



Leach Pottery
Studio & Museum

Issue 13 December 2011

Welcome to the 13th Leach Pottery newsletter. This last quarter has seen lots of firsts in the new Leach studio. We have had our first wedding – US apprentice potter, Kat Livesey is now Kat Wheeler having tied the knot in St Ives at the Chapel on the Island – many congratulations to Kat and Chris! We were joined by Sophia Wu from Taipei University during October – our first Taiwanese pottery intern, hopefully there will be many more following her. And we now have our first entry-level pottery apprentice, Felix Attlee from Hayle. We also had our first Pop Up restaurant, courtesy of Lime Tree Restaurant and Scarlet Wines – the entire menu was served on Leach tableware and looked and tasted amazing.

Sadly we also said goodbye to Ella Phillips who, after a year working in the studio, has returned to Somerset to continue her practice there – we wish her every success for the future.

This is also a time for saying a number of 'thank yous'. Firstly thanks to the Nippon Club, Japanese Embassy, the House of Cashmere and the Japanese Womens' Association for enabling the 'Day at the Leach Pottery in London' event on October 23rd and subsequent reception at the Burlington Arcade – and a special thanks to Jill Fanshawe, Setsuo Kato and Midori Endo for all their hard work. Thanks also to the Tanner Trust, Little Parc Owles Trust, West Cornwall Local Action Group, MLA Renaissance, Elmhirst Trust, Arts Council England, and Cornwall Council for grants awarded during the last quarter towards our education programme development, collections management, improvements to the studio facilities and towards the development of the business as we head towards Arts Council NPO status in 2012.

Thank you also to each and every one who contributed to the Leach Pottery's appeal for Mashiko. In November we concluded our campaign and handed over nearly £32,000 to the Mashiko Potters' Fund. We also sent a message from St Ives Town Council to the Mayor of Mashiko formally recognising the special relationship that has grown between the two towns from the original friendship between Leach and Hamada.

Thanks to all of you for supporting us in 2011 and hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Julia Twomlow, Director

**All the staff and potters at the Leach Pottery would like to wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
We hope to see you at the Pottery in 2012.**

Studio News

We have had a very busy autumn in the studio. The St Ives September Festival always brings an interested and knowledgeable audience to the pottery so we make sure that the gallery and shop are well stocked. Our festival exhibition this year was called Fiesta featuring six potters whose vibrant use of colour gave us an exceptional show.

Once the festival is over we usually have time to regroup and start working towards Christmas. This year we have had a couple of additional events which have kept us on our toes. The first was the "Leach Pottery in London" a day at the Nippon Club in Piccadilly. We set up a selling exhibition of tableware and pots from all the apprentices. Julia and I gave one of our double act presentations about the pottery. I was billed to give a demonstration but cunningly avoided this by slipping and falling, a couple of days before, onto a nail which went almost through my hand. In the evening we were entertained as guests of the Embassy of Japan at a party in the Burlington Arcade. It was a successful day, we sold almost 2K of tableware in the afternoon and met many people from the Japanese community, knowledgeable about Bernard Leach and the history of the Leach Pottery, who appreciated our visit.

In early November a collaboration with a local restaurateur led the Leach Pottery to become a "pop up" restaurant for an evening. The idea was that customers would enjoy a specially devised five course dinner with appropriate wines for each course, served on Leach tableware. Making, drying and firing the 254 pots needed in a couple of weeks gave us a few late nights, but all potters out there will know this one. By all accounts it was a lovely evening, great food and wine all looking amazing on the pots. I had to be in London and didn't get to sniff a cork. Look out for the pottery in the Michelin guide next year!

Ella Phillips has left the pottery to start her own studio in Somerset, not too far from the other Leach pottery. We will all miss her. I am pleased that she is the third apprentice from the pottery in the last four years who has moved on to work independently. This is how the apprenticeship system works best.

Our educational role in the studio is expanding to include short residencies and internships from students who are part way through their BA or MA course. In the last year we have had students from the Royal College, the Thomastown pottery skills course and the National University of Taiwan working with us for one-three month periods.

It was rewarding to read Crafts Council Director, Rosy Greenlees, comments in Ceramic Review where she described our collaboration with UCF as one of two highlights in a bleak ceramics education scene.

In early December we are working flat out to have the full tableware range available in the shop for Christmas and New Year visitors, but also looking ahead to next year and planning a great series of international residencies, master classes and exhibitions.

