

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia Potters' Guild

March 31, 2019

The AGM of the Nova Scotia Potters' Guild was held at the Findlay Community Centre, 26 Elliot St, Dartmouth, NS B2Y 2X7. There was a table set up for Swap and Give supplies and another with delicious potluck offerings. Thanks to everyone for helping to keep the meeting moving.

1. Welcome, Introductions and Regrets

At 1:05pm, Judy Gordon brought the meeting to order and the Agenda was accepted without changes.

The Executive introduced themselves and new members were recognized by a show of hands.

Sharon Fiske read the regrets:

Regrets:

Mindy Moore, Mary Jane Lundy, Vaughan Smith, Jackie Smith, Suzy Cameron, Lynette Peters, Monica DeCampo, Jane Harrington, Jennifer Houghtaling, Marla Benton, Elizabeth Sircom,

Present were:

Sharon Fiske – Co-President Judy Gordon – Co-President

Carol Smeraldo- Communications Coordinator Shauna MacLeod – Workshop Coordinator

Erin Wells – Website Coordinator Denholm Fraser – Website Assistant

Gillian Murdoch- Secretary/Treasurer Gerri Frager – Director at large

Carol Morrow – Membership Coordinator

Nancy Roberts, Danielle Sawada

Lee Yorke, Robert Vienneau

Bunk Trinacty, Andrea Puszkar

Sera Senakovicz, Sabina McManamau

Trish Hattie, Nancy Warnica

Laura Bishop, Cyndi Yeatman

Deborah Wheeler, Iris Patterson

Martha Coburn, Shirley Berman

Debbie Bull, Sheri White

Brenda Outram, Cheryl Waal

Karen Fowler, Sue Dirani

David Morison, Kim O'Connor

Cindy Smith, Cathy Allen

Carol Goodwin, Rob McLaren

Lloyd Williams, Liz Wilson

Naomi Walsh, Terry Mitchell

Liz Brownrigg, Denise Lynch

Sharon Ward, Sharon Merriam

2. Minutes of Guild AGM held April 8th, 2018

Gillian Murdoch addressed the members and thanked everyone for allowing her to sit on the Executive for the last 5 years. She told them what an honour it has been, and told them that she was going to miss it. She then asked if all had received and read the minutes from the 2018 meeting. These had been distributed electronically on March 23, 2019. For those who were new, or had not read them, Sharon Fiske had some copies which she handed out. Gillian Murdoch moved for adoption of minutes as circulated, Sharon Ward 2nd, passed unanimously.

3. Presentation of reports

a) Financial Report for 2017

Gillian Murdoch presented the financial report. She acknowledged Carol Morrow for all of her help in transition to the position of Treasurer.

The financial statements (Balance Sheet and Statement of Operation) are attached. Here are some of the highlights:

Total revenue for the year was \$ 4,225.00 from membership fees.

Total revenue from Quaff was \$ 500.00

Net profit for the year was \$ (3,691.33) Net assets at the end of the year were \$ 4,357.65

The report was distributed and is attached.

b) Membership report

Carol Morrow presented the membership report.

There are currently 179 members, of which 71 were new. The increase was attributed to the workshops. The Glaze Basics with Jeff Chown and the kiln workshop with Tuckers. Renewal at the AGM is a tradition, even though memberships run the calendar year. March 31st is the official cut off date for renewing, but since today is the 31st, Carol has extended the deadline to April 8th, 2019 for this year. Before today's meeting, there were 75 new and renewing members, 11 of which are new! Kim O'Connor wanted to note that, until the workshops, she didn't realize that anyone in the Maritimes could be a member of the Guild. She thought it was reserved for professional potters only. Perhaps there is a way to make this known? Three NSCAD students in their final year have accepted a year's free membership to the Guild as discussed at the 2018 AGM. Carol did mention that she may not answer emails immediately, but they will all be responded to in the fullness of time. Please be patient. Terry Mitchell suggested that she could put an auto response on all of her emails, Carol declined this option, and Liz Wilson acknowledged that volunteers are only able to do so much and we need to accept this. Carol thanked her.

c) Media Report

Communications Report and The Dish

Carol Smeraldo presented the communications report. This year's deadline for the Dish is May 13th, 2019. She explained how important it is that if you know of an event, to let her know! Include in your email to the novascotiapottersguild@gmail.com, who was there, what went on, where it was, and who presented. SEND PICTURES!!! We are a visual art and pictures speak a thousand words! Denholm Fraser has now got all the past Dish publications on the website – take a look!

