

## **YOUR POTS FOR SOCIAL FIRING**

Remember that we will be firing a large number of pots so it is really important that you keep to the guidelines below so that everyone gets a fair share

**Maximum of FIVE pots each no larger than 12 cm. in diameter and 30 cm. tall and smaller if at all possible. Forms which are based on the sphere or on animal models are most suitable. In particular we cannot manage flat pieces such as tiles as they take too much room in the kilns.**

**Clay and biscuit firing.** Any well grogged clay which resists thermal shock usually works. I use Ashraf Hanna clay from CTM. You will need to biscuit fire all your pots before you bring them. **Do make sure you don't trap any air in your pots when making them as raku firing is much more rapid than normal firing and will expose flaws in making sometimes resulting in pots blowing up in the kiln.** Also, if you make fully enclosed forms like pebbles, make sure that the air escape hole is larger than normal i.e. not a pin hole.

**For barrel firing, naked raku and horse hair decoration** you should burnish the surface to as high a sheen as you can or use terra sigillata [TS]. Many people put several coats of a fine slip on the surface of their leather hard pots before burnishing. I use a slip made of 50% porcelain and 50% body clay sieved using a 200 grade sieve. I then burnish when nearly bone dry using a flat plastic spatula before biscuit firing to 960 degrees. Please see additional papers on burnishing and TS if you would like more detail

You do not need to burnish for **glazed raku pots.**

### **Bringing ready glazed pots**

If you have experience of raku work and have your own glazes it can be useful for you to bring your biscuit pot[s] with glaze already applied if you wish to. This has the advantage that we can start firing more quickly on the day.

Whatever you do – Happy Potting!

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### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Books you might like to look at if you want to read further:

- “Raku” Tim Andrews. A & C Black
- “The Ceramics Handbooks” by John Mathieson. Raku. A & C Black. London ISBN 1-57498-166-8 Page 70-71 shows Sue Luker's work hand building & burnishing.
- “Raku. Investigations into Fire”. David Jones. The Crowood Press
- “Alternative Kilns & Firing Techniques”. James C Watkins & Paul Andrew Wandless. Lark Books. New York
- Knops, Ine & Ed. (2003). Rakuvaria 2. English version: ISBN 90-77266-03-8