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As our Chair notes in her report, our members are busy with numerous exhibitions, gallery events and open studios at this time of year.

Eye and hand creators - potters - are probably less inclined to conjure up written words, so at this time of year are more likely than ever to keep their news or views within the confines of their studio. This issue is shorter than many but fortunately is supplemented with news of events provided by important organisations.

Neil Dewey - Editor

Group Update

CHAIR'S LETTER

Hello.

The season of exhibitions, shows and interactive events is well underway, in line with the burst of growth in the garden. Ceramic Art London is done and dusted, SCG pop-up ceramic exhibition has just been hosted at The Corner Collective in Portsmouth, organised by Lynn Nicholls and Helen Scribbans and artists on the South coast have enjoyed Chichester Open Studios. During three days in early May an exciting new craft show called MADE Winchester was at Winchester Cathedral. MADE organisers have a fantastic reputation of looking after their stallholders, and with the backdrop of soaring Norman architecture, I hope this enticing mix of handmade ceramics, jewellery, fabrics, wood, leather, basketry and more will become an annual fixture.

Southern Ceramic Group, led by Vasu Reddy, have an exciting day planned at The Brickworks Museum, Swanwick, coming up this Sunday 7th June.

Details at www.thebrickworksmuseum.org or southernceramicgroup.org.uk/scg_events/.

If you are free, do come along to the outskirts of Southampton for a day of raku firing displays and a ceramics market, all available at no extra cost to the museum entry price. If you haven't already visited the museum, it is a fascinating insight to the history of brick making and has hundreds of clay-related artefacts on display.

Our artists across several counties are busily throwing, turning, building, sculpting and glazing getting ready for the Summer Exhibition at the Great Kitchen, Chichester, together with a myriad of other group exhibitions. There are also many chances to visit fellow ceramics enthusiasts and engage with their work, as I see from the Hampshire Open Studios brochure proof, with more potters joining in than ever before. As we all know, working independently in studios can be a lonely existence, so once artists get the chance to meet interested parties, they are invariably friendly, keen to chat and share thoughts and techniques.

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CHAIR'S LETTER - cont.

Until I volunteered to become part of Southern Ceramic Group's committee, I never realised how seasonal it would feel being involved more deeply in the world of ceramics. The annual diary of events comes round all too fast, requiring planning far ahead in order to fulfil tasks to fit in with deadlines. The joy of being a visitor to other people's displays of hard work, the lifelong opportunities to learn from others, hearing about the failures and the successes of process always sends me back to my own studio with renewed determination to innovate, to express, to become immersed in the joy of creativity.

If you would like to be part of the SCG committee, there is an opportunity to volunteer to be our Membership Secretary. Caroline Piggott has handled the role since 2021 and would now like to step down. It involves an annual task of handling the membership renewals, keeping an eye on queries or issues for new members through the year, and the chance to be part of the committee, helping to shape the group's activities and events. The membership secretary needs access to a computer, to be prepared to learn how to use the **Membermojo** site, and to communicate via email. Caroline is very happy to give training,

support, and advice to the successful applicant. Please get in touch with me at scg_chair@southernceramicgroup.org.uk or Caroline, at scg_membership@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

The committee are very conscious that much of what we organise is in or near the centre of an enormous catchment area for members. We are all volunteers and give to the group willingly our time to put on exhibitions, demonstrations, and other events. Our chosen venues don't suit all members, as time on the road to deliver, steward and collect, or just attend, feels like too much. However, if members would like to host events closer to their own homes, the committee would be very happy to support them in whatever way we can – with advice, systems, publicity and equipment or other ways of helping. Please get in touch with one of us if you would like support.

With best wishes,
Francheska

Francheska Patisson
scg_chair@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

NEW MEMBERS

Since January this year nineteen new members have joined the group.

Esther Barrett	Bordon, Hants	Sheila Purvis	Farnham
Sandy Armstrong	Stubbington	Sue Bisdee	Chichester
Matt Mullins	Fleet	Tom Chamberlain	Wickham
Nicolas Bailey	Winchester	David Pointer	Poole
Jodi Hayes	Bognor Regis	Christine Myall	Littlehampton
Jane Eastell	Chichester	Tricia Hanson	Farnham
Phil Dickinson	Redhill	Alison Wood	Chichester
Sue Fielder	Kings Worthy	Julie Wier	Fareham
Samantha Perkins	Guilford	Julian Richardson	Brockenhurst
Elaine Hains	Farnham		

A warm welcome to all these new members and apologies should any have been missed.

