

Selfridge Ceramic Art

Australian Pottery Trip 2004

In the summer of 2004 we went to Australia to visit our daughter in Surfer's Paradise. We then travelled around New South Wales and Victoria, where we visited with many of our potter friends, looking at their studios, kilns and environs. This then is a travelogue of our 4000km. adventure



Kookaburra birds in Queensland



Carol patting joeys at Steve Irwin's wildlife park



Carol petting a koala in Queensland



Our daughter Amanda petting a joey



"Agro", Steve Irwin's huge pet, who
eats power lawnmowers



One of Tony Nankirvus' kilns

We made a trip from Surfer's Paradise to Byron Bay and then to Lismore, New South Wales to visit Tony and Mary Nankirvus at Southern Cross University. Tony has just retired from the job of head of ceramics there. Tony's flashing slip, Tony's Blaze, has been a favorite of ours for wood firing since Richard's residency at Utah State University.



Tony in front of small anagama.



woodfired teabowl
16 cm., Tony Nankervis



Tony with remains of "Dancing Fire Kiln",
built by our friend Daniel Lafferty.



Some of Tony's pots on their deck.



woodfired sake cup
10 cm., Tony Nankervis



On the way back to Surfer's Paradise,
we toured Nimbin, the hemp capital
of Australia, definitely a time warp.

After two and one half weeks of the Queensland sun with our daughter and her boyfriend, we flew to Sydney for three days of remarkable exploration. Sydney is an incredible cosmopolitan city with great art and culture.



Sydney's famous Harbor Bridge



Opera House on a summer day



We stayed our first night with Gudrun Klix and her husband Richard Tarrant and viewed her work for her upcoming show. Most were large "boat" pieces.

She gave us a tour of her studios, both at home and at the university.



We had a wonderful lunch with Gudrun and Richard, seeing the produce and the boats at the fantastic Sydney fish market.



One of Gudrun's boat forms.

We stayed two nights in Chinatown and toured fantastic art galleries, the harbour bridge, the opera house, Chinese gardens and took a trip on the ferries from Circular Quay.



Pelican waiting for good food
at the Sydney fish market.



"Balmain Bugs", a delicacy
at the Sydney fish market.

Gudrun arranged for us to visit her teaching colleague, Mitsuo Shoji at his home and studio. He gave us a tour of his studio, showing us his paintings as well. Following this, he treated us to champagne and savories.



His work with melted glass was
very impressive and we traded
for a two pieces for our collection.



woodfired stoneware plate
with glass melt, 24cm., Mitsuo
Shoji, Sydney, Australia



porcelain vase 14 cm., Gudrun
Klix, Sydney, Australia



stoneware plate with overglaze
enamels, 20 cm., Mitsuo Shoji
Sydney, Australia



The colorful costumes and the animated
dragons showed the multicultural side
of Australia in cosmopolitan Sydney.



We were in Chinatown for a
Chinese New Year Parade.



The Chinese garden had limitless
photo opportunities.



Another view at the Chinese gardens

On the way back from Bondi beach, we toured Janet Mansfield's Ceramic Art Gallery in Paddington. There was a great cross section of Australia's finest ceramic artists, as well as many international ceramicists.



Bondi Beach in Sydney, on a beautiful sunny summer Sunday.



Alan Pescod's majolica painting was present in Sydney and at our next stop in Mittagong, at Sturt Pottery

We spent two nights at Sturt, giving a slide show and enjoying a pot luck dinner from the local ceramic artists. Paul Davis organized this event and was a gracious host, showing us the studios, kilns and gallery, which had the work of the best contemporary and historic Australian ceramic artists.



The anagama at Sturt.



Some works from the Fifty Year Anniversary Show at Sturt.



One of Alan Pescod's striking sculptures.



Sandy Lockwood's pieces in the gallery at Sturt.



porcelain bowl 14 cm., designed by Paul Davis, Sturt Pottery Mittagong, Australia



woodfired stoneware cup and sake bottle, 13 cm., Paul Davis Mittagong, Australia



Victor Greenaway's gestural
porcelain pieces at Sturt.



Another view of the Sturt anagama.



Carol chatting with Svend Bayer,
who was doing a three month
residency at Sturt.



Svend's bisqueware awaiting
his anagama firing.



Svend showing Carol some
of his tripod teapots.



salt glazed woodfired porcelain
vessel, 13cm., Sandy Lockwood
Balmoral Village, Australia

The second day at Sturt, we toured to Balmoral Village and the home studio of Janine King and Steve Harrison and then on to Sandy Lockwood's studio. We bought and traded pieces from all three of them.



Steve and Janine's remarkable array of finished work and works in progress. They are makers and kiln builders extraordinaire.



Their anagama kiln.



sliptrailed porcelain sake cup
9 cm., Janine King
Balmoral Village, Australia



woodfired porcelain demitasse cup
10 cm., Steve Harrison
Balmoral Village, Australia



A view into one of their noborigama style kilns.



