting artistically lately? Let us know with a few words and photos



## Work done over the break

David brought along a sample of his work completed over the summer.

Measuring 225mm it is thrown from a mixture of Keane's Red Midfire and Red Raku.

Only the decoration on the outside is clear glazed.

Fired to 1220°C cone 6 Midfire.

Please free to bring along any new work you have done to the next meeting



## Glaze sample\*

Walker Ceramics' CESCO clear gloss EQB5223.5. Claimed to fire over quite a wide range - earthenware to midfire.

The interior of the small pot is glazed with the EQB5223.5 and fired to cone 6 - 1220°C as proof of a successful midfire. Works equally well at earthenware - cone 03.

A very versatile clear glaze.

\*Brush on glaze, water added to thin cream consistency and 3 coats applied. Can also be poured, ideal for interiors.

\*Also note the container of glaze shown was decanted from a 5L container into recycled 1L containers for convenience.

## The Great Pottery Throw Down



### Episode 4 - Naked Raku & a Floral Challenge

It's naked raku week and the remaining potters throw, burnish and fire a pair of vases, and are set a floral challenge by guest judge and flower-making expert Rita Floyd

AD S 47 mins

Have you managed to watch the latest series (4) of the Great Pottery Throw Down yet?

The latest episode covered naked Raku. The clay wasn't specified but it was quite white. The task was to complete 2 matching pieces with some volume ie bulbous; one large, one small. The pieces were then burnished and a coat of white Terra Sigillata added. The final Raku firing included horsehair and feathers - including the large feathers from a feather duster. One participant even sacrificed some of his own hair!

# Pilliga Pottery

For almost three months my partner Darby and I have been volunteers at Pilliga Pottery and Barkala Farmstay located five hours drive north-west from Sydney. Pilliga Pottery is named after the forest park that surrounds us. It is a 35 year old commercial pottery producing themed work (the little native Blue Wren features on many of the pieces) and the work is sold online and onsite. It is also a bush land/farm with farm stay accommodation and a cafe/restaurant. The business is owned and managed by the Rickert family who all live here, a small staff of full and part timers and volunteers like us.

The pottery studio produces mainly wheel thrown work which is decorated by incising, exclusively done by Julie, who has been here for 25 years. Glazes are then applied into the carved patterns by a team of staff members.

Maria Rickert, owner and matriarch, encourages artistic license so I have produced a range of garden art which is selling well for them. They want to introduce Raku as a course so Darby is building a kiln and tools and I am planning workshops. There are numerous other classes which are fairly simple, catering for young and old, and taking 1-2 hours. I have introduced some new classes including a weekend workshop because there is a large untapped interest in the outback for art. People drive out of their way to visit this place.

Clay is sourced from a dam 50 km away and wet sieved in an enormous plant onsite. Grog and calcium is added. I was amazed to notice potters picking up large platters of green ware by the rim and them not breaking. The clay particles are so fine making the clay enormously strong.

The property is off the grid and running on solar power therefore all firings are done in a large tracked gas kiln. The pottery products are mostly single fired to around 1100 with a very slow ramp. Being a production pottery, the kiln is fired fortnightly. Large areas of the pieces are left raw so every piece is dipped into a clear sealant after firing.

The pottery is just one part of the business. Barkala Farmstay offers accommodation that ranges from a fairytale pole house to the campground with compost toilet. There are horses and goats and sheep and guinea pigs and chickens along with a resident wombat, a few kangaroos and lots of noisy Cockatoos and Kookaburras. For those who love the outdoors, there are 44 km of constructed bush tracks on the 13,000 acre farm with beautiful views from the tops.

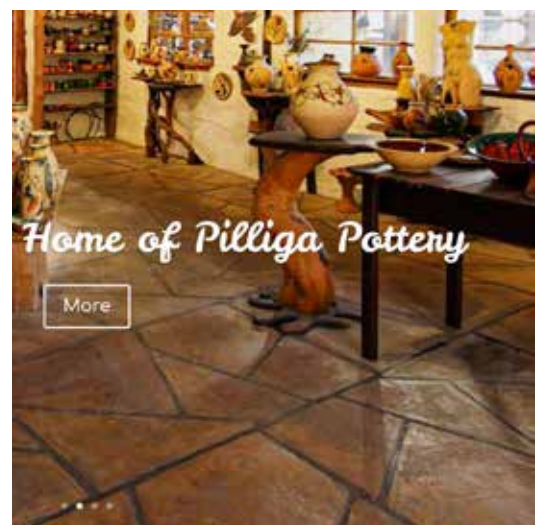
And then there is the food! The Blue Wren Cafe is ruled by Kimi, the Taiwanese cook, who prepares cooked meals for our breakfast, lunch and dinner. The cafe is the social meeting house for the staff and family and the meals are often hilarious gatherings of us all. Aside from potting I am assigned chores like everyone else.

We are living absolutely free, having a ball and I am doing what I love most - potting, designing and creating. The challenge I have for any potter who dreams about combining their love of the art with their love for life, is to come and join us! There is capacity here for more than me and my partner - you can stay for as little or as long as you like, come and go as you please and eat fabulous food with an eclectic bunch of like minded people. If you would like to know more about working here, visit the website [www.barkalafarmstay.com.au](http://www.barkalafarmstay.com.au) and/or email Maria

[pottery@tpg.com.au](mailto:pottery@tpg.com.au)

*Tammy Kuijpers*

Thanks to Anthony for finding this article



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