

MERA Pottery Cooperative
Report for MERA AGM March 26 2017

MERA's potters have enjoyed an "interesting" year. We are still working to resolve the issues raised by a visit from the local fire chief in early November, the result of a false alarm. The belt on the fan in the kiln room broke allowing the room to become hot enough to trigger the smoke alarm. Fortunately it was a false alarm. Unfortunately the fire department arrived first, before we were able to open a window and shush the alarm (as one does when the toaster sets off the smoke alarm in the kitchen). For want of a fan belt we have had the kiln inspected and will install a new ventilation system to comply with new code regulations. The potters are very grateful to the MERA Board for on-going patience and help with these unforeseen expenses.

In happier news, there are currently 15 active potters. There are regular gatherings on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and other, occasional studio users who leave tracks in the form of treasures on the drying racks. Working groups continue to form and dissolve according to shared interests, joint projects and other commitments. The MERA pottery studio is a happy and happening place!

MERA potters contributed \$180.00 in sales at the MERA Christmas Fair to MERA. The total was disappointingly low compared to past contributions because we could not use our kiln in the weeks leading up to the sale. As a result there was little new ware available. New offerings remain available for sale in the glass case beside the front door.

Our community outreach this year included workshops with students at Smith's Falls High School, and with the Lanark Home Schoolers. We also participated in the "Empty Bowls" project by collaborating directly with local professional potters, preparing clay for use, and decorating the finished bowls. Special thanks to Molly Forsythe for co-ordinating this work, and to all the potters who participated.

We owe Molly thanks for much more besides. Molly has stepped down as contact person for the pottery studio. I have agreed to take on that task. We will have to work together to fill all the roles she has been playing. Luckily Molly is not leaving us, only hoping to feel less responsibility for us. Wendy Dodd also deserves a vote of thanks. She has been managing our books. Jean Dunning has taken on that task. Three cheers for friendship and cooperation!!

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the M.E.R.A. potters,
Lyndal Neelin