

March Meeting

Monday 7:30 PM March 13, 2017

Program: Ceramic artist Ruthanne Tudball will talk about her life with clay.

Tudball is the author of a seminal book on soda firing – Her work can be viewed at <http://www.ruthannetudball.com/>.

February Program in Review

February's program was a particularly delightful presentation by Yujia Xu introducing the Guild members to the Chinese tea ceremony and the uses of special ceramic ware for its various aspects and traditions.



Guild Members Volunteering to Participate in Tea Ceremony



Yujia Xu

Yujia thoughtfully provided a handout to explain some of the history and the meaning behind the ceremony as well as the elements including the various types of tea and tea bowls. In her demonstration, it was especially evident that “The Chinese tea ceremony is shared to create a peaceful, self-cultivating state where guests meditate on the meaning of life”.

Yujia's handout noted that “Chinese Tea Ceremonies use various materials for tea ware including wood, metal, ceramic, porcelain and glass, while Japanese Tea Ceremonies use ceramic materials”.

Cedar Hill Ceramic Studio – with Sue McLeod

I recently had the pleasure of speaking with Sue McLeod, the pottery technician at the Cedar Hill Ceramic Studio. I thought the Guild members might be interested in the information that Sue shared. Sue has been the pottery technician for the past two years with the studio and she also has her own fully equipped studio in her home, where she produces her own work. Her formal education includes a diploma from the Kootenay School of the Arts at Selkirk College in Nelson BC as well as three courses with Alfred University in New York through distance learning. She notes the latter option may



Examples of Sue's Work

seem expensive, but each course provides a full four credits towards a degree in Ceramic Arts and while geared towards artists with any level of experience, can move the artist to an advanced level of understanding in the most technical aspects of glaze and clay development.



Many of the Guild members will be familiar with the beginner, intermediate and raku classes offered at Cedar Hill Ceramic Centre. Those interested in the details on these can access Saanich's Active Living Guide online at: <http://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-culture/active-living-guide.html>.

I was particularly interested in learning from Sue about the changes in the drop in program over the years. Many potters for a variety of reasons choose not to set up a studio of their own. For these folk, the Ceramic Centre's drop in program is a boon to the lucky fifty potters it can accommodate. The greatest challenge is getting into the program, as it is usually fully subscribed within thirty minutes of the online registration program being available at 6:30 a.m. on the advertised first day of registration. It's been noticed that with the change to online registration there has been a shift in the demographics to a younger group of users. Before online registration, it was not unusual for applicants to line up at 5:30 a.m. to await the doors opening at 6:30 a.m. The program has a published schedule of availability by day and hour, starting at 6:30 a.m. weekdays and 8:00 a.m. Saturday and Sunday and going into the evening hours, except when classes are in session. Users pay a fee of \$185 per quarter, which includes glazes and firing. The first quarter runs January 1, to March 31st. The dates for registration for the quarters can be obtained from the studio. The registration date for the current quarter was in November 2016. The studio does create a 'wait list', once registrations have hit fifty, but it is rare any of the twenty or so hopefuls get access to the program mid-term, as the policies for the program do not permit (with rare exceptions) a midterm withdrawal.

The limit of fifty users is based on the space available for storage of both clay and supplies as well as finished work waiting firing on shelves and dollies. Cedar Hill staff is always seeking approval to expand the studio to allow more drop in users. As always, it's a question of competing priorities, so those interested in the studio as an option to their own studio might want to plan how they might persuade Saanich Council to invest further in this well used facility.

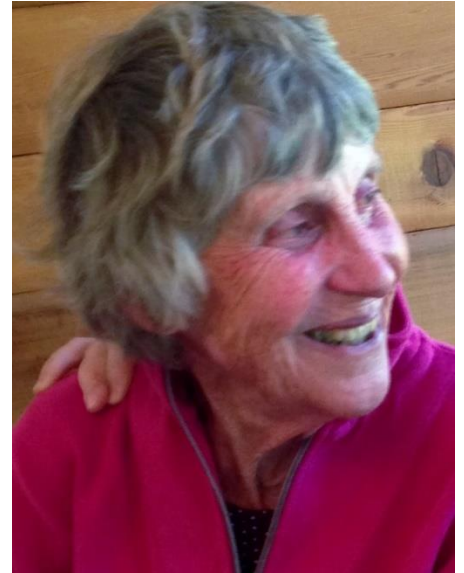
The program gives users access to 12 electric wheels, tools and equipment (slab roller and extruders both hollow and solid dyes), glazes and firings, including cone 6 electric and gas reduction firings. The studio maintains approximately twenty glazes, some of which can be used in both oxidation and reduction, with dramatically different results. For safety and the protection of the studio's kilns, users may only use glazes provided by the studio with the exception of some underglazes. Users are also required to use only clay

purchased from the studio – options include Plainsman 300, 340, 370 and 390 as well as Seattle Pottery paper clay and Laguna WC389 WSO for Raku. A small storage shelf is provided for users to store their clay and supplies. Basic pottery skills (minimum 2 previous classes) are required to use the studio independently. By Helen Pedneault