If you are sending something to be distributed to the membership through email, be aware that Mail Chimp has its limitations. It is difficult to incorporate PDF's and Document file to a mass mail; JPEG's are a little easier, for some reason it accepts these files more easily. Although it is not happening as frequently, some people are still responding to the emails by hitting reply! DO NOT HIT REPLY!!

Nancy Roberts asked, when emails come from the public with general questions, is there anyway to know if they have been responded to? Shauna replied, unfortunately, no. Cyndi Yeatman suggested that an auto reply be set up for the public emails saying, 'Thank you for contacting the Guild, your request has been sent out to our general membership, we hope you receive a response soon'.

Judy Gordon mentioned that sometimes the emails end up in her Junk file. Many suggested that if you added the contact, it should stop this, and Denholm Fraser also suggested that if you label the email as Not Junk, it will help solve the problem for many. This is because Google using these labels to identify potential Spam. But, if 50++ people label it as Not Junk, then Google will eventually catch on!

Website Report

Erin Wells and Denholm Fraser presented the website report. Erin started by welcoming Denholm, and by also thanking Nancy Roberts who will be learning how to add member pages to the website. She then talked about Facebook and Instagram. It has become evident that we need someone to actively keep our Facebook page current. Liz Brownrigg of Gypsy Pottery Studio volunteered to work on this. Iris Patterson reminded Erin that she had made her the Facebook administer, and Iris will happily continue with this and work hand in hand with Liz. If anyone else would like to help with the page, please let Erin know! She will get you in touch with either Iris or Liz. Denise Lynch is working with a Social Media consultant. She offered to give us her contact information, and maybe she can help the Guild outreach better. The entire Executive thought this could potentially be very helpful

In 2018, the website was very successful. There were 7000 new visitors.

Denholm Fraser stated that, not surprisingly, the Classes and Event pages receive the most traffic on the website. He is going to be working on getting, those two pages specifically, more visible and more user friendly. Sheri White asked if any and all pottery classes can be posted to the website. Denholm said sure, but once again, we need more input from the membership to make the page most effective. Please inform the website administrators as to what you want posted.

Kim O'Connor asked if we want to post something on the website, who do we contact? Erin indicated that on every page of the website there is a 'Contact Us' button, use that. Carol Morrow pointed out, that if you have something that needs to get out in a timely fashion, email it to the potters guild, but please allow ample lead time to announce any events, shows, etc.

Kim also commented that it is very exciting the direction the website is going.

d) Workshop Report-Glaze II

Shauna MacLeod commented on how successful the two workshops were! The Tuckers one, in her opinion, was fantastic, and the Glaze I workshop given by Jeff Chown, was also amazing! Although, originally, Jeff was to do a part II Glaze workshop, but unfortunately, his other job has become super busy and he is unable to fulfill this. He has however given a couple of options for people to continue with the glazing education. Jeff recommended two resources for glaze education:

John Britt <https://johnbrittpottery.com/>

Ceramic Materials Workshop <https://www.ceramicmaterialsworkshop.com/online-classes.html>

Sharon Fiske is holding her Throwing workshop. This will be discussed after the break.

There are already shows lined up for 2020 and 2022! In 2020 we will be in Truro at Visual Arts, and in 2022 we have secured a slot at the Nova Scotia Archives.

