POTTERS ASSOCIATION OF NAMIBIA
newsletter
October 2021

LETTER FROM THE chair

Dear Potters

While gathering my thoughts for this letter, the shocking fact that Christmas is only 3 months away, hit me like a ton of bricks. It's unbelievable that another year swooshed by, in the blink of an eye, with covid restrictions that made it impossible for PAN to organize any events...and believe me we tried.

Something that we did manage to bring to fruition, after many discussions with stakeholders through the year, is a permanent ceramics outlet at the Namibian Craft Center in Windhoek. Despite the feeling that there might not be much traffic, tourist or local, our stall has been doing very well. Within the first September weekend, we had sales of over N$4000. I think this is largely contributed to the fact that we have a variety of styles, all well executed, and none of which are touristy. Thank you to the 7 potters who took the brave step with us. There is still space available, so please contact Uschi R if you are interested.

As the Covid infection rate is dropping, and with more and more people getting vaccinated, we have decided to go ahead with an 'Obvara firing day', planned for mid-November. Obvara is an ancient Eastern European technique, that was used to seal the porous surface of low fired ceramics. This event will take place in Windhoek, and the exact date and location will still be communicated.

Lastly, but definitely most importantly: THANK YOU to all the members who have stuck with us during the tumultuous Corona times and paid their membership fees to keep us going. Remember, none of your fees are paid to any committee members. All of it goes towards saving for exhibitions and workshops, paying a layout artist for the newsletter, keeping our website going, the occasional boost for a social media post etc.

I wish you all a creative, productive, but above all heathy and safe last quarter of the year. Also remember to start gathering your ideas for the 10th PAN Biennale in 2022.

Happy Potting

Jacqui

FROM renate.

It seems like only a very short time ago since I moved to my new hometown. But time flies when one is busy. My house has almost been completed. Only the kitchen and built-in-cupboards still need to be fitted and then I can move in. As you all will understand, I am most excited about being able to get my studio up and running again. A highlight of last month was when my kiln was connected! I was so excited to switch it on after such a long time to check that all is working properly. And I am not ashamed to say that I almost burst into tears when everything worked 100%. Not long to go before I can start playing with mud again. My new pottery wheel is standing there, ready and waiting for me. Life is good! Once all is done, I will send photos of my new studio.

Not being able to do pottery for so long was really hard, but I watched endless YouTube videos, trying to find new ideas, tips and techniques. And I came upon a video showing how to make clay that has hardened in the bag workable again. Such a simple context and one I will certainly give a try.

It is well worth watching on this link **https://youtu.be/C64hVjTX8ak** Maybe someone can let us know whether this works or whether there are even easier ways? Maybe tweak it a little bit?

We have received so many positive messages regarding our last newsletter and I want to urge all of you to contribute in some way. Be it a short article, tips, tricks, inspirations, every single contribution is welcome and appreciated. You can send it to me directly and I will put everything together for the next edition. Only when everyone contributes can we bring something worthwhile to you, our members.

Until then, stay safe.

Yours in potting,

Renate

CAROLA Lorck

However Carola gladly assists to source products not in stock for the interested ceramic enthusiast.

Inspired by the colours and textures of the landscape around her, local potter Carola Lorck produces creations that reflect upon to the singular beauty that characterises Namibia.

Carola has been engaged with pottery since 2000. In 2005 she established her own little pottery studio at her home, but then expanded and moved and opened Die Tonfabrik 2013.

Die Tonfabrik offers pottery classes on a weekly basis to adults, but also once off classes to adults and children. These classes can be booked as private events such as birthday parties or as business team building sessions.

2019 Die Tonfabrik expanded into a pottery supplier. You will find basic pottery supplies here such as different clays, tools, slips and underglazes.

A passionate and diligent local potter of twenty years, she is committed to producing unique functional yet beautiful pieces that seduce those that are fortunate enough to use them.

While she strongly feels that beauty is something that we should all revel in every day, sometimes Carola creates purely for the artistic pleasure of it.

A former Chairperson of the Potter's Association of Namibia, she is also a prolific participant in exhibitions and was awarded the Decorative Merit award in 2011 and in 2017 winning third prize in the Wheel work category.

Always determined to challenge herself both in her wheel- and handwork, Carola currently incorporates sand from the dunes outside Swakopmund in her pieces. Be it for the tactile result or because it inspires a particular colour glaze, being able to work with natural materials in new ways is hugely energising to her, and it is a unique way for tourists to take a little bit of Namibia home with them.

Die Tonfabrik

CAROLA LORCK CERAMICS

HELLO SOCIAL media.

All of us have used social media by now and the concept is not new. From sharing your photos on Instagram, memories on Facebook or sending a picture of the cupcakes your just baked to your family on WhatsApp, we all have these apps on our cell phones. Now, consider how much you or someone you know use social media and multiply that with millions and even billions. That is how many images get shared on these platforms every day!!

