

The Woodworkers' Association of NSW Incorporated

June 2021

From the Chair

Each month, all over Sydney, large amounts of wooden furniture appear on the nature strip for the local Council to remove. The vast bulk of that furniture is smashed and becomes landfill. What a waste. The older (unfashionable) furniture is often made from beautiful timbers that are now difficult (or impossible) to acquire from timber merchants. You would think that we could come up with a way of better way dealing with our limited resources than destroying and burying them. I hope that all the courses we run at our Workshop can use reclaimed timber. The idea of another tree being lopped for our amusement is not appealing.

On the topic of courses, Phil Nanlohy is keen to receive your suggestions for one-day courses on any aspect of woodwork or

related activities. If you have a skill that you would be willing to share with others on a Saturday, or you would like to learn more about how to do something, please let Phil know.

The Workshop is almost fully booked on Wednesdays and Saturdays for June. We would like to expand the number of days that the Workshop is available to members. We are going to have a trial of opening the Workshop on Monday mornings, thanks to a kind offer from **Richard Leniston**. If others would be willing to be Supervisors, we could expand the offering further. All bookings for use of the Workshop (on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays) need to be made through **David Palmer**.

Congratulations to our members **Peter Harris** and **Leon Van Vliet** for winning first and second



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prizes at the Royal Easter Show. Peter made an immaculate Blackwoodset of drawers with an opening lid that also earned him a place in the Standard of Excellence display. Leon crafted a superb rocking chair that will be on display at our upcoming meeting on **Monday, 7 June**. At that meeting, we are delighted that **Stuart Faulkner** will be giving a talk on how to inject yourself in the design process. We will also be having a quick tool sale of pre-loved items and much more.

I hope to see you there.

Phil Greenwood

WWA Objectives

The objects of the Association are to:

- Provide a forum for networking and to encourage camaraderie amongst all those who work in wood
- Promote public awareness and appreciation of fine woodwork
- Encourage creativity, design and development of skills and application by all woodworkers
- Represent professional woodworkers and promote sustainability of fine woodwork as a career
- Promote awareness of environmental issues including encouraging the judicious use of our precious native timber resources and use sustainable harvested, recycled and reclaimed timbers.

New Members

Since January many new members have joined the Association.

We would like to welcome our new members below:

Geoff Aigner, Elizabeth Berzins-Jones, Ian Berzins-Jones, James Brodie, Martin Butler, Benjamin Bywater, Olivier Champetier, Fraser Cobb, John Desborough, Elizabeth Duck-Chong, Keith Durkin, Austin Finn, Chris Gaskin, Colin Gaskin, Kenneth Giblin, Rhys Gill, Nettie Harris, Andrew Honan, Simon Howells, Wei Guang Luk, Jason Man, Justin McDonnell, Michael McGlynn, Anthony Natoli, John Neems, Clare Nicholson, Sav Cremona, Zachary Simandl, Mandy Ellis, Robert Redwin, Celeste Stein and George Turnure and Aaron Stewart.

We look forward to your involvement in the activities of the Association and meeting you at our bi-monthly general meetings and at our Abbotsford workshop.

Workshop Supervisors

We are grateful for the ongoing support and supervision of our workshop supervisors:

Gordon Joseph, Peter Harris, Tim Major, Peter Dunn, Peter Munro, Richard Leniston, Phil Nanlohy and David Palmer

WWA Committee 2021

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Steve Townsend

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If you would like to join or assist the Committee or be more involved in the Association, please call any Committee member.

