

*Inspirations...continued from page 2*

tion are equally difficult to receive as well as to give. Jeff's observations and remarks were honest, thoughtful and often poignant. His anecdotes and experiences were always pertinent and supportive. I certainly learned a lot about my own emotions and motivations.

As a professional ceramic artist, my motivation for participating in a workshop is more than learning a new technique. A workshop of this nature teaches me more about myself, asking me to consider my own inspirations. Living with and visiting the studios of the other artists outside of the clay studio as well as in the clay studio is as important a source for inspiration as technique is. Sure, spending five days immersed in clay, one would hope to leave behind some inhibitions and market driven work habits and delve into unexplored territory. But I also hope to be motivated by interacting, critiquing, searching, talking, revealing, inventing, inspiring, being inspired, making new friends and more. The fact that I still sense the motivation from my experience at NCSC is more than I could have expected. Anyone who has ever attended a workshop away from home can relate to the

feeling of exhilaration to return to one's own studio. After attending NCSC, my emotions carried me over the snowy Hogback Mountain to my Seacoast New Hampshire home and studio where I am anxiously awaiting the next North Country Studio Conference (in 2005) while I continue to fill my tables full of new explorations.

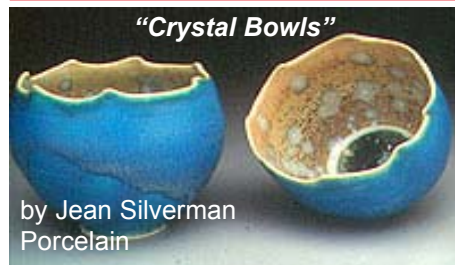
### Letter to the Editor:

I just have to write to let you know that I think our newsletter, POTLUCK, is the most elegant, colorful, informative, and attractive craft newsletter on the east coast if not in the country. I want to give particular praise and compliments to Deb Tessier who must spend countless hours putting our newsletter together. It is completely professional in every way and I just want her to know it is greatly appreciated by all of us in the Potters Guild. Thank you again Deb!

Very Truly Yours,  
Art Worth

The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Potters Guild

# POTLUCK



"Crystal Bowls"

by Jean Silverman  
Porcelain

NH Potters Guild  
c/o Linda Fletcher  
18 Depot Road  
Candia, NH 03034

### NH Potters Guild Officers

**Jeff Brown, President**, 950 1st. NH Turnpike,  
Northwood, NH 03261,  
<http://www.jeffbrownpottery.com>

**Lauren Dadmun, Vice President**, 23 Ormond  
Street #20, Concord, NH 03301, (603)226-0832

**Linda Fletcher, Treasurer**, 18 Depot Road,  
Candia, NH 03034, (603)587-0812,  
[mudsinger@atbi.com](mailto:mudsinger@atbi.com)

**Kathleen M. Feltz, Secretary**, 6 Ninth Street,  
Hampton, NH 03842, (603)926-2743,  
[fiestax2@gtcinternet.com](mailto:fiestax2@gtcinternet.com)

**Deb Tessier, Newsletter Publisher**, 10 Ashlie  
Road, East Kingston, NH 03827, (603)642-3801,  
[dtessier@ci.manchester.nh.us](mailto:dtessier@ci.manchester.nh.us)

The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Potters Guild

# POTLUCK

Volume 8, Issue 3

May 2003

## Inspirations and Explorations

By: Maureen Mills

Every once in a while, when I am at my wheel working with a table full of bowls waiting to be decorated, I pause and think to myself, "I'm making pottery in my own barn!" I recognize how fortunate I am to be able to continue to work this way, creating the ceramic work that I love to make and making a living from it, albeit a limited one. When my husband and I first opened our studio, we were in a very public place, demonstrating our work to museum visitors who walked through on a daily basis. When I recall working every day for a number of years in that manner, I rejoice now in the opportunity to work quietly in my own studio with my dogs by my side.

On the other hand, although I leave my studio regularly to teach classes and workshops or to participate in a craft fair, I occasionally find myself wanting to be with other potters, as a student of the teacher. I want to steep myself in new work and new ideas, be challenged in my thinking and my work, and interact with someone whose own clay work I respect and who will engage me in an intellectually and artistically challenging dialogue.

The North Country Studio Conference (NCSC) is a place where you can lose yourself in your work. Devoting time and thought to a new environment, new friends and new work is nothing less than intoxicating, especially when nestled in the snow covered Green Mountains of Southern Vermont.

This year's NCSC, hosted again by Bennington College, offered a compelling array of workshops ranging from *Book Making to Encaustic Painting, Found Object Lamp Making to Lampwork Bead Making*. The talent of each instructor was matched only by the enthusiasm of conference participants, and I realized every workshop had something significant to offer.

