HOW TO BURNISH

There are several approaches.

The leather hard believers: I do this with a very soft red silicone rib with wheel thrown pots. If you try to rock burnish too early you will have marks on your pot. Coarse clay like Hartnell’s is easier to get a good burnish if you start when it is leather hard (firm), then do multiple burnishes. No one said it was easy.

The bone dry believers: Unless absolutely smooth you won’t get great smooth, glossy burnish results. Use dry wall or substitute (window screen, mesh) and make the surface smooth. Take a wet sponge and wipe the dust off. Sponge again to put moisture in the clay, rub with a rock or spoon. Do a small area at a time until whole area is cover. Do not rub if it is wet, wait until the moisture has soaked in but don’t wait until it’s dry again. While the pot is still damp, rub with oil or Crisco. Do not use rancid oil. Do not rub again until the pot is cloudy.

Terra Sigillata is a very fine slip that helps with burnishing. Basic recipe is 70% water 30% clay and .5% deflocculant (such as calgon, or soda ash, or sodium silicate). The type of clay and the type of defloculant you use react differently. I always try to start with distilled or rain water. Tap water has too many additives that influence the clays ability to float.

FIRING MATERIALS

TOOLS: Hand torch, matches, shovel (long handled), fireplace tongs, gloves, cotton clothing (hat, long sleeves, long sleeve shirt), closed shoes (not open sandals), camera, food, water, chap lip gloss.

COMBUSTIBLES: Premium: cow pies, hardwood scraps (available at cabinet shops), fine hardwood sawdust. Regular: kindling, firewood, pallet wood, hemp string. COLOR: Dry seaweed, oxides,

RESIST MATERIALS: aluminum foil, clay or metal shard, wet clay, fire blanket, copper wire.