

# Art Walk Party continues during the winter

## 'THE DECORATORS' – Nicky Bird Residency until February 2020

This residency focuses on a group of women who worked as decorators for Buchan & Co potteries in the late 1960s.

Most of the women were in their teens and they painted thistles, among other motifs, in workshops near the present-day site of the kilns in Portobello.



Rosie (second left) the curator and some of the Art Walk Party people at the Kilns in the summer with local MP Tommy Sheppard  
PHOTO © 2019 The Edinburgh Reporter

Each decorator would have her own mark that she would put at the bottom of any pottery she decorated. In 1972, Buchan & Co

closed the Portobello site and moved to Crieff. Some of the women ceased to be decorators at around this point, either through redundancy or moving onto to married life. Two kilns are the only physical traces of the pottery with a housing estate now on the site of the workshops.

A visit to the present-day site makes it hard to locate where the workshops once were and so the women's work remains invisible.

The Decorators residency directly collaborates with a number of these women. The residency consists of viewing their photographs, interviews, site visits, and locating relevant archive material. By paying attention to voice, image, pattern on pottery including the marker on its base, the residency will produce a series of events and site-specific related artwork that tease out the significance of stories of the decorators, and how in their own subtle way, they continue to leave a mark on the Portobello landscape.

#### RELATED EVENTS:

##### **Saturday 16th Nov, 2.00-4.00pm**

Introductory Walk with Nicky Bird & visit inside kiln, Bridge Street, Portobello Edinburgh EH15.

Walk starts from the kilns.

[BOOK HERE](#)

##### **Saturday 29 February and Sunday 1 March 2020 11.00am – 4.00pm**

Kiln opening with oral recordings & site specific photographic work exhibited in and around the area of the potteries.

Talks programme to be announced.

# The Decorators

Art  
Walk  
Projects

NICKY BIRD RESIDENCY  
Oct 2019 to Feb 2020



Title & Photo Detail: courtesy of Mairi Fortuna