Leading the workshops were outstanding artists from around the country with impressive backgrounds. Each instructor was personable, approachable and more than willing to share his/her knowledge and talent. During this 5-day conference many workshop participants worked diligently (sometimes until after midnight) taking only a brief respite to listen to a slide presentation offered by their instructor.

Not surprisingly, both clay workshops were among those that worked late. The handbuilding workshop, *Mining Inspiration: Handbuilding Clay*, was conducted by Arnie Zimmerman. Please refer to the article by Ron Tornow published in the March 2003 issue of POTLUCK.

Although the *Flameworked Glass* and the *3D Design* workshops (among others) tempted me, I decided not to pass up an opportunity to work with Jeff Oestreich. I participated in his throwing workshop, *Expressive Functional Pottery*. I genuinely respect and admire the strength and clarity of Jeff's pottery and found him to be an extraordinarily generous workshop instructor, contributing to an overwhelmingly positive experience for all workshop participants who ranged in experience from "professional amateurs" to professional potters. His teaching style included not only demonstrations but also anecdotes about his personal life and inspirations supplemented with a broad range of slides. Jeff shared his thoughts about his experiences at the St. Ives Pottery in England, working with Warren McKenzie in Minnesota, and about his travels to Australia. Each of these experiences strengthened his own ideas and



Jeff Oestreich demonstrates one of many techniques to alter a bowl.

*Inspirations...continued on page 2*

*Inspirations...continued from cover*

and inspirations, culminating in the consummate talent he so generously shared with our group.

While the handbuilding studio jumped right into working with clay, the wheel working studio was up to its elbows in glazes during the first evening of the conference. Each participant brought bisqueware on which we experimented with waxes, stains, glazes and flashing slips that were then fired in a small soda kiln, one of several kilns in Bennington College's kiln yard. Although most participants had fired kilns before, not everyone had done a soda firing, so taking turns introducing the soda mixture kept many of us up late.

Thanks to the assistance of a more than able studio monitor, who worked into the wee hours of the morning, our soda firing was done by midnight the following night! Considering the array of clays and the variety of techniques everyone used, I'd have to say that the firing was a great success, which really means that every one of us wanted to go home to build our own soda kiln.

Jeff's demonstrations included throwing drinking bowls, using wet altering techniques while the piece was still glistening on the wheel and saving some pieces to experiment on while leather hard. The 'beaked' pitcher, which has become his trademark, was constructed from a thrown piece, then cut and reassembled into a dramatically altered form with a slab spout added on. Focusing on expressive forms led to understanding altering techniques in combination with design principles and their thoughtful incorporation into our own work to enhance the refinement of form.

After two days of throwing and working on altering techniques, we had a group critique to which we all brought two pieces: one 'winner' and one 'dog'. This sort of group effort requires strength of character on the part of all participants. Freshly thrown work explored new directions or incorporated new techniques. Displaying each piece on the table and sharing in the critique taught each of us something new about our work and ourselves. But in a situation such as this, among peers, our emotions are shown in our work and are put on display to be deconstructed and then reconstructed. Constructive criticism and honest interpreta-

*Inspirations...continued on page 4*

## June Meeting – June 8<sup>th</sup> @ 3:30pm

**Directions To Jeff Brown Pottery**

**950 1<sup>st</sup> NH Tpk., Northwood, NH 03261**

### **From Concord I-93:**

Take Exit 15E toward Loudon/Portsmouth. Merge onto Rte 4/Rte 202 and continue for 17 miles (from I-93). Look for Jeffrey Drive on your left. #950 is the 4<sup>th</sup> house on the left after Jeffrey Drive.

### **From Portsmouth I-95:**

Take Exit 4 toward NH Lakes/Spaulding Tpk/White Mtns. After you pass over the bridge, take Exit 6W which is Rte 4 toward Durham/Concord. Continue on Rte 4 for about 22 miles into Northwood. Northwood's Town Hall is on the right-hand side of the road. #950 is the 4<sup>th</sup> house on the right from the flashing yellow light at Coe-Brown Northwood Academy's parking lot.

This is a potluck meeting.

Officers should arrive at 2:30pm.

**Deadline for next issue of POTLUCK is July 11, 2003.**

Send your information to: [dtessier@ci.manchester.nh.us](mailto:dtessier@ci.manchester.nh.us).

