

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Campus News Archive

Campus News, Newsletters, and Events

10-29-2003

First woodfired kiln to be inaugurated

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

Recommended Citation

University Relations, "First woodfired kiln to be inaugurated" (2003). *Campus News Archive*. 1913.
https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news/1913

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Campus News, Newsletters, and Events at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus News Archive by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

First woodfired kiln to be inaugurated

Summary:

(October 29, 2003)-Beyond the art studios of the Humanities Fine Arts building on the University of Minnesota, Morris campus an exciting opportunity awaits UMM's ceramic art students. On the northeast edge of campus, next to the horse pasture, UMM's first woodfired kiln has been constructed and is ready for its first firing.

Students and regional potters will be continuously firing the kiln beginning Thursday, Oct. 30, and will end midday Sunday, Nov. 2. Volunteers will be on site around the clock to ensure that the kiln maintains the high temperature necessary for the glazing of porcelain and stoneware pots and sculptures. It is expected that up to four cords of wood will be burned during the four-day firing. Most of the fuel for the kiln comes from trees that blew down on campus during the July 4 windstorm.

The project began with UMM Ceramics Teaching Specialist Kevin Flicker's '74 summer school class, "Woodfired Kiln Design and Construction." Sam Johnson '96, who has extensive experience designing and building woodfired kilns, served as a consultant for the class. Johnson's residency in Morris was made possible by an Educational Development Project Grant. EDP grants are used for innovative curriculum development. For five weeks students took part in the laborious construction of the kiln, beginning with only a 10 foot by 20 foot by five foot deep hole in the ground.

Currently students from Flicker's fall semester ceramics classes are putting the finishing touches on the kiln. Over 300 ceramic pieces have been carefully loaded into the kiln for its inaugural firing.

In addition to student assistance, Flicker also received help from several other sources. He obtained 1,500 free firebrick from the Pope/ Douglas Solid Waste Incinerator Project in Alexandria, and over 200 bags of castable (which when mixed with water can withstand temperatures of up to 2600°F) from Deltak, a company located in Plymouth. Gary Moore '72, an executive at Smith-Sharpe Firebrick Supply in Minneapolis, informed Flicker of the potential donations. Together, the value of the material donations came to over \$12,000.

In addition, Flicker was given \$5,000 in labor and materials from UMM's Plant Services for construction of a road and kiln shed, and \$1,000 from the UMM Division of the Humanities, primarily used for purchasing various tools and materials needed at the kiln site. The Office of Continuing Education at UMM donated \$500.

This project is a special opportunity because it gives ceramic art students the chance to work hands on with the firing. Normally students do not fire their own works when they are fired in gas or electric kilns instructors do it for them.

"It's very exciting for students to have access to the possibilities offered by a woodfired kiln on our campus," said Flicker.

UMM joins several other schools in the region that have woodfired kilns on their campuses among them are St. John's

University, St. Cloud State University, and the University's Twin Cities campus.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.