In ceramics, artists can use social media for promoting their work (if you do non-functional sculptures and exhibitions) as well as displaying the products you sell if you are a functional, commercial potter. The rule is that you need to interact with your audience on a regular basis by means of photos, short demonstration videos or live chats for those comfortable with unedited material. You can also create content for a Namibian market or an international market, depending on your strategy/intention.

So, how do you start?

1. Create a Facebook and Instagram profile for yourself or your studio/gallery. You can do one post from Facebook for both or vice versa when set up correctly.
2. Use your logo and correct name so that people can find you easily.
3. Change your normal WhatsApp to WhatsApp for Business.
4. Set up a content planner to plan posts and what they will contain so that you create information on time. There are many awesome and free samples online.
5. Use the right handles. These are the words that create a sentence and start with a hashtag (good ones to use is #ceramicsnamibia #pottery #clayproducts, etc.).
6. Create a catalogue on WhatsApp and a shop on Facebook where people can browse your items and order via WhatsApp button or e-mail.
7. Promote and interact with your clients/ friends/family, ask them to like and share your posts; create competitions and polls, short videos and more that will give you more followers and profile visits. The more you get, the more your name will spread and bring all kinds of new business and friends.

There are social media marketers that set this up and will manage it for you at a monthly fee as they know how to generate traffic and content. You can also get them to set it up and then manage it yourself as part of your creative journey.

Potters' Association of Namibia has both Facebook and Instagram profiles for marketing and awareness where they promote events, exhibitions, and members. The details for both platforms are on the last page of the newsletter. As you know, I e-mailed all members my proposed marketing strategy – thank you to those who responded. PAN also has the WhatsApp group where we share and learn from one another.

Social Media is much more than just sending pictures and videos - it is inspiration, learning, motivation, knowledge sharing and support. Do not be daunted by the thought of becoming a savvy marketing potter!

Be blessed and safe till next time.

Chrizaan

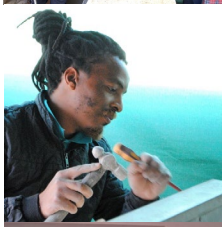
Die Tonfabrik

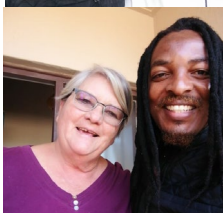
stocks different clays, underglazes,
raw materials, glazes, pottery tools

offers pottery classes to adults & children

30 Einstein Str. Swakopmund
lorckc@iway.na
081 298 7274
www.dietonfabrik.com

ZAK, THE KILN whisperer





It was such good news to finally have a kiln specialist visit Namibia. Wow, what a first for the potters of Namibia! Thank you Hazel for your willingness to "share" him and organising his papers etc. And thank you Sharon for arranging the other potters.

Zak drove from Johannesburg to Windhoek via Botswana and had come prepared for all kinds of kiln possibilities he may come across. Initial hiccups with lockdown delayed the arrival by about 2 two weeks. But all's well that ends well. Immediately on Sunday Zak called us to say he was here. In no time he was fixing, connecting, coupling, linking a little kiln to electricity. As we had to test it he said he would return after seeing the other potters in Windhoek and his sojourn at the coast. We tested it (it didn't quite reach a temperature of 1280) and true to his word he popped in here and changed the elements before heading back to SA. Meeting Zak was super interesting and lively filled with humour and exchanging knowledge. We are so grateful to you Zak. Please come again.

Genie & Rolf Albrecht

It's always so heartwarming to have guests to our country seeing where we live every day... with a small economy but peaceful . It was a great pleasure meeting you and am chuffed with the work you did on my kiln. Thank you once again

Uschi Ramakhutla

My ageing 10 cu ft kiln's problem was mainly the roof. The internal roof arch bricks had dropped preventing the door from properly closing causing severe heat loss. Zak lifted the arch bricks and cemented and pinned them back into place. Also pinned back bricks down the sides which had moved because of the roof dropping. He also cemented strips of kiln fibre around the door inside to improve the seal. The metal frame was very rusted so he sanded all of that off. Don took him to the hardware shop for heat resistant paint which he then used to dolly her up! She looks so pretty and is as good as new again.

Don will still replace the old shabby front door cover with new zinc or aluminium one to complete the makeover. Once that's done (hopefully soon) I will be advertising to sell this kiln.

Zak is a superstar ... he certainly knows what he's doing and I'm very satisfied with his work on my kiln!

I enjoyed spending the day with him... we had a lot of laughs and I learned a lot too. He is welcome back here anytime!

