



Canberra Potters' Society

MEDIA RELEASE

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Media Release: 2008 Budget supports Canberra Potters' Society

"The Canberra Potters Society is delighted to be recognised by the ACT Government as the regional peak body for artists producing hand-crafted ceramics" said the President of the Canberra Potters' Society, Jennifer Collier, following the provision of \$300,000 for design and planning work on new studios at the Watson Arts Centre.

"Our Arts Minister, Jon Stanhope, MLA, has listened to the desire of the Society to improve our facilities and our services to members and, through them, to the wider Canberra community."

In the budget released today, \$300,000 will be provided for design and planning for five new studios at the Watson Arts Centre, which is managed by the Canberra Potters' Society. The new studios will provide further opportunities for local ceramic artists to further develop their skills and will enable the Society to provide visiting artists with an appropriate space in which to pass on their skills to our local artists.

While officially opening the 2007 Annual Members' Exhibition in September last year, Minister Stanhope confirmed a grant of \$66,000 to the Canberra Potters Society to assist in the construction of a new kiln shed. The kiln shed is now under construction and due for completion by August. It was during his tour of the Watson Arts Centre that evening that the need for studios was raised with the Minister.

The new kiln shed will significantly increase the capacity of the Society to provide kiln firing services to members and to the students attending weekly classes at Watson. Members who are unable to construct or install kilns at home – especially as backyards become smaller and medium density living increases – will be able to use a wider range of kilns owned and operated by the Society at the Watson Arts Centre.

Although the Society enjoys excellent relationships with the ANU Ceramics School and Strathnairn Arts Association and is frequently able to share the costs of bringing experts to Canberra, we have had to rely on them to provide studio spaces. These new studios will enable the Society to attract national and international ceramic experts to Canberra to work at Watson as visiting artists, being more immediately available to a wider audience amongst the ceramics community. We also have a number of members looking for studio spaces – being able to have more studio spaces at the Watson Arts Centre is ideal.

The Canberra Potters' Society was established in 1975 and has more than 200 members based in Canberra and the surrounding region. Our mission is to promote excellence and innovation in ceramics, foster appreciation of handcrafted ceramics in the broader community and encourage the professional development of our members.

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