Mavis Mooney - Potting in Africa

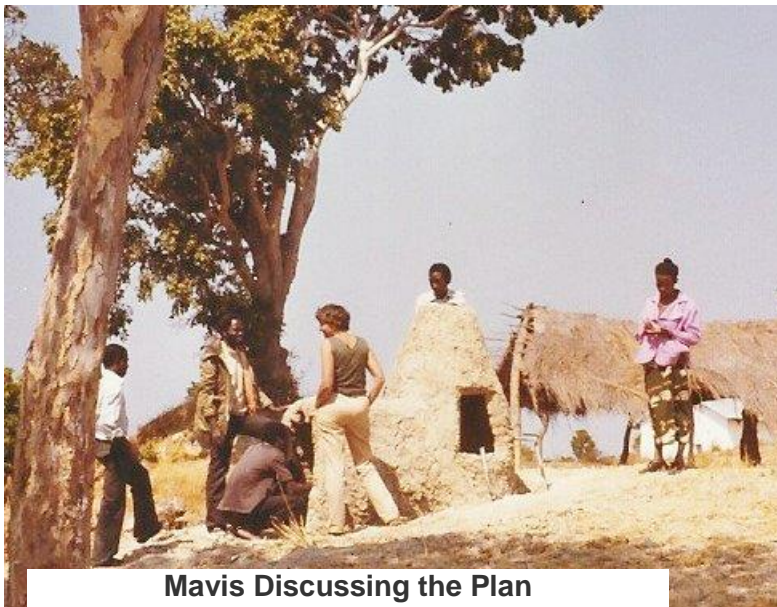
Meet Guild member Mavis Mooney. Mavis has been potting on Vancouver Island in either North Saanich or Comox for over sixty years. Her career started with instruction on the potter's wheel from German master potter Jan Grove (the same whose work, along with his wife Helga, is now on display at the Art Gallery), followed by the study of fine arts at the University of Victoria and later still with studies at North Island College and many workshops with notable teachers.

Mavis' career in pottery included at one time offering courses in her home-based school as well as volunteering in the mid '80's with CUSO in Zambia.



CUSO International is a development organization that works to reduce poverty and inequality through the efforts of highly skilled volunteers, collaborative partnerships and compassionate donors.

In 1983, Mavis and her husband Ron were looking for a change in life style, and decided a two year assignment overseas would provide just that. With Ron's help (who was also busy doing his own CUSO projects), Mavis led the establishment of a pottery which provided employment for the small community they were assigned. Although it is not known if the pottery is still running today, it



Mavis Discussing the Plan

was known to be still operating ten years after Mavis and Ron's 1985 return to Vancouver Island.

