

potty for clay

Meet Tania Kunze. She loves getting dirty and has been known to smash her work if she doesn't like it. The Shorncliffe Pottery Club president explains in her own words why she loves her job.

CERAMICS is what I studied ... but most people call themselves a potter. In places like America, they might say I'm a ceramic artist.

I kind of have two roles – I'm here as an artist and the president of the Shorncliffe Pottery Club. We've built up this studio at Sandgate PCYC from a very small one (which used to be) under the town hall in the basement. The sergeant running the PCYC helped us. He applied for a grant to build a studio and so did we.

The studio itself was finished in 2006. It's only been here for a year and a half and we're already extending.

It's designed so that anyone who knows about pottery can come and access the facility, but if someone doesn't know we can teach them.

So I do that complementary to my own art work but for selfish reasons. I now don't have to own my own equipment because I can use this community space to do it.

I make sure this works well and everyone chips into the cost of running it and keeping it going.

Part-time I actually work for a glass factory and I do a lot of design and photography for them.

I've got a permanent 20-hour week job that the income comes in on an even stream. Everything else I do goes up and down like a yo-yo, but I've

got my bread and butter money.

The other 20-hours a week I'm doing whatever comes up next, so that might be a commission, sometimes its teaching and sometimes it's putting in submissions for big projects.

I don't know very many artists who can survive on the yo-yo of just making commissioned work. You need something else that you can rely on.

I love it. Pottery ... I don't think I'd be able to live the rest of my life without it now. It's got its hooks in me. It does for a lot of people. We all enjoy being able to do things that in the normal confines of a normal life you can't. You know, like get really dirty or play with fire.

When you're actually working on the wheel you almost go into a meditative state. It's all about reaching the centre and making sure everything's even and centred.

You have to learn to control the clay not let it control you. If you're in a funny mood some days you just can't get it right and other times you'll turn out 10 beautiful things.

You've got to close your mind to everything else and concentrate on that one thing. It's quite peaceful. When you have a busy life it's really nice to have something that you can do that switches everything else off. ▀



HAVE A CRACK

If you want to have a go at making a ceramic tile, visit Shorncliffe Pottery Club's display on the Lower Moora Park foreshore on Good Friday as part of the Bluewater Festival. Members will be there all day. Phone Tania on 0404 083 109.