Caroline Piggott scg_membership@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



DEMONSTRATION - Jo Davies 19 September

On 19 September we will be delighted to welcome Jo Davies to Herne Hill in Petersfield to give a demonstration and workshop to our members. This promises to be a thrilling and inspiring day.

Jo Davies is a ceramic artist specialising in wheel-thrown porcelain (<https://www.jo-davies.com/>). Her practice includes hand-making her fine porcelain design range of vases, vessels, lighting and unique objects. Jo's work creates a balance of simplicity and surprise, making shapes that appear soft and inviting to touch. Her signature black and white glazes have recently been developed to include shades of red, gold-leaf and cobalt blue surface design elements but shape and form continue to be the most important factors in her work.



In addition to making, Jo works with brands like Union Coffee and Mulberry as a named-designer and is also a specialist tutor for ceramics.

Jo runs a number of workshops throughout the year at various locations (including her own studio in Herefordshire and at West Dean College). Jo also inspires and teaches ceramicists through her online platform, Studium, (<https://www.studiumcommunity.com/>) This online community has been developed by Jo Davies as a place for ceramicists to learn and seek advice through live sessions with Jo and other guest-experts.

Booking details will be sent out nearer the time.

Caroline Berkeley
scg_demonstrations@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

Social Media



INSTAGRAM - STORIES

Not content with beautiful and informative posts, our [SCG Instagram account](#) is now getting more and more active. You will have seen eye-popping posts about member's work on the hugely popular Instagram Stories function. SCG member and volunteer, Libby Daniels, had created animated posts to music to build momentum ahead of the summer exhibition. Please [@SouthernCeramicGroup](#) on your own Instagram stories so that your stories can be re-posted for even greater exposure. Don't forget to follow [@SouthernCeramicGroup](#) & [#SouthernCeramicGroup](#) when posting your amazing pictures of your ideas, work in progress, hacks etc.



FACEBOOK

If you have not already done so, please follow [@southernceramicsgroup](#) on Facebook - also a great place to see posts from fellow members and find out about local opportunities too. The [Members Chat room](#) is a great place to share ideas, get advice and offer up unwanted equipment etc. If you are a SCG member and have not got access simply use the Facebook messenger function, with your name and membership number.



HELP NEEDED

Please try and use the SCG social media tools available to you to help keep the feeds active and engaging for fellow members. It really helps us get the word out to the broader community about the great work everyone is doing - and will help footfall at exhibitions - and that means better sales!!

To learn how to market on social media, or use social media to your advantage please get in touch

We are constantly looking for help with our media content. If there are any members who would be interested in joining a small social media team to help on specific events please contact Beccy Gardiner.

Becky Gardiner scg_social@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

Members' News

CHALK'S - Lymington



Harriet and Rosie of Chalk's Gallery report they have re-opened with a new exhibition "Lyme to Lepe". They say, "We have resumed our usual opening hours of Tues - Sat from 10-4pm. We have lot of fabulous new work available from brand new artists who have never exhibited with us before, plus some that have come back after a few years away! As usual, there's artwork available for all budgets and tastes, including ceramics, printmaking, jewellery, glass, painting and textiles."

Chalk's Gallery
29 St. Thomas Street, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 9NE.

www.chalksgallery.com
info@chalksgallery.com



MADE Winchester - 7-9 May 2026, Winchester Cathedral

I was very excited to hear last November that MADE was coming to Winchester as I live a few miles south of the cathedral and to my knowledge this was the first event of its size and quality in Winchester for a very long time. I was however a bit concerned about the upfront costs (similar to Potfest) and the risk of losing money. The application deadline was the beginning of December and as with many events I had to submit photos, a bio and details of my website and social media. MADE has a reputation of being highly curated. Although I enjoy making my monochrome pots using black clay and white slip / glaze, I only submitted details of my functional pieces in traditional colours as I thought they would be more popular. A couple of weeks later I heard that I had been accepted. I had very little stock after the Christmas markets so had to work hard from January making mugs, jugs, bowls, vases and plates. I have 3 functional ranges using a palette of green, blue and white.



There were around 80 exhibitors most of whom were inside the cathedral, the rest in gazebos outside in the 'inner close'. I was really fortunate to have a stand near the entrance in the central nave (outside stands were cheaper but you had to demonstrate and I don't have a portable wheel). Set up was easy as I had help from my family. Thursday was a long day – 10-5pm then a private view in the evening. Thursday and Friday were busier in the morning with things quietening down after 3pm. Half-way through Day 2 to my relief I had covered my stand costs. Saturday was really good – very busy in the morning and pretty good in the afternoon. I sold more on Saturday than Thursday and Friday combined.

