



PICTURE: ROXANNE KOTZE

■ Some members of the potter community celebrate Julia Bingham's good fortune. Pictured at back, from left, are Ralph Johnson of Ceramics South Africa, Kyle Hanekom and John Bauer. In front are Andrea Smit with Julia Bingham and James Kantor.

Potter Julia is all fired up after kiln donation

KAREN KOTZE

A confluence of events has led to the donation of a dream to a young potter.

Claremont resident Julia Bingham was a potter without a kiln until a chance meeting with ceramicist John Bauer changed all that.

Mr Bauer calls it a "Christmas miracle", because he just happened to be in the right place to meet a number of people's needs at the end of last year.

"I was chatting to James Kantor of Just Junk, and he told me he had a massive kiln in his Wynberg branch, which just wasn't moving. It is huge and takes up quite a bit of space, and he was quite keen to

get it into the potters' circles," Mr Bauer says.

"The next day or so, I met Julia who asked me if I knew where she could find a kiln," he grins.

Once in touch with Julia and Ceramics South Africa, Mr Kantor decided to donate the kiln, and deliver it to Julia.

Ralph Johnson, chairman of Ceramics SA, was on hand in Wynberg when Julia and James met for the hand-over.

"I am very pleased at James's generosity, and thank him for his commitment to uniting any future kilns and potters that come across his path. Delivery of the kilns is as much a gift as the kiln, and this kiln is a big one, worth at least R25 000 new," Mr Johnson says.

Mr Kantor says donations are part of a good life principle.

"I make my living from reselling junk, and I believe in being environmentally conscious – but also conscious to needs of people. By connecting Julia with a kiln, we have given an artist the chance to earn a living and add to the economy. We all have to share the world's resources and we can help each other and keep the wheel turning, in many ways," he says.

He delivered Julia's kiln this month so she can start "cooking".

"I am super-excited," Julia says. "I've spent a lot of time thinking up new designs and can't thank James and everyone else involved enough."