

SA BAKERS ASSOCIATION 1ST AGM 21ST OCTOBER 2017

PRESIDENTS REPORT by Dave Collier, Founding President

Visitors, Friends, Associates, Bakers, Cake Makers, Confectioners, Suppliers to the Baking Industry, Sponsors, Executive Committee Members and Fellow Directors. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this, the very first “Bakers Day” of the South African Bakers Association. Yes, we are officially one year old. Happy Birthday to us.

But can anybody tell me when the first bakers guild was founded, No? 2185 years ago, in Ancient Rome the Pistorius was founded, guiding and regulating the Trade of the Baker. The London Guild of Bakers was founded in 1185 followed by many European countries, and the first modern Bakers Associations were founded in the late 19th Century both in Europe and America.

My point is that our Trade, and, yes, I am proud to call it a trade, is one of the most ancient and one of the most honourable, and yet sadly in decline. Where can you learn the skills of Baking and Confectionary in South Africa? Where?

There are NO formal bakery schools that can teach you to make a traditional sourdough bread, right through to a Royal Icing Wedding Cake, or to make tasty meat pies, as well as the perfect Koeksister.

And why is this. It is because since the modernization of South Africa the Baking Industry was traditionally run by European trained artisans. The imports, as we are, most of us. The Industry fell afoul of apartheid politics, and many brilliant African bakers and confectioners were taught a wide range of practical skills, with little or no theory.

As the elderly European bakers slowly disappear from the scene, the only people preserving the skills and knowledge are the purists, some of the suppliers, and the home industries, that strive to achieve the perfection that they find in textbooks.

We in the Industry are allowing a culture of mediocracy to creep in, which must stop.

And this is how towards the end of 2005 a bunch of old European bakers got together with the idea of a Bakers Association. It battled to get off the ground. It could not find the right identity. It had a different name, but it was the forerunner of our wonderful Organization. It was during this time that we decided to model ourselves on the South African Chefs Association, and I am proud to say that they have supported our efforts ever since

I would like to recognize the members of that group that are here today with me

Stuart McClarty, Nick Parcell, and Bill Reed

Then early in June 2015 I thought NO we have to give this another chance, and so I created the Facebook Page.

And how did that take off! 100...200...500...1000 Members posting all sorts of recipes, pictures of cakes of all shapes and sizes. Videos, complaints, adverts. It all started happening.

About this time, I met my good friend and colleague Henri Lebon, as well as reconnected with Tim Faull after many years, and we started to talk about the way forward. And so, in November 2015, at this very venue, just under two years ago, we held our very first social event. We spread the word and managed to get nearly 50 people here, to start the flame burning again.

I called for volunteers, and got a show of hands. Most of our current volunteers were not around then. It's easy to put your hand up, but not so easy to commit time and energy to a "dream"

But in early 2016 we managed to form a working committee to start the Association. By the time the Non-Profit Company was registered, on 1st September 2016 we had already held a further social event, written a Constitution, gained promises of Sponsorship, constructed an Executive Committee with designated Portfolios and started building a website.

We build the organization around solid aims and objectives which are as follows:

- To become the recognized Professional Body for all Bakers and Confectioners of the Republic of South Africa.
- To be an Association that welcomes all Bakers and Confectioners from every part of the Industry, as Members, as well as encourages the support of all Industry Stakeholders.
- To determine the Recognized Skill Levels and Job Descriptions for the Baking and Confectionery Industry
- To encourage and support Training Providers to develop Learning Systems that talk to a World Class Baking and Confectionery Skills Development System as well as the Recognised Skill Levels of the Association.
- To organize and run Skills Competitions and other Social Activities to promote the advancement of Baking Skills in South Africa.
- To operate a range of Social Media services that will offer benefits to all the Association Members; such as a Job Vacancies page, a Technical and Business Help and Support page, and an E-Learning portal.
- To engage in a wide range of Social Responsibility Programs to benefit the communities that we live in, with various charitable activities.

We registered the NPC with three Master Bakers as Directors; myself, Tim, and Henri, and we created and Exco with six members.

We created a set of rules under a constitution (which is available to view on our website), and today, at the AGM, we have agreed to develop a set of Byelaws to support the constitution, by this time next year. This will assist us in offering our members peace of mind that we have effective corporate governance going forward as we grow.

On April 11th this year we held our first formal Exco meeting, where we elected myself as President, Tim as Vice-President in charge of Training and Development, and Henri Lebon as Vice-President in charge of Marketing.

We also agreed to the following Founding Exco Members:

These are now (please stand up) Reinhard Leopald, Secretary, Marina Kirk-Osman, Membership, Stuart McClarty, Competitions, Wayde Rubin, Social Responsibility, William Kleyweg, Marketing and Nick Parcell as Minister with No-Portfolio, or more importantly Corporate Governance

This committee, as will the Directors positions, be re-elected ever two years at the AGM, with all Exco members normally only being able to serve in their positions for a maximum of two terms. Directors will however remain on the board indefinitely to serve as Non-Executives. If a board member or committee member resigns before the term end the Exco will request a volunteer to step in until elections are held.