Positives: an amazing location and plenty of room for my stand. High standard of work (yes I experienced imposter syndrome). Beautiful organ music. Friendly exhibitors. Good connections made. Lovely to see people from SCG.

Negatives: none really although we couldn't eat or drink inside the cathedral which presented its challenges especially when I was on my own on the stand. There was some confusion over the name. Some visitors thought the event was Made 'in' Winchester and were expecting all local businesses. In reality many exhibitors were part of the MADE community and had travelled quite a distance. I also think the event could have been advertised more widely locally.

What did I learn? My prices were on the low side. My larger items sold more than the smaller/ less expensive ones. Exhibitors with high end items (and there were many) didn't need to sell much to cover their costs – I needed to sell quite a lot. Would I apply again? Yes definitely for Winchester. Further afield I am not so sure as there would be accommodation costs.



Helen Piper
Silkstead Pottery
silksteadpottery@gmail.com



ART IN THE GARDEN 2026 - a reminder

SCG member, Jan Griffiths, will be hosting her annual `Art in the Garden` event once again this year and would love for you to pop along and say hi, or even better enter the Open Competition to have a piece installed in the woodland.

See www.littleforestlandart.co.uk for full details.

May 23rd – June 6th

Opening Times: Wed – Fri 10am-4pm, Sat & Sun 10am-5pm
Closed on Mon 25th & Tue 26th May, Mon 1st & Tue 2nd June

Free entry – donations welcome to support the LFLA project

On-site parking

Payment card facilities now available

Children only with accompanying adult

STRICTLY NO DOGS – except guide dogs

Little Forest Land Art

Open Art Competition

Display your work at Art in the Garden 2026

LFLA are looking for artworks to display at Art in the Garden, an annual open studio event in the Hampshire countryside, featuring work from numerous invited artists and makers.

Prizes:
The Judges' Choice will receive £150
The People's Choice winner will receive £50

Closing date:
9th February 2026

FREE TO ENTER

ENTER HERE

Judges:
Jo Bushnell, Director, Aspex Portsmouth
Joe Ross, Street Artist, and our 2025 winner
plus LFLA's Jan Griffiths & Adrian Mundy

www.littleforestlandart.co.uk

Little Forest Land Art

@littleforestlandart
 LittleForestLandArt



HOLY DIRT



Performing clay in a new way, Vidya Thirunarayan, an SCG member uses the symbolic value of mud and nature in the dramatic theatrical production "Holy Dirt".

Directed and designed by David Glass, the show is touring festivals this summer including at the Brighton Festival, (late May), and An Indian Summer Festival (<https://www.indiansummer.org.uk/>) Leicester on 3,4th July. The show will tour India and Korea in 2026/27.

It aims to depict the current climate crisis, and women's success in breaking back into nature. But emotionally it carries a deeper vein of engagement, showing one woman's captivity in a world without mud (literally and symbolically), and her ability to break the barriers of a clinically clean and controlled world.

It reminds me of a short story by Ursula Le Guin, and the choice we face between accepting the risks of of a messy reality and the sterile fantasy of the world we have become accustomed to. Go and see it!

Vasu Reddy





MELANIE LEGGE

Aged 11, I joined the Chelsea Pottery in London and absolutely loved my first contact with clay. I recently found the first head I made from that time; I am so glad I kept it! After school there was no time for clay – but then a chance meeting when living in Denmark in 2012 led to my joining Danish sculptor Jeanette Bronsted for sculpting life classes. As soon as I picked up a handful of clay, it was like coming home... the familiarity and joy. My enthusiasm got the better of me at one point; I dug a fire pit in the garden. The resultant billowing smoke wafted through the neighbour's windows and prompted threats to call to the police unless I put it out immediately



Sir Ranulph Fiennes and his image which now resides at the Royal Geographical Society



The Very Rev. Trevor Beeson at Romsey Abbey

Once back in England I joined the occasional Master Class with eminent sculptors including Marcus Cornish, Etienne Milner, and Alan Clarke to fine tune my portraiture techniques. I absolutely love the challenge of portraiture – the attention to detail, the hint of character and personality. The subject's time is precious, and for them to sacrifice some of it while I fiddle around with muddy hands is such a privilege. When it goes really well, sculptor and subject develop an extraordinary "confessional" relationship, where there is an unwritten rule that confidences are not betrayed. If the essence of these conversations seep into the portrait, then I know I have done my job.



