



## Press Release

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For immediate release:

### **Buncombe County Pottery Exhibit at the North Carolina Pottery Center**

Once again pottery from the NC Mountains comes to the North Carolina Pottery Center, in our current exhibit, Buncombe County Pottery. Buncombe County is known for its county seat, Asheville, a western North Carolina city that *AmericanStyle* magazine called one of "America's Top 25 Arts Destinations. The county is comprised of sixteen townships and includes mountains, valleys, and beautiful vistas. No wonder there are, and always have been, wonderful potters scattered throughout this county.

Nearly every potter in North Carolina has been to Highwater Clays in Asheville to buy their glaze materials, clay or tools. In 1985, Brian and Gail McCarthy acquired a professional mixer, pug mill and warehouse space, and began to refine their clay-mixing process. Soon Highwater's inventory expanded to include glazes, equipment and tools and the Highwater brand began to be recognized as superior clay. Highwater Clays and Odyssey Center for Ceramic Arts, which include classes and workshops, artist residencies, and a ceramics gallery, are now nationally known and have grown and thrived under the guidance of Brian and Gail McCarthy.

Brian has served on the North Carolina Pottery Center Board in several capacities and even as President of the Board. We are pleased to have Brian as the curator of the contemporary portion of this exhibit. With forty potters represented, the pieces have a wide range of style; we even have a pottery banjo made by potter Rob Mangum in Weaverville, where he and his wife Beth continue a creative tradition started by Rob's parents over thirty years ago. While they make many pieces for use in the dining room, instruments have been part of Rob's repertoire for years. These fine art instruments are hand built stoneware and raku combined with various hardwoods. For the past several years, Rob has been mostly focused on the banjos, because he's enjoying the sound that he's getting out of them, although they are made to hang on the wall.

In addition to the unique banjo, there are over fifty contemporary pieces including teapots, platters, vases and abstract vessels on display and for sale through the end of the exhibition.

The exhibit also includes over fifty historical pots, including George and David Donkel, Pisgah Forest, Javan Brown, Oscar Bachelder, Edward Stone, John Henry Stone, Joseph Sylvester, William Marion and Cash Penland, Benjamin Trull, Albert Fulbright, and more. Many large storage jars and vessels; utilitarian and yet beautiful in their simplicity have been gathered for this rare exhibition. Art pieces too, decorative, crystalline, and colorful, tell the story of Buncombe County's rich history.

Steve Lott, the curator of the historical portion of the exhibit, curated several Exhibits at the Mountain Heritage Center. These Exhibits have ranged from walking sticks, painted furniture, southern stoneware, homemade Appalachian musical instruments, Cherokee baskets, 18<sup>th</sup> century hearth iron, etc. Steve was on the Consulting Board for the North – South Trader Civil War Magazine for fifteen years. Knowledgeable and generous with his time, Steve has put together a fine grouping of pieces that highlight the diversity of Buncombe County's historical potters.

The Buncombe County Pottery Exhibit will be at the North Carolina Pottery Center through July 31, 2010. The NCPC, a non-profit entity which is supported in great part by donations from individuals, is located in Seagrove one of the state's key historical and contemporary pottery producing regions.

*Exhibitions are made possible through the generosity of our membership, the North Carolina Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Mary and Elliott Wood Foundation and the Goodnight Educational Foundation. Thank you!*

*The mission of the North Carolina Pottery Center is to promote public awareness of and appreciation for the history, heritage, and ongoing tradition of pottery making in North Carolina. The Center is located at 233 East Avenue in Seagrove, NC. Hours of operation are Tue - Sat 10 am - 4 pm. For more information, please call 336.873.8430 or go to [www.ncpotterycenter.org](http://www.ncpotterycenter.org)*