Liz Browrigg asked about bringing potters from Hawaii to give a workshop. Shauna explained that the Guild's mandate is to support Canadian artists, particularly, female artists. Therefore, the Guild will support and help individuals who wish to hold these workshops by advertising through the Guild, sharing potential locations to host, and guiding the individual through the process of hiring a workshop presenter; but it will NOT be a Guild sponsored event. Liz Wilson asked if there was any possibility of hosting an exchange program between provincial Guilds? Perhaps cross promotion? There was lots of interest in this idea, and Judy and Shauna both mentioned that there were lots of possible opportunities for a project like that. Pam Bingham suggested the Mississauga Potters Guild.

Gerri Frager noted that the Bonavista Craft Guild, in Newfoundland, is looking for a workshop leader. This would be a terrific opportunity and also a blast! The deadline to apply is April 15th, 2019 for a workshop in October 2020.

e) Quaff Report

Sharon Fiske and Nancy Roberts presented the summary of Quaff. From Sharon's notes.....

Quaff – To drink deeply! Wow, what a show! There were 42 individuals who entered a total of 50 pieces. This show is a result of the survey that went out the membership asking what do you want? The number one answer was a gallery show. The Quaff committee was formed after Gerri Frager searched for a location to host this impressive show. The committee, Sharon Fiske, Gerri Frager, Nancy Roberts and Shauna MacLeod worked tirelessly.

This was an all-inclusive show, and that was important to the executive and the committee to ensure that the entire membership could participate. Because Government House had space restrictions, it was decided that the best way to handle this was to have both a juried and non-juried show. For the juried show, photos were submitted, and the 3-member jury assigned point values to each piece. All pieces were going to be represented in the online show, and space in the venue was given to the juried pieces with the highest points. Out jurors, Louise Pentz, Mariko Patterson and Sandra Alfoldy did an amazing job and we were honoured to have them do this for us. A curator was also hired, Brandt Eisner did a great job of staging the show and making all the pieces look their absolute best! Both the jurors and curator were paid CARFAC rates for their contribution.

The Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc and his wife Patsy host Evenings at Government House and offered us an evening to share with the public. This event was well attended and was taped for Eastlink Community Television. The show also ran through the evening of Nocturne. There were over 2800 people who came through Government House that night! It was a tremendous way to end the show. From demonstrations of throwing and hand building, to the touch stones, we definitely brought something completely different to the Ballroom!

There was a juror's choice award and a people's choice award. The juror's choice was a tie between Gerri Frager and Sharon Fiske. The people's choice was won by Sharon Fiske. Sharon stated that only a few votes separated the winner from the top 5 whom she acknowledged: Denise Aspinal, Iris Patterson, Sharon Fiske, MJ Lundy and Gerri Frager.

There were close to 2500 ballots cast and Iris Patterson did the counting. One of the ballots stood out and read: "After viewing the works, I must say that comparison is the thief of joy. I loved and admired each piece in so much as they each get my Vote!" Not signed.

Nancy Roberts wanted to say a big thank you to all of the volunteers who stepped up and helped make this show the success it was. The following are just some of the statistics of what went into the show:

Over 3000 touch stones were made by 11 individuals and 3 groups

Plinth lenders – 7 groups and various individuals

Nocturn demo's – 10 individuals

Gallery Attendants – 35 individuals

Take down – between 12 and 15 people just showed up!

Volunteer coordinator – Tracy Horseman

Graphic Designer – Sharon Ward

Sandwich board – Peter Oickle

Ikea shelves – France Arruda and Naomi Walsh

Special mention has to go out to our presenters at Evenings at Government House, Judy Gordon, Karen Robinson, Sandra Alfoldy, Gerri Frager and Shauna MacLeod.

Needless to say, this was a huge undertaking and was accomplished with finesse and professionalism. The Guild should be extremely proud.

Judy Gordon asked that all of the reports, as presented, be accepted. Trish Hattie moved to accept, 2nd by Danielle Sawada passed unanimously.

Condolences

Sharon Fiske announced, that with great sadness, Sandra Alfoldy Passed away last month after a long battle with cancer.

Break

4. Upcoming events and Requests for workshops/events/upcoming gallery show locations

Sharon Fiske's hands-on throwing workshop series will be held in three separate locations (to start!). All of the information will be sent out by email soon. Space is extremely limited and the only way to secure your spot will be to pay. First paid, first in! This is intended for intermediate to advanced throwers only. The flyer is attached.