In contrast to the exacting precision of portraiture, my hands need to be released from any rules, and have fun simply playing with clay. This is where the "abstract" porcelain sculpture comes in. I never start a piece knowing how it will turn out – the journey is dictated by the whim of the clay. Bits drop off, holes appear, bits twist and turn in the kiln... opening the kiln is always exciting! I am lucky in that whilst only about 30% ever make it to the end of the process in a sellable form, there are a couple of galleries who do sell my work, which makes the whole process worthwhile.

cont. on next page



MELANIE LEGGE - cont.



In the meantime, much of my time is spent teaching prisoners in HMP Winchester the joys and discipline of pottery. Recently I took in a portable wheel, which generated much hilarity and enthusiasm. See previous SCG Newsletter for more on Pottery in Prison.

I am currently pulling together a collection for an exhibition in Venice in the Autumn. You are all very welcome to come to the PV - further details will be shared with the SCG as they are published.



MELANIE LEGGE
SCULPTOR AND CERAMIST

VENICE

EXHIBITION DATES
16 - 30 SEPTEMBER
2026

11:00 - 18:00
EVERY DAY

S. POLO 62
VENICE

1 MINUTE WALK
FROM RIALTO BRIDGE

Instagram icon @MELANIE_LEGGE
Globe icon MELANIELEGGESCUPTOR.COM

*"Porcelain shaped by nature,
refined by hand, made to endure."*



FREE EXHIBITION - Winchester College's Treasury Museum Collecting and Connoisseurship: Winchester's Greek Vases in Context



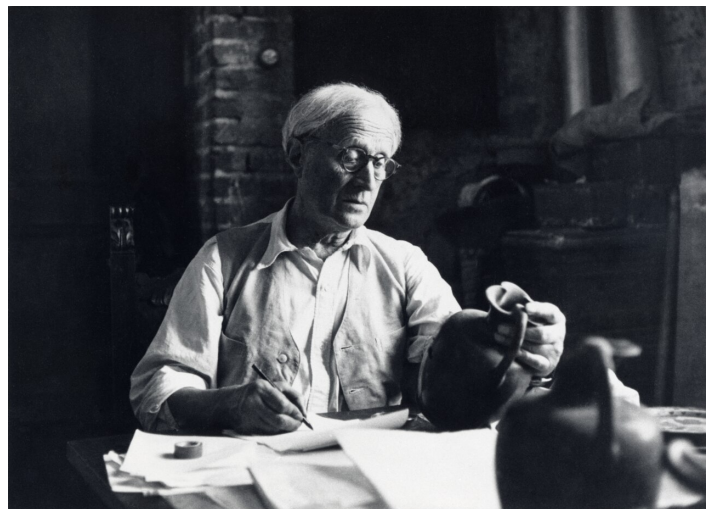
A [new exhibition](#) has recently opened at Winchester College's [Treasury museum](#), showcasing the school's important collection of ancient Greek vases. It has been curated by a group of sixth-form pupils at the College, and examines the history of the collection alongside wider developments in the study and collecting of Greek vases.

Most of the vases in the College's collection were acquired by the school in the 1890s and early 1900s, either through purchase or donation, and they have been used in teaching and research for over 100 years. The pupils responsible for the exhibition have been working alongside staff to research, select, and interpret these objects, offering their insights into the history and academic significance of the collection.

Mr Edmund Lewis, Head of Classics at Winchester College, said: "This exhibition explores a number of fascinating stories, above all the history of our own Greek vase collection. It has been very rewarding to see our sixth-form Classics pupils curating it. At Winchester we greatly value object-based learning, where pupils engage with history by interacting directly with extraordinary resources like these ancient vases. This allows students to gain a deeper understanding of the past and to develop new ways of interpreting it."

Winchester College's Treasury museum displays the school's collections of art and archaeology. In addition to artefacts from the ancient world, the museum's displays also include medieval art, Chinese ceramics, paintings, and an important collection of early English silver. Open daily from 2-4pm, the museum offers free entry and an opportunity to discover exceptional collections in the heart of Winchester.

Collecting and Connoisseurship: Winchester's Greek Vases in Context is open daily from 2-4pm and runs until mid-December 2026. Admission to the museum and to the exhibition is free and no pre-booking is required.





