

International artists visit

By Diana Rinne
Record-Gazette Staff

• PEACE RIVER

Artists from all over the world gathered in Peace River last week for the first of three workshops focused on local artist Keith Howard's safe etching techniques.

"I think this is really an indication of the interest in alternative ways of printmaking," said Howard, in an interview, July 21. "It also means that I can give workshops and be around my family. I don't have to go traipsing off to Japan for six weeks."

The artists attending the first workshop came from Australia, New York, Texas, Kansas, British Columbia, Falher, California, Japan and Oxford. Learning Howard's technique which challenges the traditional toxic methods of printmaking, these artists will be able to share their knowledge with others when they return home.

"They will become the front line experts after me," said Howard. "They're on the threshold of a new beginning. They can adapt and reinvent these techniques for themselves to suit their own creative demands."

For Linda Genet, a multimedia artist from Austin, Texas, the idea of learning this new technique and of visiting a different part of the world was very appealing. "There's a sense of adventure here," she said. "Keith's attitude is really wonderful because he is willing to share his artistic secrets."

Genet has actually arranged to stay in Peace River a little longer than originally planned to work on the process and enjoy the town. "I'm finding it very delightful and friendly," she said.

Lina Tardif of Falher was the



Photo: Diana Rinne

Keith Howard demonstrates part of his safe photo-etching technique to New York artist Franco Copello, during the first of three workshops being held in Peace River.

only local artist taking part in the workshop. "The way I was learning photo etching was not safe and I think my health is important. Also I'm here to help develop my creativity," she explained. A relative beginner to printmaking, Tardif welcomed the opportunity to learn from Howard and the other international artists.

One of those artists was Mick Jilg from Hays, Kansas. A

painter/drawer, Jilg said the traditional methods of printmaking were affecting his health. "I thought the idea of a non-toxic method would be worth the time," he said. "Some of the things are really very simple, but very clever."

The workshops will continue over the next week, with artists from England and Scotland, as well as other points around the world expected to take part.