Steve, the author of many useful books on woodfiring, contemplating yet another kiln design.

Steve and Janine are great innovators with the use of and understanding of local materials, both woods and minerals.



Ceramic fibre paper clay, fired and translucent.



A triptich of Steve's woodfired vases.



porcelain thrown serving dish
Sandy Lockwood



porcelain saltglazed woodfired
mug, 10 cm., Sandy Lockwood



Thrown woodfired tray at
Sandy Lockwood's studio



Woodfired saltglazed pieces at
Sandy Lockwood's studio

We drove through the Blue Mountains to the interior to Gulgong where we visited with Chester Nealie and Jan Irvine at their Goanna Ridge studios. Chester took us on a tour of the property where we saw an amazing collection of wild animals.



The road leading into Chester and Jan's "Goanna Ridge" property



While searching for Chester's place we stumbled onto Alan Pescod's pottery and had a brief tour and visit. His range of work is quite astounding.



Goanna in a tree at Chester's. We saw about six or seven of them. Some were over eight feet long.



The view from the deck to the water hole which has many animal visitors especially in the early evening.



woodfired stoneware vase
17 cm., Chester Nealie
Gulgong, Australia



Carol and I hand fed some of the
tame emus in Chester's paddock



One of Chester's "pet" goannas



woodfired stoneware bottle
12 cm., Chester Nealie
Gulgong, Australia

After we had the animal tour we were joined by Robert Barron who has a large kiln in Gippsland. He was showing his apprentice, Jo Larkman, around the pottery places in New South Wales before she returned to England after her three year stay at his workshop. Chester and Jan fixed us a great meal. It was a splendid evening.



Chester's anagama with Jo Larkman, apprentice to Robert Barron, beside the kiln



woodfired salt glazed bottle with stopper, 13 cm., Chester Nealie Gulgong, Australia



One of Chester's bottle vases on the deck



Chester's kiln in the late afternoon.



A delightful range of the pots in Chester's al fresco showroom.



Gold rush period hotel and bar in center of Gulgong.

After spending the night at one of Gulgong's historic hotels, and looking around the famous "Gold Rush" environs and museum, we went out of town to Janet Mansfield's country home and pottery studio Morning View.



The main house at Morning View.



Janet's anagama kiln.

There are many kilns at Janet's as she has hosted many international pottery events here with invited guests and participants building their own special designs. The place abounds with pots and sculpture installations from these events.



Carol inspecting a John Neely "Train" kiln.



Some of Janet's woodfired pots emerge from the shade.



The Fred Olsen "Car" kiln at Janet's.



After a morning visit with Chester and selecting some works for our collection we drove to Cowra where we saw a range fire in the early evening.

We had come to Cowra to see Greg Daly's work at a show at a winery and to visit the Japanese garden that is a memorial to the Japanese prisoners of war who were killed while attempting to escape during the second world war.



A view of the Cowra garden.



Koi in the Japanese garden

From Cowra, we headed to Canberra with a stop to visit Ian Jones and Moraig McKenna at their pottery at Gundaroo. They have established a pottery and residence in an old church.



One of the many woodfired kilns at Gundaroo.



woodfired stoneware cup
9 cm., Ian Jones
Gundaroo, Australia



woodfired faceted stoneware
vase, 20 cm., Ian Jones
Gundaroo, Australia



Another outdoor sales display of Ian and
Moraig's woodfired porcelain and stoneware



inlaid porcelain cup
10 cm., Moraig McKenna
Gundaroo, Australia



woodfired stoneware cup
8 cm., Moraig McKenna
Gundaroo, Australia

After checking into our hotel in Canberra, we met up with Ian and Moraig at the gallery at the ANU art department. We attended the opening of the graduating show of two MFA ceramic students. We were pleased to run into our friend Janet DeBoos, who although on sabbatical, had come back to Canberra for the show. We arranged to meet the next day for lunch and a tour of her ceramic department.



porcelain ewer, 19 cm., Janet DeBoos, Canberra, Australia



Janet De Boos' translucent porcelain at her studio at Australia National University in Canberra.



Janet De Boos' porcelain, which she has adapted for bone china designs made in both Italy and China.



ANU Master's student, Byong Chan Seo, woodfired show piece in ANU gallery.

We toured around Canberra and saw some excellent work in the public galleries, especially painting and sculpture in the National Gallery. We then connected with our colleague, Daniel Lafferty, and drove to the coast to Cobargo for a two-day visit with his wife, Gabriella and his children, Alice and Jack. It was a lot of fun.



Daniel at the entrance to his workshop.



woodfired stoneware teabowl
13 cm., Daniel Lafferty
Cobargo, Australia



Daniel's amazing brickwork in the
domed roof of his woodfired car kiln.



Some of Daniel's woodfired work
in his al fresco showroom.



