

Cariboo Potters' Guild
Newsletter
September 2021

Dues for Guild Membership. \$75. Best deal ever!

Can you please send an e-transfer or leave Birgit a cheque at the guild in the treasurer box.

guild.wlcariboo@gmail.com.

Make the security question: Pottery

Make the answer: Clayfun

Thanks, Birgit

October Meeting. Raku Night. Monday October 4th

As with every October, this month's meeting will be a Raku night. Bring bisqued work. Glazes are supplied. Always fun to participate or to watch other potters' iridescent pots emerge from the firing. **Location: Jean Webster's house. 3111 Huston Road, 150 Mile.**

Come out to Likely Horsefly Road. Turn on the first right, called Valley Road. Come down there to the y in the road and come down the hill to the 4th driveway on the left. You will see the round bales in the front yard. There is an executive meeting at 5. Everyone is welcome to arrive before 6 to start Rakuing. Jean has a huge outdoor covered area so Covid protocols will be followed. Bring a mask. Dress warmly. It is a 'finger food' event. Bring something to share.

Technical Myths by Jeff Zamek

Frozen Clay

Moist clay contains approximately 20% to 28% water, depending on the particular clay body. Some potters store their clay in conditions that cause it to freeze. Upon opening a bag of clay it looks either rock solid or has thawed, leaving fissures and cracks. Don't worry; there has been no damage to the clay. It has simply gone through a change that it has experienced countless times in nature. Simply warm the clay and wedge it to the appropriate consistency.

Fired Clay in Freezing Conditions

After the clay has been fired another type of freezing condition has to be considered if the object is to be placed outside. As some potters have already discovered, ceramic forms – whether glazed or unglazed – when placed into freeze/thaw conditions can fracture and spall (chip due to internal stress). When your favorite flower pot is left out in the winter and cracks, strong forces are at work. Not all clay bodies - no matter what temperature they are fired at - can withstand freeze/thaw conditions. What are the factors causing freeze/thaw failures and how can they be eliminated? Most materials shrink when frozen. Water, however, expands due to the formation of ice crystals. The open pore structure of fired clay traps moisture in the form of rain, snow, and humidity by capillary action. Upon freezing, ice crystals expand in the unyielding pore structure of the clay, causing cracking or chipping. Any clay body that is to be placed outdoors in freeze/thaw conditions should be tested in accordance with the American Society for Testing Materials, Designation: C373-88, Standard Test Method for Water Absorption, Bulk Density, Apparent Porosity and Apparent Specific Gravity of Fired White ware.

The freeze/thaw test measures the percentage of water entering a fired clay body when it is soaked in water for 24 hours then boiled in water for 5 hours, which conforms to the American Society for Testing Materials test procedures. The test method replicates conditions present in the natural process of the clay body in actual freeze/thaw environments where the open pores of the clay body take on water.

Slow Drying Prevents Cracks

Slow drying of leather hard pottery or sculpture is often thought to prevent cracks. Many potters dry their work under plastic or water saturated cloths wrapped in plastic. However, when this type of drying technique works it is more likely due to even drying conditions. Pottery can be dried very fast if it is dried evenly. Slow drying often wastes time and can delay the onset of a crack that is already present due to improper selection of a clay body, incorrect forming technique or excessive use of water during the forming process

Pottery or sculpture can be turned over every other day under a lightweight plastic sheet. In most instances it can be uncovered during the day, covered with plastic at night, then uncovered the next day and rotated. This process can be repeated until the pottery dries evenly. Forms that cannot be turned upside down can be supported with foam rubber that will uniformly hold the pots or sculpture. Even drying insures that all parts of the ceramic form undergo shrinkage at the same rate.

Potter Of The Month: Christy Richardson

I've been potting for 50 years but am still capable of making beginner mistakes. I love everything about clay: its stretchy, malleable nature, its raw & fired strength, its wild flexibility to lend itself to all manor of creative manipulation.

I make wheel-thrown & handbuilt functional and sculptural pieces. I mix most of my own glazes (I'm down the rabbit hole of having too many & constantly testing more) and use a few commercial ones.

2 years ago, we built my dream studio. After always working in a very confined space in our house, this new space is amazing. It is bright, warm (gas heater), and has running hot & cold water. The photos were taken before it attained a lived-in look. I can create a mess in no time flat. I do try to maintain some order as I hate working in clutter.



New Executive

Congratulations to our new president, Jean Webster. Jean has stepped up to join the executive for the first time. Her enthusiasm and energy are contagious! Thanks Jean.

Lesley Lloyd is our new (rejuvenated 😊) electric kiln master. She has already had others offer to assist with guild firings. Lesley also continues to be our gas kiln master. Thank you.

New member Stella Xiao has offered to take on the guild website and to look in to making the online calendar work better for some who have had difficulty with it. Welcome to the team.

Mugs for Essential Workers

Some members have committed to making mugs for the city to present to essential workers. These need to be ready in October. Hope production is coming along. Donna is coordinating. Additional help may be needed. To be discussed at the meeting.

Mini Workshops**Basket making with Cinde & Colleen**

This workshop is on Sunday, October 3rd and still has room for a few more participants.

Contact Cinde Porter if interested. All workshops are for members only and are free. They are held in the Kelsey room, so plenty of space for distancing.

Handbuilt vessel with Jill

Monday, October 18th 6:30-9:30pm. Full, but contact Jill Crosina if interested.

Underglazes with Barb

Saturday, October 23rd 9:30-12:30. Contact Barb Fraleigh if interested.

Wishing I had a glaze the same colour as those golden poplar leaves. More testing needed.
Christy Richardson.