CLAY COLLEGE Graduate Showcase 2026

Clay College Stoke has asked that we draw our members' attention to their Graduate Showcase 2026. It features 14 emerging makers at the forefront of the next wave of ceramics in the UK. The work is the outcome of two years training on the only ceramic diploma of its kind in the UK and will be on sale at both venues - the historic Middleport Pottery in Stoke, and a specially curated short show at The Department Store, Brixton, London.

Clay College - 18 July - 6 Sept
open Tues - Fri: 10 - 3pm. Sat, Sun & Bank Hol.: 11 - 3.30pm

The Department Store - 31 July - 2 Aug
open Fri & Sat: 10 - 5pm. Sun: 10 - 4pm



MUSEUM & ART SWINDON Beneath the Surface: A Century of Studio Ceramics in Britain 9 May 2026 27 Feb 2027

The first major exhibition of Museum & Art Swindon's important studio ceramics collection is now open. They say it is one of the finest collections of studio ceramics in the South West, and spans a whole century of making. 'Beneath the Surface' looks at the history of studio ceramics in Britain, from the early 1920s until today. It examines the foundational ethos of studio ceramics, which placed beauty and practicality at the heart of everyday objects, and traces the evolution of clay as a contemporary art medium. The exhibition highlights the fusion of innovative styles and techniques over the last century, and the porous boundaries between art and craft, breaking down limiting categories of fine art and craft items.

The collection is particularly strong on women artists within studio ceramics, and six makers have been featured as part of the exhibition: Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie, Lucie Rie, Ann Stokes, Mary Rogers, Sara Radstone and Fenella Elms.

Also on show is a new display from Museum & Art Swindon's fine art collection, 'Dialogues: Continuing Conversations from Beneath the Surface', which presents paintings and prints that resonate with themes in the Studio Ceramics exhibition. Works include paintings by Desmond Morris, a great supporter of the museum, who sadly died earlier this year, Ben Nicholson, Edward Bawden and Mary Fedden.



Committee



Chair Francheska Pattison
07879 634103
scg_chair@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Treasurer Neil Rampton
07710 535012
scg_treasurer@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Honorary Secretary Lucy Prosser
07786 391749
scg_secretary@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Exhibition Treasurer - Helen Scribbans
07854 630930
scg_exh_treasurer@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Demonstrations Caroline Berkeley
07740 465400
scg_demonstrations@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Summer Exhibition Co-ordinator Diane Henshaw
07910 113320
scg_summer_exhibition_coordinator@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



IT Manager (temporary) Neil Rampton
07710 535012
scg_it_manager@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Other Exhibitions Manager Lynn Nicholls
07855 753431
scg_other_exhibitions_coordinator@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Newsletter Neil Dewey
07714 372857
scg_newsletter@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Membership Secretary Caroline Piggott
02380 550718
scg_membership@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Other Events. Vasu Reddy
07906 850724
scg_other_events@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Social Media Beccy Gardiner
scg_social@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



Newsletter Publication - Dates and Guidance

Please send contributions to: scg_newsletter@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

NEWSLETTER DUE	1 June 2026	COPY DEADLINE	17 May 2026
	1 October 2026		16 September 2026
	1 February 2027		17 January 2027

Keep me posted, please, at any time before the deadline with your news of galleries and exhibitions showing your work, studio tips, memories, and especially images that might be shared.

Article Ideas. I would be pleased to discuss ideas you may have before drafting. Generally 5-600 words would be the ideal with a maximum size of 1000 plus photos.

Photos and other images. Please send these as separate .jpg files. If your document contains embedded photos that is not a problem as it shows me where they should be placed but I always need them as separate files as well with descriptive file name please, (e.g. Freda blue pot). And please remember the reproduction limitations of the newsletter if viewing your technical or aesthetic detail clearly is paramount.

Neil Dewey



Advertisements

Interested in advertising in the Southern Ceramic Group Newsletter?

If so please contact Neil Dewey : scg_newsletter@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

The rates for advertising are:	SCG MEMBERS: FREE		
	COMMERCIAL B&W/COLOUR:	Full Page	£20
		Half Page	£10



New Members

Interested in becoming a member of the Southern Ceramic Group?

Application forms can be found on the Group's website at:

<https://www.southernceramicgroup.org.uk/join/>



Acknowledgments

Thanks go to regular contributors to the Newsletter and all the new ones prepared to have a go and submit something.



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