WWA Life Members

Richard Crosland

Phil Lake

Kim Larymore

Leon Sadubin

Richard Vaughan

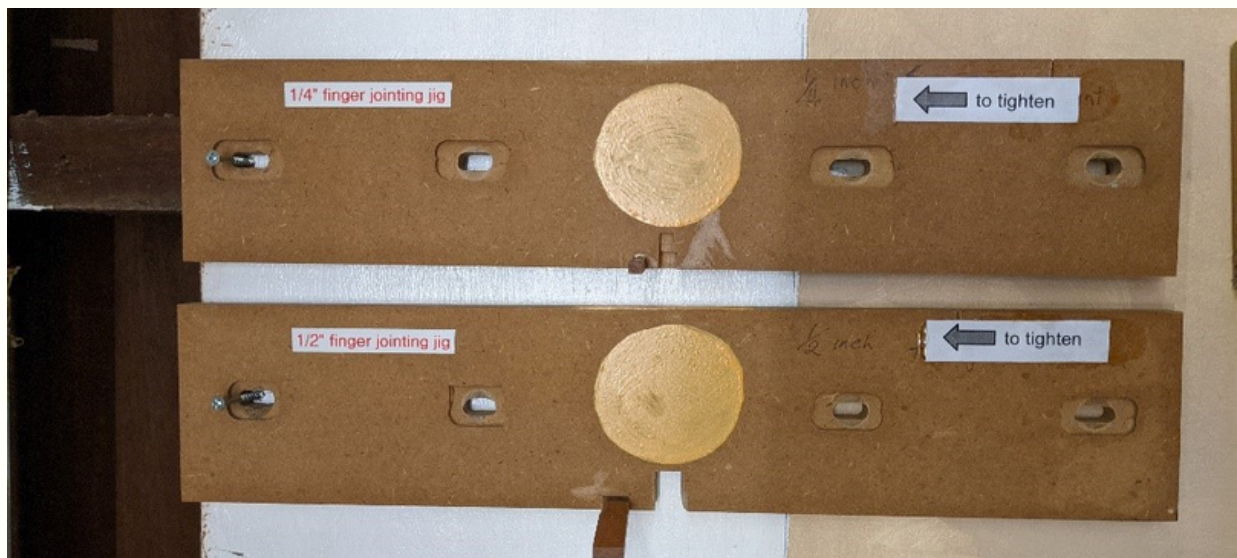
News, News, News

You may notice a proliferation of labels and signs in the workshop. The committee decided to attack the problem of things going missing in the workshop. It's not that anyone is walking off with our equipment, it's simply that things get misplaced and can't be found.

For example, John Kirkwood made a magnificent finger jointing system for use on the router table. It has parts for $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, $\frac{3}{8}$ inch and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch finger joints. The trouble is there are many parts and it's not easy to find the one you need.

A sub-committee of labellers/organizers was duly formed and they got stuck into the problem on a recent Saturday. The sub-committee consisted of **Frank Duff, David Palmer, Tim Major, and Steve Townsend.**

Now, all the finger joint parts have yellow paint and labels identifying them. Many other systems now have labels identifying them.



We have now bought a Festool Domino system. This also has many small parts that are easily lost. So, it will have a special place in the lockable steel cabinet in the backroom. It will also be where special router bits are stored along with the Makita router for mortising and other small but important components.

This cabinet has been fitted with a lock which will be opened by a supervisor when needed. All parts must be checked by the supervisor at the end of the day, and the cabinet locked again.

It might sound a bit authoritarian, but it's only so we can all enjoy our woodwork rather than waste time trying to find lost bits and pieces.

Our Next Meetings Agenda

June 7th 2021

Design

Stuart Faulkner, the director of Heartwood Creative Woodworking, will talk on how to design a piece of furniture so it is uniquely yours.

Formerly a designer, Stuart trained at Sturt School for Wood and then embraced the “artisan lifestyle” at the Splinter Workshop.

In 2010 Stuart returned to Sturt to follow in Tom Harrington’s footsteps as the Director of the Wood School. Stuart has a number of professional teaching qualifications and was Head Teacher of Furniture and Product Design at Lidcombe TAFE. During that time he had the



privilege of teaching and mentoring many promising furniture and product design students as well as working with some truly inspiring teachers.

Since 2013 Stuart has been teaching recreational woodworking classes from his fabulous facility at Marrickville.