*~Our August 6<sup>th</sup> meeting will be at Mt. Sunapee (in the upper lodge) at 5:30pm. This meeting will be catered!~*

 **IT OUT**

*“Taking your Wheel  
Throwing to the Next Level”*  
June 21-23, 2003

Mark Shapiro - Instructor  
The technical side of making bowls/cylinder forms with greater scale, and confidence, as well as working on lids, handles, and spouts and the problem of harmonizing these parts and making them function will be explored. The throwing of large two-part forms will also be shown. Website: [www.snowfarm.org](http://www.snowfarm.org)

**Snow Farm**  
The New England Craft Program

**WATERSHED** 2003 Summer  
Center for the Ceramic Arts Sessions

**Session I: June 22-July 4;** Artists Invite Artists with Brad Schwiager

**Session II: July 6-18;** Woodfire Artists Invite Artists with Dan Murphy

**Session III: July 20-Aug. 1;** Guest Artists David Alban & Megan Sweeney

**Session IV: Aug. 3-5;** Artists Invite Artists with Kevin Nierman

**Session V: Aug. 17-29;** Guest Artist Justin Novak

Website: [www.watershedcenterceramicarts.org/](http://www.watershedcenterceramicarts.org/)

Some may have found it distressing to have read a negative **Letter to the Editor** in the last issue of POTLUCK. On a positive side, POTLUCK, like all publications, has benefited by the controversy that letter has generated. Not surprisingly, all of the commentary can be rebutted.

### *What indeed has happened to the Potters Guild?*

1. It has remained an important, active, educational and informational community especially for entry level potters, students and professionals, who are new to NH (as well as, parts of ME, MA and VT).
2. It continues to be an inclusive organization with a membership profile of broad interests.
3. The biennial exhibit is open to ALL members without submission to a jury. ALL work entered is displayed (this was not so in the past).
4. Records show that over the years, award recipients have been quite diverse.
5. Open kiln groups have been established which enables greater contacts and easier travel.
6. The object of the biennial exhibit is to showcase our members work, thereby offering a guaranteed display for each member, publicity for the NHPG and better awareness of other members' work. The "awards" given are nominal and far less significant than the above goals.

I personally have participated in the last four exhibits and have not received an award. However, because of my participation, I have sold a piece or two. My reason for participating each year is to support the PG. I am proud to be part of an exhibit that is well received by the public.

I have offered to be on the committee to plan our next exhibit. Any input regarding the structure of this exhibit, its location, publicity, etc. will be given a thorough review.

Those interested in being part of this committee should contact Jeff Brown or myself. I expect to see Roger M. Galuska among the group.

Sincerely,  
Ron Tornow

### **Read On...**

Roger Galuska, in response to your **Letter to the Editor**, I agree that competition does not always foster a warm sense of community...on the other hand:

- Every piece that was entered into the Over, Under/Inside Out Exhibition was exhibited, no jury, no holds barred.
- The Potters Guild had a marvelous, noisy, convivial opening with food described by Jane K. as "better than the Currier's" (whose opening of the NH Art Association's Annual Exhibit was the same evening). Tamsin even made three pineapple upside down cakes in keeping with the spirit of our exhibition's theme.
- The exhibition's juror, Phil Rogers, an extraordinary potter from Wales, is of international importance, thus lending exceptional prestige to our exhibit.

- Phil conducted a workshop for the Potters Guild and the NHIA during the fall of 2001. He did not see any member's work then, no pieces were identified when he juried this exhibit and no one was in the room with him as he made his choices, so there was no bias. It's true that five of the 8 prizes were awarded to juried members of the League of NH Craftsmen and four prizes were awarded to NHIA ceramic faculty members, which in my opinion, only enhances the pride/feel for the League's standards and the Institute's policy of hiring the best artists available in our region.
- The presentation of awards did take up the better part of our social time on this occasion. However, in the last two years, there were nine other meetings and several workshops, in addition to the two smaller/regional social and educational offshoots of the NHPG not to mention the many friendships fostered through our organization.
- The awarding of prizes should involve fanfare! (*And I hope it was educational as well*). Noting quality does not imply denigration, but rather gives us aspirations. Let's hope that in the best sense of community, we can rejoice when one of us is noticed while continuing to support special qualities in each of us every day.

With Respect,  
Al Jaeger



**The Empty Bowls Committee has heard  
your requests!**

We have scheduled another bowl-a-thon to take place at the New Hampshire Institute of Art on Saturday, June 14th from 10am - 4pm. Please come by and throw or handbuild as many bowls as you'd like. Come back two weeks later (Saturday, June 28th) to glaze your bowls any way you'd like. All bowls made during the bowl-a-thon will be donated to our next Empty Bowls Event which will be held sometime in September at Brookside Church on Elm Street in Manchester. Come on by, catch up on what other members are doing, bring a lunch and make some bowls!

Robin E. McGregor

**THE CLASSIFIEDS**

Classes in Manchester - Beginner through Intermediate  
Wheel-Working and/or Handbuilding  
For more information call the Studio of Robin E. McGregor at  
603-669-1601 or E-mail: [loveofclay@aol.com](mailto:loveofclay@aol.com)

**For up-to-date classified information visit the NHPG's  
Website at: [www.jeffbrownpottery.com/guild.html](http://www.jeffbrownpottery.com/guild.html)**