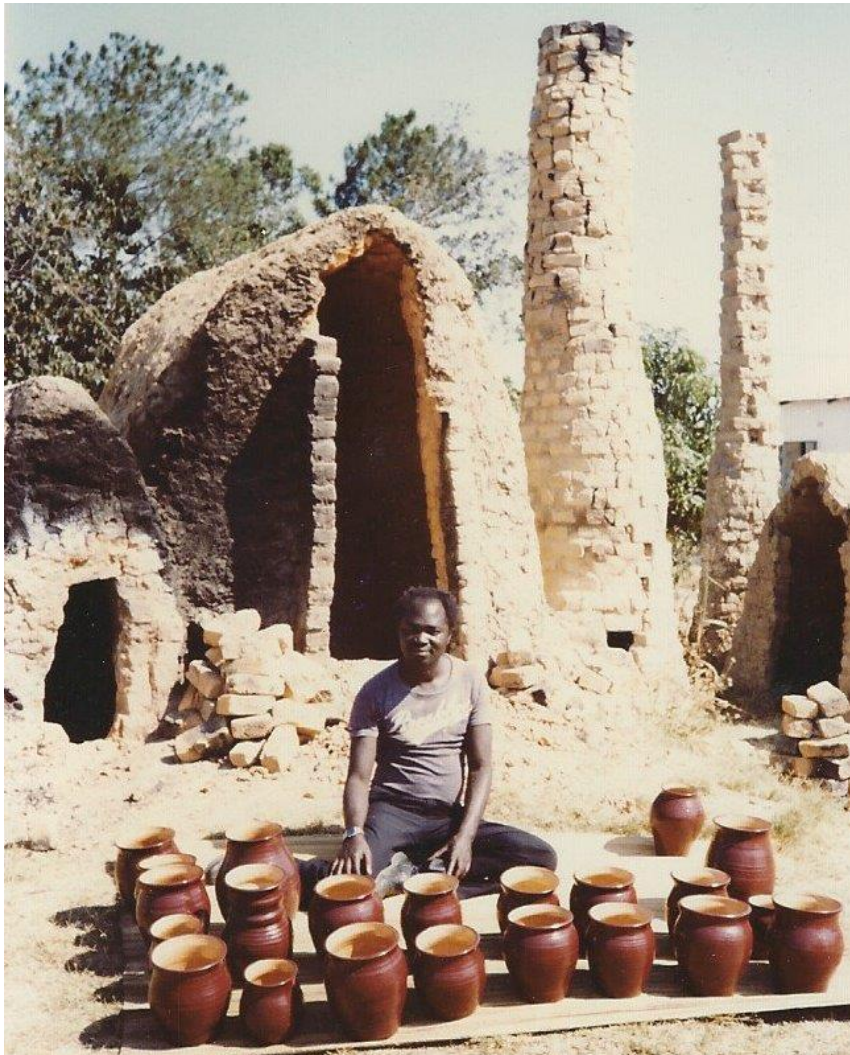
For us western potters in the 21st century with the means to order materials online or pop down to our local supplier for whatever our hearts desire or wallets can imagine, it is hard to put ourselves in Mavis' shoes 30+ years ago in Zambia – materials were virtually non-existent. Starting a pottery didn't mean just buying some clay, kilns and wheels and demonstrating some skills. From the fascinating pictures Mavis has shared, you can see that it meant digging clay out of local watery grasslands with pick axes and building kilns out of bricks made from anthill clay and firing kilns with wood stacked in front of the kiln door. The brick making followed the method used by one of Mavis' participants who made bricks for house building in the area – firing them



to a bisque like firing in a long tunnel affair – it wasn't known what temperatures the bricks could take, but they survived the first small updraft kiln, so the larger cone 10 kiln was built and with relief they survived that too.



As well as an artist, Mavis has the heart and soul of a scientist, so when she doesn't know something she undertakes research, which led her to a book by Michael Cardew, the first apprentice of Bernard Leach.



She found Cardew had built potteries in Africa and his books described the properties of the clay found in sub-Saharan Africa. Mavis' second reference book was a very well-worn copy of *A Potter's Book* by Bernard Leach. By the fine ware glinting in the sun, the clay appears to have very good properties.



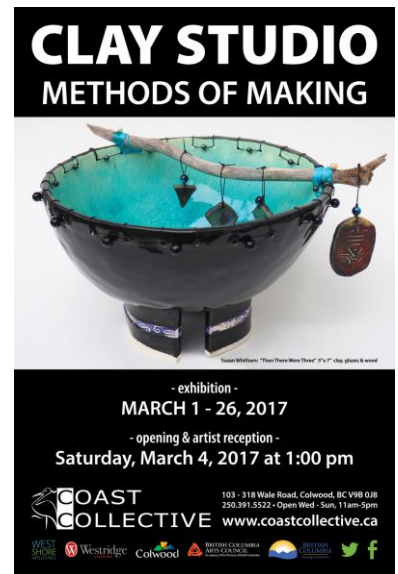
Programs:

March: Ceramic artist Ruthanne Tudball will be coming to the Guild meeting on March 13 to talk about her life with clay. Tudball, the author of a seminal book on soda firing notes on her website that "Manipulating soft clay on a revolving wheel and feeling the material respond to the merest touch is like setting out on an exciting journey for me. The dialogue that goes on between the maker and the clay is carried out through the use of the pots. You pour, you eat, you store, you serve and you drink from them, and sometimes you just contemplate them. All of my work is thrown and manipulated while wet on the wheel. In an attempt to capture the softness in the finished piece, I do very little turning (trimming), and when the turning is done, it mainly happens at the soft stage. After firing and transforming the clay to stone, that softness can still be seen." Check her out at <http://www.ruthannetudball.com/>

April: Marlene Bowman demonstrates her hand-building techniques. See <http://www.stinkingfishstudiotour.com/Marlene-Bowman/> for some examples of her colourful and unusual creations.

May: tentative: Photographing your work and other presentation tips.

June: spring get-together and gallery.