Execution

This year **Peter Harris** won First Prize at Royal Easter Show in the Small Item of Furniture category. He also won second prize in the Box-making category. Peter has kindly agreed to talk about the making of each item.

Leon van Vliet’s rocking chair, which won Second Prize in the Small Item of Furniture category will be on display.

And, as always, there will be contributions of interest from members and even a quick tool sale by the irrepressible **Gordon Joseph**.

Members are welcome to invite friends and family to join us. As usual, the venue for the meeting is the **Canada Bay Club, 4 William St, Five Dock**. Plenty of parking is available. We will be meeting in the William Room on the first floor.

Sturt School for Wood 2022 Certificate IV in Furniture Design and Technology

Over the years quite a number of Association members, both past and present, have had the opportunity to learn from some of Australia’s finest woodworkers at the Sturt School for Wood at Mittagong. Using the knowledge and skills gained at Sturt, many of them have gone on to establish successful woodworking careers and businesses.

The tutors for Sturt’s Certificate IV in Furniture Design and Technology in 2022 include New Zealand’s David Haig who will be joining David Upfill-Brown, Roy Schack and others.

There are still a couple of places available on 2022 Cert IV course and, if you or someone you know is interested in it, head to www.sturt.nsw.edu.au

Finding Motivation – Sometimes it takes a while

By John Austin

About 40 years ago, I had my own cabinetmaking business and was making custom built furniture, including Louis style Hall Consoles. It was a good time, when furniture was appreciated as something to enjoy, keep and possibly pass on. Times change and things get put to one side...



The Footstool

After the recent passing of club member Tom Paley, I had the opportunity to take a half-finished foot stool he had been working on and decided to finish the project.

The footstool is made out of Cedar and the cabriole legs have a beautifully turned foot. The wings of the legs are perfectly placed on the oval frame. All in all, a work of clever design and construction.

After sanding and polishing with shellac, the stool was fitted with a drop in seat, and upholstered in a brocade fabric.

It now holds pride of place.

Doing this prompted me to bring out and finish off some old projects I had tucked away in shelves in the garage. I had some components for a Louis style Hall Console that I used to make and decided that would be a good place to start.

Despite being over 40 years since the components were cut out on an old Jeffwood bandsaw, the Brazilian Mahogany timber had dried with virtually no movement or distortion. It was still excellent to work with and to carve.



Footstool Legs



Components cut on Bandsaw

The table components comprise 4 legs, 2 side rails and front rail for carving and one plain back rail and a solid top. The mirror was made of 4 sections, joined and glued using a timber tongue. An extra piece of timber was left on each segment to facilitate cramping and was removed after the frame was completed.



Fluting and toe carving



Toe carving



Pattern drawn on knee
for carving



Knee carving complete



Side cut out for carving



Side carving complete



Close up of side and leg carving

The crown carving is attached with screws and the mirror "legs" are attached with screws and supplemented with a ply brace on the back of the mirror frame. These "legs" are purely decorative and not designed for weightbearing.



Richard Crosland's
School of Fine Woodwork
 All tools are provided and work in progress can be stored at the Alexandria workshop.
 Phone 02 9313 4142
www.crosland.com.au

What Timber Should I Choose?

*From a talk at our April 2021 AGM
by Rodney Henderson of Anagote Timbers
and Steve Townsend*

At the start of every project is the question “What timber should I choose?” There are more than 15 important considerations to take into account. Many of these choices are made instinctively by experienced woodworkers but some need careful consideration.



A display of some of timbers at Anagote Timbers showing the wide range of colours and textures available.

Here are the most common considerations when selecting timber.

Colour

Probably the first choice is what colour should the final product be. Should it be a modern, crisp, light blonde colour or a more traditional brownish red?

Source

Many beautiful timbers come from the Americas, Europe and Asia, but a lot of woodworkers like to use Australian timbers which have their own beauty and practical qualities.

Price

Prices are very important, particularly for large projects. They vary greatly over time. For example, Hoop Pine is particularly cheap at the moment (April 2021).