Exhibitions

The Birds and the Bees Exhibit – Craig Gallery

Shauna MacLeod and Iris Patterson presented the information about the next show. The committee consists of: Shauna MacLeod, Iris Patterson, Mindy Moore and Jennifer Houghtailing. There are people already working on their pieces – how exciting! Shauna encouraged everyone to think outside the box with the theme and be creative! There are not as many restrictions on pieces for this show as there were for Quaff, so experiment! This will be a juried show.

Rachel DeConde and Becky Welter-Nolan are our jurors. Please make sure that you have high quality photos! Be aware of your resolution, back ground, lighting. If you want your piece to be considered for advertising posters, the photo must be perfect! Mindy Moore's husband is a photographer and will be available as a resource to answer questions for the committee. Lee Cripps, the manager of The Craig Gallery will be curating the show for us. All of the pieces must be available for sale and the gallery will be taking 35% for their fee. We will not need volunteers to sit the show, however, Lee Crips wouldn't mind if we wanted to have someone there. She has also suggested that we could have artist talks or demonstrations throughout the show. Shauna mentioned that it would be nice if we could arrange to have something every Saturday of the show. As you are ramping up for the show, send your progress images along to Iris to post to Facebook and Instagram! She has set up an Instagram site for the show: [thebirdsandthebees_thecraig](#) Follow the show on Instagram! One thing that will be different about this show is that we will be paying the artists. It is important to recognize our artists in a tangible way. It is also important as an artist to be involved in juried, paid shows should you wish to apply for any grants. There will also be another online gallery as it is important that all work the Guild be seen on the website.

Feedback Feast

Judy Gordon explained what a Feedback Feast was. An opportunity to get together with your peers and have your work critiqued, while enjoying a feast of delicious offerings that we all bring! It is a wonderful experience to have ideas given to you to 'fix' problems or issues you may be having with your pots. In 2018, two FF's were held, along with a few events for 'Quipping about Quaff'. These events were helpful for the participants and it was suggested that similar events be held for the Birds and the Bees show. Both Iris Patterson and Danielle Sawada offered to host these. Iris will host hers on May 26th and Danielle on June 2nd. What a wonderful start!

5. Supply Issues

Lynette Peters was not able to attend the meeting due to a death in her family. Judy sent her regrets to the membership. Liz Brownrigg's husband works in transport and asked if she could be connected with Lynette. Upon her return, we expect there will be some answers to the survey that she sent out. Many questions were asked, and all were referred back to the survey, ie: drop locations, timing of orders, etc. Danielle Sawada is very happy! She has been able to secure a loading dock in Truro at the old U-Haul to have her clay orders delivered to, and they are willing to let her use it for free! Way to go Danielle, we know this has been a long haul for you.

6. Elections

Judy Gordon made it known that the positions of Secretary and Treasurer are now open. She thanked Gillian for all her work with the Executive and told her she would be missed. Judy then asked the general membership if anyone would like to take on one of these positions, or any other position of the executive, or join the executive as a Director at Large. It was then asked, that the current executive – except for the Secretary/Treasurer, be accepted for another year. Carol Morrow nominated Andrea Puzskar for the position of Secretary, 2nd by Shauna MacLeod, passed unanimously. Then she nominated Sheri White for the position of Treasurer, 2nd by Iris Patterson, passed unanimously. Welcome to the new Executive members!

9. Other Business and Closing

Bunk Trinacty is offering a casting workshop in July during the Peggy's Cove Studio Tours. He brought a flyer and outlined the full day of instruction. He will be sending the information to the Guild email and to the website for distribution.

Danielle Sawada asked if anyone would like to donate to Bowls for Balance. This is an annual fundraiser in Truro that helps people get back to work who have been suffering from mental illness. The deadline to donate bowls is May 1st. She will be sending an email to indicate where you might be able to drop off your bowls in HRM.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm by the co-presidents Sharon Fiske and Judy Gordon.