

## **Bound by Clay Education Pack: Careers in the Ceramics Industry.**

*Here are highlights of the notes produced by Dr Laura Cohen for her presentation at the Stoke and North Staffs Women's Network International Women's Day event 8.3.19.*

### **Dr Laura Cohen, Speaking at IWD, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

#### **Proud of heritage – looking to the future**

I'm Laura Cohen, Chief Executive of the British ceramic Confederation. That's the trade association representing British ceramic manufacturers.

A bit about me: school – maths, physics, chemistry A level. Degree and PhD in Materials Science at Cambridge in Materials Science. Joined chemical industry and worked for 20 years in variety of technical roles in chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturing industry ending up working with regulators and being a spokesperson for the broader UK and European industry on a number of issues to do with manufacturing and packaging in particular.

I joined BCC just over 10 years ago.

#### **1. What is the industry about now and the recent growth in ceramics**

**Sectors –**

- Tableware and giftware
- Bricks, roof tiles, drainage pipes, loos / basins, wall / floor tiles
- Technical ceramics – car brake discs, aircraft, artificial hips / spines
- Refractories – linings for high temp processes – steel, glass, cement, chemicals, ceramics – without them stone age
- Suppliers – china and ball clay, glazes, kiln manufacturers

**22,000 people, £2bn, £630M exports**

Had been growing at 9% year out of recession

Cluster in **Staffordshire** – 40% jobs, turnover, exports

**National** - Members from china clay extractors in Cornwall – technical ceramics manufacturers in Scotland

BCC Work on helping support them innovate and grow and amplifying voice in discussions with government.

Share good practice re energy efficiency, extract clay – safely, environmentally responsibly – trying to change government's mind so that Brexit works for our sector.

People – skills for future and the role women play

#### **2. How women are playing their part today**

Not just Potters – rightly proud of craft potters and entrepreneurs such as Emma Bridgewater and Elise Adams, Managing Director of Moorcroft

At British Ceramics Confederation (BCC) – we value diversity in background

**Lauren Darby**- background as passionate eco warrior – degree in environmental biology, masters degree, researcher Cardiff University. Groundwork – helping business, particularly smaller ones improve their environmental performance. She also picked up some qualifications IOSH – health and safety expert. She runs our work on minerals extraction, health and safety, tableware, brick and roof tile sectors as our SHE Director.

**Ciara Jagger**, joined us a year ago. After a degree in criminology and psychology at Keele, she's become an experienced journalist and was the communications expert at Aspire Housing. Her work has been fantastic in putting ceramics on the map – and in the last month in particular we've been in mainstream media more times than I've had hot dinners...

I wanted to share a couple of videos our members have put out for IWD showcase the diversity of the roles women play in our sector. I've spotted a couple of great ones from brickmakers:

At Wienerberger: Meet Julie, Laura and Harriette

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=102&v=TRgq4kMKGyE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=102&v=TRgq4kMKGyE)

At Ibstock: Paula, Imogen, Amandeep, Emma

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFwxkB7dt7c&feature=youtu.be>

Women also play a strong leadership role in other companies:

**Amy Harris** is Michelmersh Brick's Health, Safety and Environmental Manager

At Ideal Standard, **Georgina Salt**, HSE Manager, European wide role – chairs our energy committee. Experienced ceramicist. Our committee – she has to help explain key energy and environmental issues affecting our sector working with us when we meet politicians and regulators

Her colleague, **Sue Izon**, plays a prominent part in our health and safety committees, driving up safety standards.

**Amanda Quadling**, Technical Director, M&I Materials – variety of technical ceramics including electrical components. Amanda is a geologist – S Africa – family 3 teenage daughters – moved to London – PhD Imperial College on ceramics. After that she joined Morgan Advanced materials leading their work on refractories development across the world. She moved to her current role Technical Director at M&I Materials a year ago. We're really pleased she's joining our Board.

Last but not least, **Hannah Ault** Valentine Clays

Marketing professional – previously worked at Emma Bridgewater – now Director at a family firm, Valentine Clays, which has changed the landscape and image of pottery in the City with a new centre in Stoke-On-Trent

### **3. Message for women listening to this about their role**

Think outside box – we're not just potters

STEM skills – Science technology, engineering and maths are really important

Plenty of jobs using your brain as well as hands examples:

- Starting a business Emma Bridgewater
- Running a business –Elise Adams
- Being an ace scientist and innovator – Amanda Quadling
- Being a practical production manager – Imogen, Ibstock
- Practical engineer – Harriette, Wienerberger
- Leading the way on safety and environmental issues, setting really high standards and sharing good practice like Lauren, Georgina, Stephanie Sue and Amy,
- Communicating about our fantastic industry – Ciara Jagger, Hannah Ault

There is a job for you – we all can play our part in continuing to grow this fantastic industry