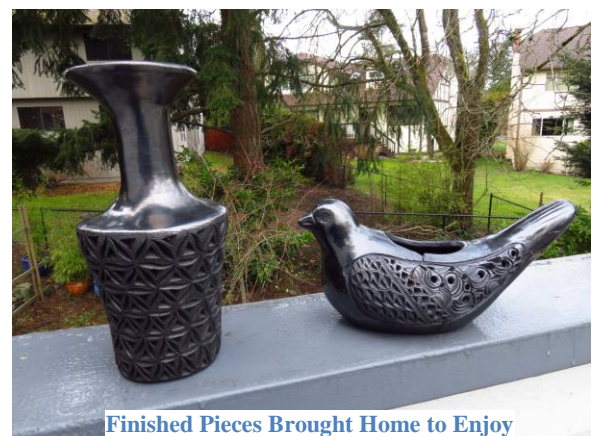
Barro Negro with Rosemary Neering

Meandering around the Oaxaca region in southern Mexico, we were lucky enough to arrive at the pottery workshop of Doña Rosa, in San Bartolo Coyotepec, while a tour group was being entertained with a pottery-making demonstration. *Barro negro* pottery, created from local clay, dates back many centuries, but the shiny black pieces that are now characteristic of this town have a shorter history. Fully fired, the black clay is matte and greyish, but durable and able to hold liquid. Several decades ago, Doña Rosa discovered that if the pottery pieces were burnished and wood-fired for a shorter time (usually eight instead of 12 hours), they acquire a beautiful shiny black finish. The pieces are made of incising and carving, and these strictly decorative and very fragile pieces are among Mexico's most popular folk art, and other



potters have continued the evolution of *barro negro* into sought-after artworks.

Almost everyone in San Bartolo Coyotepec is involved in the pottery-making business, but Dona Rosa's workshop, now run by her children and grandchildren, is the largest and best-known of the town's establishments.



MARCH 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Joy Finlay's Pottery on Display at Saanich Municipal Hall for the month of March				Clay Studio Methods of Making March 1-26 Coast Collective – 103-318 Wale Rd. Colwood		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Look Show Community Arts Exhibition Submission Deadline
12	13 Guild Meeting Souper Bowls pick up	14	15	16	17	18 Canadian Clay Symposium Shadbolt Centre Burnaby 9am-5pm
19	20	21	22 NCECA's 51 st Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017	23 NCECA's 51 st Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017	24 NCECA's 51 st Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017	25 NCECA's 51 st Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017
26	27	28	29	30	31	
APRIL 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Jan and Helga Gove Exhibit at Art Gallery Continues throughout the Month
2	3	4	5	6 Souper Bowls of Hope	7	8
9	10 Guild Meeting	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

ADVERTISING RATES

Business card size (2" x 3 1/2"):
\$10 per issue
or
\$75 for 10 issues

Quarter page ad (3 1/2" x 4 3/4")
\$20 per issue
or
\$150 for 10 issues

Sales announcements, events, classified ads:

FREE

Contact the *At a Glance* editor
helen.pedneault@shaw.ca

Guild at a Glance

... is the newsletter for the South Vancouver Island Potters Guild.

It is published monthly, September through June. It's distributed by email to all members and some copies are available at Guild meetings. The newsletter is also posted online at www.victoriapotters.ca

Articles and items of interest to members are welcome and will be included as space permits. Items for inclusion are best emailed to the editor
helen.pedneault@shaw.ca

**SUBMISSIONS REQUESTED BEFORE
THE FIRST OF THE MONTH**

The Executive

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**Victoria
Clay Art**

654 Burnside Road W.
Victoria BC V8Z 1M8

Here is a list of my favorite pottery tools, glazes and things. Dan

All available at Victoria Clay Art

Mud Tool Ribs
Amaco PC-20 Blue Rutile [cone 6]
Alphabet Stamp Set
2" Goat Hair Fan Brush
Magic Water
Stroke & Coat SC-74 Hot Tomale [cone 08-10]
MKM Finger Rollers
Xiem Telescoping Sponge on a Stick
Mud Tool Blue Sponge
Amaco Velvet Underglaze V-361 Jet Black
Aardvark Cone 5 BEE-Mix
Mud Tool Clay Cutting Wire [green handle]
MKM Wood Stamps
Paper Clay cone 06, 6, or 10

**Come in and look around, we're open
10:00am to 5:00pm Mon-Sat**

Vancouver Island Pottery Supply

Has Moved

Hello to all our valued customers, This is notice that VIPS has moved.

Our new address is:

515 Stanford Avenue E.
Parksville, BC
V9T 6V6

We have the same phone number and website address. We have a new email address.

Cheers, Donna

Ph: 1-250-248-2314

E-Mail: sales@vipottersupply.com
(new email address!!)

Web: www.vipottersupply.com

REMEMBER – among others, 2 great benefits to being in the South Vancouver Island Potters Guild are:

- 1) the library
- 2) access to the BC Potter's Guild newsletter online. Roger C. sends us the username and password each month.

So ... check them out! They're worth using!

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about them in the Guild Newsletter.*

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