As with Marina, who is vacating her position sometime soon to emigrate.

Therefore, next year we will have our first elections and we hope that many of you here wish to get involved in the running of our new organization.

OK so we are up and running, so how do we achieve our Aims and Objectives?

We have stated that we want to establish an effective training system for Bakery Skills. The government are supposed to do this, however are struggling to achieve this because of lack of involvement from industry. There is a recession out there, and training is not top of mind.

But if we don't train, one day we won't have a Baking Industry.

But we are going to have to be a little patient here, and Tim will have a little time to think of the best way about working with government and higher education, because first we need to have what is referred to as Critical Mass,

Our organization needs to be big enough to make all the role players sit up and listen to us.

We need to make a noise

We need members, lots of members who are passionate about Baking and / or Confectionary

We need money

We need to hold events to attract attention and earn revenue

We need to find willing sponsors who's interests are in assisting us grow as an organization.

And all this means that Henri and myself have not been able have time to think.

We have had to actively market our organization and grow the membership and sponsorship base

Well we have not done so badly and I think we should shout about what we have achieved in just 6 months.

- We went from paid up 12 members to almost 60
- We went from 1400 members of the Facebook page to almost 2400
- We got our troublesome website off the ground, albeit slowly, but we are almost there
- We held another social event this May and then we held a Golf Day in July at Benoni lake and raised over R3000 for our Training fund
- We held technical demonstrations at both the Cape Town and the Johannesburg Good Food and Wine Shows
- We went from four sponsors to ten, about who I shall refer to shortly
- We went from having R2000 in the bank to having nearly R40,000

Not bad for a bunch of volunteers who work throughout South Africa in high pressure jobs in the baking industry.

But now we need everyone to start getting involved and bringing in members.

What do I get if I join? Everyone wants to know what's the bang for their buck!

OK well let's start:

- A Certificate of Membership
- A Logo Patch and right to wear our Logo on your jackets
- A membership card (only next year)
- Access to the Website (closed pages will only be available when your password is registered after this AGM)
- Access to training programs and videos, through the website
- A technical chat page to ask questions of your colleagues, through the website
- At least one Sponsored social event in your area every year where you can eat and drink your membership fee!
- Value Discounts from our sponsors such as 7.5% of Macbothers equipment.
- And if that not enough you have the access to the network of the fraternity of the South African Baking Industry

For R150 a year! (R300 if you are a Professional)

Now I think the we, and our sponsors are giving away enough for us all to work hard to double this membership base by Christmas! And then your Executive will start to work to build training systems for the Industry

Before my closing Statements let me just take a few minutes to thank our sponsors, without whom we would not be here today

In order by whom we came across them:

- HTA and Chef Stephen Billingham, (President of the SA Chefs Association) who owns this establishment and has allowed us to meet here since inception.
- Anchor Yeast, who supported that first event in 2015 and have remained a loyal sponsor, and who are our first and only paid up Gold Sponsor so far. Thank You Kim Le Roux and team. Also note that Anchor were the main sponsor for today's event.
- Professional Vision Group, which is Tim's food Consulting Company in Cape Town, for developing and maintaining the website. (you will hear more from Tim later)
- Macbros and Craig Roff and his team for allowing us to meet at their premises every month and drink their beer
- Kees Beyers and the Chocolatiers for becoming our first Silver sponsor and supporting our Christmas event last year
- The South African Chefs Association, who came on board this year to give us advice and share information as well as sponsoring our catering. Thank you, Thomas and team,
- Chipkins Puratos and Clinton and Paul for sponsoring us for two years in a row
- Sean Haynes and Maestro Chef for sponsoring our jackets and helping us develop a range of branded clothing.
- Romax Bakery, which happens to be Henri's bakery, for sponsoring the Catering at the Golf Day as well as the wonderful Croquettes that you will be tasting just now at lunch

- Fiero Milano for giving us space at the Good Food and Wine show, as well as Tombake for supplying us machinery

- And Finally, RCL Milling and Baking for providing the Coffee Station at the Golf Day

I must tell you that we have at least five major suppliers in the Baking Industry queuing up to join us at this moment

All of these sponsors believe that we are can make a difference to the industry. To the extent where the old long-suffering business Chamber of the industry The SA Chamber of Baking, has granted us free membership this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have listened to me long enough, and we have a fun filled as well as informative agenda of events for the rest of the day.

I would just like to thank you all for coming here today, spending your Saturday here for a passion that you love

In the words of a very famous man; CAN WE DO IT.... YES WE CAN

Thank You