Sharon Flewellen

My kiln was dropped in transit. These are the before and after photos. It was also converted to a single-phase kiln.
I contacted Zak to come down to Namibia since I could not find anyone to help me. As I couldn't find someone, I posted on Facebook if other potters would also be in need and the rest is history!!!

Hazel Smit

Zak's visit helped me ascertain and diagnose the most crucial repairs necessary. He came, he conquered. I was so impressed by his unhurried expertise, his work, his service and his ethics.
Thank you so much, Zak.

Sarie Maritz

And from the man himself Zak

OK, Zakhele Mbele here, a kiln technician from South Africa in 'naturena'. I am very grateful to the Namibian potters for giving me the opportunity to see their beautiful country. Coming out of South Africa for the first time I honestly expected to be in the bush and wild but Namibia looks like South Africa yet more peaceful and people are minding their own business. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to see and experience Namibia / Botswana. It's a lifetime experience and hence I feel like whatever work I did there cannot be compared with what I got from the experience.
A very peaceful country.

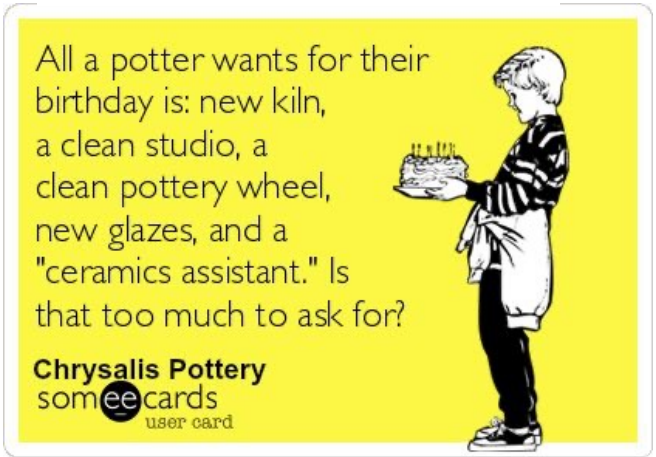
Compiled by Genie Albrecht

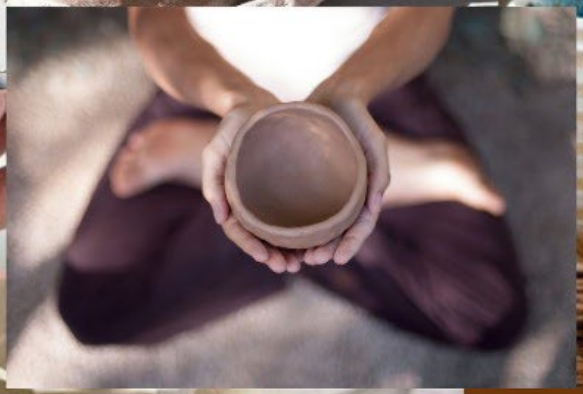
BEFORE

AFTER

POTTERY jokes

Looks a bit wet, have you tried adding more fibre?





CERAMIC CLASSES

FOR ALL
YOUNG, OLDER, NEW TO CLAY OR PROFESSIONAL,
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VENUE:- COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
(68 ROBERT MUGABE AVENUE)

CONTACT FILLIMON KAPOLO:-

081 471 0256
FOR MORE DETAILS

POTTERS' ASSOCIATION OF NAMIBIA

PAN's main objective is to promote the art and craft of pottery and ceramics in Namibia.

Visit our exhibition at the Namibian Craft Centre to buy beautiful work from Namibian ceramic artists.

SOCIAL MEDIA dates

Here are the planned Social Media posts for the rest of the year. The dates indicated is the day it will be posted, so work on the content will have to start a week before, depending on what we will post. Please let me know if you want to contribute to a specific post and we will discuss it from there. I will be glad to help if you want to give it a try.
Contact me on WhatsApp (**0812706045**) or on the PAN e-mail address.

OCTOBER:

Monday (4th and 18th)
– Potter's profile.
Thursday (7th and 21st)
– Thursday tools.
Monday (11th and 25th)
– Monday method.
Thursday (14th and 28th)
– PAN events/exhibitions/ background/ famous potter profile

NOVEMBER:

Monday (1st, 15th, 29th)
– Potter's profile.
Thursday (4th and 18th)
– Thursday tools.
Monday (8th and 22nd)
– Monday method.
Thursday (11th and 25th)
– PAN events/exhibitions/ background/ famous potter profile

DECEMBER:

Thursday (2nd)
– Thursday tools.
Monday (6th)
– Monday method.
T**hursday (9th)**
– PAN events/exhibitions/ background/ famous potter profile
Monday (13th)
– Potter's profile.
Thursday 16 and Monday 20th
– Holiday message (Pottery as gifts, feature all places pottery can be bought in Namibia).

POTTERY teachers

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