



# mudlark

February 2021

South of the River Potters' Club Newsletter

## COMING EVENTS:

- March Meeting – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>
- Robyn Varpins exhibition – April 8-18
- Glorious Mud Exhibition October 15<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>

## February Meeting

The February meeting was busy with news of the children's pottery classes, a successful clean-up of the sheds and ideas for a theme for this year's 'Glorious Mud' in October. As the new studio will under construction (we hope) by the date of the exhibition, themes such as 'Renewal', 'Renaissance' or 'Rebirth' were suggested. If you have another idea for a theme, please let Chris know.

Members are also encouraged to contribute suggestions for workshops and demonstrations for the upcoming year.

Suggestions so far include: Cone 6/1220° Firing and Majolica.

## AGM

The AGM was held on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> and was very well attended. The important business of the meeting was dealt with most efficiently and Jenny presented a summary of the year's activities and it was apparent that 2020 had been a very busy and productive year, despite the virus. While presenting her report, Treasurer Peggy recalled the tradition, now lapsed, of members donating 'Club Pots' whose sale proceeds would be donated to the Club coffers. She encouraged a renewal of this policy as these small amounts can add up to a significant contribution for the Club. There was also some discussion about kiln fees and it was pointed out that the fees cover the electricity costs and include a loading for maintenance and eventual replacement of the kilns. 2020 was a case in point with significant expenditure on kiln maintenance including very costly element replacements.

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Website: <http://sorpottersclub.com>

President – Jenny Rygiel 0451 119 242

Secretary – Chris Rogers 9453 1401

Treasurer – Peggy Stacy 9331 2507

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## Website

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We have a new website which was officially 'launched' at the AGM. The address is: [www.sorpottersclub.com](http://www.sorpottersclub.com) or you can scan the QR code below.



Please take the time to check out all the pages\* and feed back any suggestions to Clive ([clivesmail71@gmail.com](mailto:clivesmail71@gmail.com)). The **Links** page is incomplete and all suggestions are welcome for links to pottery sites and organisations as well as useful pottery web pages, videos, etc. The **'Downloads'** page has links to various documents including and archive of Mudlark back issues and minutes of Club meetings.



\* PS: the more pages are visited, the higher the Google search ranking will become.

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## ROBYN VARPINS' EXHIBITION

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Robyn Varpins will be having a joint exhibition with artist, Julie Podstolski in April 8-18. The theme is 'An Italian Dream' and the venue is EARLYWORK, 330 South Terrace, South Fremantle. Opening night is Thursday April 8 between 6.30 and 8.30pm.



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## BARB'S TIPS

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Barbara Reeve has been a member of the Club for a very long time and has been potting for longer than she cares to remember. Here she shares some of her favourite tips and tricks for us.

### 1) How to reconstitute dry clay

Break up clay into small pieces and add it to a bucket of water.

Add a dash of vinegar

When mixture has completely slaked stir well to remove any lumps.

Pour slurry into an old pillow case and tie it up and by a rope to a tree branch or rack. Allow it to drain for several days or until the clay is ready to be wedged. Another way is to pour the slurry on to a plaster bat and allow the excess moisture to be absorbed until it is firm enough to wedge.

### 2) Magic Water

This solution is great for joining and repairing green porcelain. I also use equal parts of it and water mixed with dried stone ware or earthen ware clay to make a joining slip.

Recipe: 1 Tbsp Sodium Silicate  
1 Tbsp Soda Ash (Washing Soda) dissolved in a little warm water  
1 Litre water

**3) If your glaze has settled and is difficult to stir** (ie hard panning) the addition of a flocculant could restore it to the right consistency.

To a cup of warm water add 1 to 2 Tbsp Epsom Salts Stir well and continue adding salt until a thin layer of crystals can be seen at the bottom of the glass jar The clear fluid at the top is now a saturated solution Pour the clear fluid off the top of the glaze and save it Break up the residue with a metal tool and return the fluid to it While stirring constantly add a few drops of the flocculant at a time until the glaze is creamy and in suspension. This website has lots of good information - <https://suemcleodceramics.com/>

### 4) Make your own personalised tools

Using strips of metal strapping (they used to hold bricks together - nowadays plastic is used) With tin snips cut your desired profiles.

Bamboo makes wonderful tools Whittle them into shape.

A hairpin stuck in a broken biro makes a good carving tool.



5) A damp piece of chamois cut to wheel head size will keep a bat from slipping.

6) Bridal tulle is great for fabric to rub the dry porcelain to gently 'sand' the surface to thin and smooth it.

7) The best tip of all is to experiment learn new techniques and enjoy potting!

**Next Meeting:**

- **Wednesday March 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am**