Jack Doherty, Lead Potter
December 2011

Pop-up Restaurant A Huge Success

Last month the Leach Pottery teamed up with Limetree Restaurant and Scarlet Wines to create a pop up restaurant in the Leach Pottery gallery. The event was so popular that the limited tickets could have sold three times over. Eventually 25 diners, many of whom had never visited the pottery before, seated themselves at tables against a background of pots by Bernard Leach, Hamada etc. while the meal was served on new Leach tableware. Superb food and fabulous wine were served by Scarlet wines and Limetree. Fingers crossed for another pop up restaurant next year – keep an eye on the Leach Pottery website for details.



St Ives Town Council formally recognizes its 'special friendship' with Mashiko

The relationship between Mashiko and the Leach Pottery in St Ives dates back over 90 years when Shoji Hamada, co-founder of the Leach Pottery with friend Bernard Leach, returned to Japan from St Ives following the Tokyo earthquake of 1923. He set up his own pottery in the village of Mashiko shortly after and through this friendship between two potters the friendship between the two towns developed. Over the years there have been numerous visits by individuals and artists between St Ives and Mashiko and in 2008, when the Leach Pottery was being restored, Mashiko people raised over £7,500 towards the building of the new studio in St Ives. On 20th October St Ives Town Council passed a unanimous resolution which formally recognised the 'special friendship' between the two towns and welcomed future exchanges and collaborations. On October 23rd at a reception for the Leach Pottery held at the Burlington Arcade by the Nippon Club and the Japanese Embassy, the resolution was announced by Harry Isaacs, town councillor and trustee of the Leach, former mayor of St Ives and former Leach potter.



Grant for new kiln

Thanks go to the Tanner Trust and the Little Parc Owles Trust who have between them donated nearly £3,500 for the purchase and installation of a new electric kiln in Beagle Cross, specifically for the use of the schools' and community education programme at the Leach Pottery. Education Officer, Amanda Brier, said "At the moment there is always a long wait after a community workshop before the pots can be fired. Having our own kiln is a huge boost to the programme".

Leach appeal raises over £31,000 for Mashiko

The Leach Pottery's appeal to raise money for Mashiko Potters' Fund closed at the end of October having attracted nearly £32,000 in donations. The appeal was launched in March 2010 by trustees and staff of the Leach Pottery as a response to the news of the dreadful damage that Mashiko pottery village had suffered during the Japanese earthquake.

The village of Mashiko, which relies heavily on its 400+ kilns and studios for its livelihood, was devastated during the earthquake and many of the historic kilns were destroyed. The appeal attracted donations from across the globe. Donations ranged from individual gifts to proceeds from auctions, sales, specially made pots and even a CD release. Woolley and Wallis auction house in Salisbury arranged a special auction with the assistance of potter Phil Rogers, Lisa Hammond at Kigbears Pottery held a fundraising sale, events and donations were received from groups as widespread as West Country Potters, Aardvark Clay & Supplies (USA), the International Potters Camp, Clayworks of New Hampshire, J D Wolfe Pottery, Mary Wandrausch pottery and the Etsy Mudflat group to name but a few. Classical guitarist Catherine Thom even recorded and released a CD of music for Mashiko and performed a concert at Hatfield and St Ives, the proceeds of which were donated to the appeal. With over 250 donations received, it is impossible to list everyone but thanks go out to each and every one who contributed to the fund and who promoted the appeal through blogs, social networking and even good old word of mouth.

The money collected has been sent to the Mashiko Potters' Fund, a non-profit organisation set up to help the potters and potteries of Mashiko to recover from the earthquake devastation. Mr Usuba, director of the fund, sent a brief message of thanks for this impressive donation along with the promise of a report and update on progress in Mashiko. While the Leach Pottery has now closed its appeal it is clear that the work is far from over and the Mashiko Potters' Fund is still accepting donations. Please see the front page of the Leach Pottery website for a link to the MPF bank details.

The Leach Pottery in London

Thanks to the Nippon Club and the Japanese Embassy for inviting the Leach Pottery to London in October. The day included a display and sale of new Leach Pottery tableware, a chance to take part in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and talks by Julia Twomlow and Jack Doherty. The sale and talk took place in the Nippon Club's HQ in St Alban's Street. The day concluded with a lovely reception for the pottery at the Burlington Arcade, Piccadilly courtesy of the Nippon Club, House of Cashmere and the Japanese Embassy with a welcoming speech by the new director of the Japanese Information and Culture Centre, Minister Hiroshi Suzuki.



Cornwall Council's Schools Art Collection goes on show at the Leach Pottery and the Royal Cornwall Museum

Cornwall Council Schools Art Collection which includes pieces by renowned artists such as Bernard Leach, Janet Leach, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, Patrick Heron and Terry Frost, is set to be enjoyed by a wider audience as the Council enlists the help of the Leach Pottery and the Royal Cornwall Museum to put more of the collection on show.