An impressive vessel with inclusions.



Bossy goose organizing the others.



On a hot day, Daniel got us a "gelati treatment" at the clinic.



Daniel's hand built house made from adobe bricks was very cool and comfortable in the heat.

Daniel took us on a day trip to the beach for a great swim, then to an historic village and then down the coast to Yuri Weidenhofer's studio, where we saw his anagama and some kilns that were built at an earlier conference/workshop.



One of Yuri's woodfired kilns.



woodfired stoneware sake cups, 7 cm.,
Yuri Weidenhofer, Barrabooka
Pottery, Tanja, Australia



One of the kilns that Daniel Lafferty built at Yuri's.



Another anagama of Daniel's making at Yuri's.



The cupboard in Yuri's open air kitchen, with many works by important Australian potters.



The interior of Yuri's anagama. He throws in bones from the butcher to get bone ash effects on his amazing wood fired pots.

After our two-night stay with Daniel's family, we drove down the coast and stopped at Lakes Entrance to visit the studio of Victor Greenaway.



translucent porcelain bowl
11 cm., Victor Greenaway
Lakes Entrance, Australia



Victor Greenaway and Carol in his studio.



One of Victor's impressive recent oil paintings.



An echidna in the field that Carol spotted from Victor's window. These ancient creatures dig in and hold on to the ground when threatened.



stoneware demitasse mug
12 cm., Victor Greenaway
Lakes Entrance, Australia



stoneware mug 10 cm.,
Victor Greenaway, Lakes
Entrance, Australia

From Victor's place, we drove to Boolara South to Barbara and Dr. Owen Rye's home and studio in Gippsland. Many of our contacts with Australian woodfiring potters were the result of our association with Owen, a much revered "dean" of Australian woodfirers.



The sideboard in Owen's dining room, with many special pots including one of our flattened cups.



Dr. Owen Rye and his anagama in Gippsland.



Some of the remaining native trees at Owen's place in Gippsland.



The interior of Owen's anagama. He fires it for about 100 hours to achieve spectacular and subtle woodfired effects.



woodfired stoneware plate
29cm., Owen Rye
Gippsland, Australia



Small special pots in Owen's studio.



woodfired stoneware vase
22cm., Owen Rye
Gippsland, Australia



woodfired stoneware cup
12 cm., Owen Rye
Gippsland, Australia

We travelled from Owen's place to Wilson's Promontory, the southernmost part of continental Australia. Dramatic scenery and some interesting animals are found here in this national park.



We had a brief dip in the ocean at Wilson's Prom. The water was much colder than the water in Queensland.



A dramatic view towards Tasmania from the rocks at Wilson's Prom.

The next day, we met with Robert Barron and went to his studio which has the largest noborigama kiln in Australia. We had first met Robert when he stopped for a visit at our studio in 1980.



woodfired stoneware fish bowl
23cm., Robert Barron
Kardella, Australia



woodfired stoneware mug
11 cm., Robert Barron
Kardella, Australia



Three of the five chambers of Robert's kiln



The interior of the large firebox of Robert's kiln, where he sometimes pulls over large vessels at the end of the firing to submerge them in charcoal and ash.



An al fresco showroom, showing some of the very large work that Robert produces from this kiln.



woodfired stoneware pan
23 cm., Robert Barron
Kardella, Australia



woodfired stoneware mug
10 cm., Jo Larkman
apprentice to Robert Barron,
Gooseneck Pottery
Kardella, Australia



woodfired stoneware bottle
13 cm., Robert Barron
Kardella, Australia

The following day, we took the ferry across the mouth of Port Phillip sound and proceeded to Lorne for a visit with Graeme Wilkie.



woodfired stoneware mug
11 cm., Graeme Wilkie
Lorne, Australia



Graeme's kiln in his QDOS ARTS sculpture
garden and gallery/restaurant.



One of Graeme's sculptures amongst
the gum trees in the garden.



The interior view to the chimney of
Graeme Wilkie's large anagama.

After a great lunch and rave-up with Graeme, we toured around his studio and gallery and sculpture garden and then had a rest at the B&B he had booked for us. The next day we drove down the coast to see the koala bears in the wild at Kennett River and the dramatic "Twelve Apostles".



A view of the "Twelve Apostles"
on the Great Ocean Road.



The pounding surf from the Antarctic Ocean,
which has formed the "Twelve Apostles".

After two days in Lorne and driving on the Great Ocean Road, we drove to Melbourne where we saw the works of many of the potters we had visited on our trip at the Scepsi Gallery. We saw important paintings, like Pollock's "Blue Poles", in the major public galleries as well as historic ceramic collections. Melbourne was a wonderful three day experience, a fitting send-off for our long flight back to Canada.



porcelain cut bowl
20 cm., Graeme Wilkie
Lorne, Australia



A well travelled Aborigine musician
playing the traditional "digeridoo" on
the main sidewalk in Melbourne.