The collection of around 116 works was started after the then County Council received an anonymous donation in May 1961 of £100 made up of twenty £5 notes with a simple note saying 'To help Primary School funds'. After much thought it was agreed that the money should be used for something specific and art was finally agreed upon.

The Council wrote to John Piper, Peter Lanyon, Lady Epstein and Barbara Hepworth explaining what had happened and asking if they may be able to sell something at a reasonable price or had any other suggestions. They all replied and the collection was born.

The fine art collection has already been transferred to the Royal Cornwall Museum where 28 paintings are on display, and the ceramics collection is at the Leach Pottery. The works will be incorporated into each museum's educational programme to increase access and use of the collection by Cornish schools, as well as enjoyment of the collection by the general public.

Cornwall Council Cabinet Support Member for Culture Joan Symons said: "At a time when some other council's in the country are considering selling off works of art to plug funding gaps, Cornwall Council is making a very positive statement about the value that we place on our cultural heritage and improving opportunities for children and young people to gain inspiration from Cornwall's international reputation. This collection, formed with advice from Dame Barbara Hepworth, has for a number of years been kept in store with only a few works being loaned to schools and exhibitions each year. With the desire to see the collection better used, the Council has negotiated for the Royal Cornwall Museum to manage the fine art collection and the Leach Pottery the ceramics collection, with the expectation that their education teams will ensure that more schools make use of the collection."

Hilary Bracegirdle from the Royal Cornwall Museum said: "We are delighted to be managing the Cornwall Schools Art Collection on behalf of Cornwall Council. With a generous grant from the Tanner Trust to match our own funds, we have been able to provide the new storage required for the collection. Some paintings will be put to immediate use in our START project, funded by the Princes Foundation for Children and the Arts and aimed at using art to improve the academic and personal skills of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Funds from Cornwall Council will enable us to start addressing the conservation work that is needed and over the next 5 years we hope to integrate works from the collection into our learning programme. In the meantime around 28 of the works are on display in our fine art gallery."

Julia Twomlow from the Leach Pottery said: "Cornwall Council and Penwith District Council before it, has done huge amounts over the past few years to protect and preserve the Leach Pottery for future generations. We are delighted to be working with the Council again, bringing this important collection out of storage and back into the public eye. It is a great asset for us to use in our exhibition and education work. Several of the larger pieces are already on display in Bernard Leach's old workshop and can be seen by visitors to the Leach Pottery museum."

New Partnership with Taiwan University

Following a masterclass by Jack Doherty at the University of Taipei last year, the university sent their first student potter to the Leach Pottery for a short internship. Sophia Wu, a masters student at Taipei, spent six weeks studying at the Leach pottery studio and learning about tableware production. Sophia was also able to make use of the new accommodation made possible by the acquisition of Beagle Cross last year, the adjacent house which was part of the original Leach Pottery site. The house now has four bedroom and shared kitchen and bathroom facilities which are available to rent students and potters visiting or working at the Leach Pottery.



Gift Vouchers

Gift vouchers are available for sale from the Leach Pottery shop. These are ideal as Christmas or birthday gifts and can be posted to you with a gift card and a copy of our guidebook or a selection of postcards. The vouchers can be redeemed in the shop or can be used to pay for one of our 5-day intensive courses. If you would like to purchase a gift voucher, please telephone Margaret on 01736 799703, or email office@leachpottery.com.

Reissue of A Potter's Book by Faber & Faber

First published in 1940, Bernard Leach's most famous publication 'A Potter's Book', once a best seller translated into several languages and the 'bible' of the pottery world, has been out of print for many years. Since our reopening in 2008 the Leach Pottery has been petitioning the publishers to reprint. So we were delighted to learn, this autumn, that Faber & Faber have decided to restore this neglected classic as part of its Faber Finds series

The new edition of 'A Potter's Book' can be pre-ordered for £14 through Amazon or you will be able to buy it direct from the Leach Pottery shop. Next on our wish list is the re-release of 'Beyond East and West' – fingers crossed we may not have to wait too much longer!

The Leach Pottery Opening Times 2011/12

March - October
Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm
Sunday 11am to 4pm

November - end February
Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm
Closed Sundays

CLOSED

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day



Join our
facebook
group for
the latest
updates.

Leach Pottery, Higher Stennack St. Ives TR26 2HE
Telephone : 01736 799703
Email : office@leachpottery.com
Website: www.leachpottery.com