Strength

There are three main ways to measure the strength of timber:

Modulus of Elasticity a measure of how much a unit of timber can be bent before it breaks.

Modulus of rupture a measure of how much force (measured in megapascals, MPa) can be applied to a piece of timber before it breaks.

Crushing strength a measure of how much force needs to be applied longitudinally to a piece of wood before it collapses in on itself.

Hardness

The hardness of timber is usually only an issue with flooring, although it is important if selecting wood for tools like planes. Gidgee is a particularly hard Australian timber commonly used to make planes. The hardest wood in the world has been shown to be Waddy Wood, also an Australian timber.

Modulus of rupture of selected timbers - MPa

Balsa	19.6
Paulownia	37.8
Northern Silky Oak	36.7
Australian Red Cedar	71.5
Huon Pine	76.3
Hoop Pine	85.1
White Oak	102.3
Jarra	108.2
Hickory	139.3
Spotted Gum	141.8

Density

Density is more correctly called specific gravity and is a measure of the weight of a particular volume of wood compared to the same volume of water.

It is important in furniture making as furniture should be kept light and easy to move. Some typical Australian furniture woods with their specific gravity are:

Density of selected timbers - mmHg

Australian Red Cedar	0.40 - 0.49
Hoop Pine	0.39 - 0.50
Northern Silky Oak	0.49 - 0.56
Jarra	0.66 - 0.84

Stability

Stability is the measure of how much a particular timber will move once it has been dried. It is largely a matter of how much the wood will expand and contract with changes in humidity.

Timber will move most tangential to the growth rings, and about half as much radially across the growth rings. The least amount of shrinkage will occur along the grain.

Durability

Durability can be classified into three levels:

1. Weathering – largely a matter of UV damage and surface cracking.
2. Insect damage – typically from termites and lyctus borers.
3. Fungal rot – due to contact with moisture.

Keeping the timber indoors will solve most problems 1 and 3 but insect damage can happen in any situation.

Treatments such as H2 to H6 can reduce damage in most situations but usually not for an extended time.

Toxicity

Some timbers can be toxic to human causing problems ranging from mild skin irritation to nausea, headache, dizziness, septicaemia and even heart attack. These effects are particular to individuals and many people have little or no reaction.

Timbers commonly found to have problems for many people include; Australian Red Cedar, Western Red Cedar, Ebony, Rosewoods, and Yew.

Grain and texture

Highly figured grain is much sought after but interlocking grain can result in tearout and other difficulties when working the stock.

Ease of gluing

Most woods can be glued with no difficulty. Oily woods present problems, particularly tallowwood. Very dense woods can also cause problems because they won't absorb enough glue to provide a solid joint.



Huon Pine Grain Pattern

Ability to take finishes

The ability of a given wood to accept a finish depends very much on the type of finish e.g. oil, varnish, shellac, polyurethane, etc.

Steam bending

Some woods have excellent steam bending qualities such as myrtle beech and celery top pine. Other very good timbers for steam bending are northern silky oak, huon pine and radiata pine. Some timbers with acceptable steam bending include Silver Ash, Spotted Gum Blackwood and Karri. Woods not suitable for steam bending include Queensland Maple, Hoop Pine and Rose Gum.

Availability

Many timbers are available in a range of sizes year in and year out at reasonable process. But, particularly with the

current shipping chaos, certain woods are extremely hard to get.

Some woodworkers buy newly felled trees, have them sawn up and stored for drying so they have a reliable supply on hand.

Sustainability

Woodworkers often feel guilty that they are causing the destruction of forests but the main causes of deforestation are beef production, oilseeds, cereals and other food crops. These make up the cause of 99% of deforestation.

Information sources

This is a tiny amount of the information available on the subject. Sources used for this article include the following books.

Wood in Australia, *Keith R. Bootle*.

Australian Timber Buyers Guide, *Skills Book Publishing*.

Wood! *Eric Myer*. Eric Meier's book is also available as a website: www.wood-database.com



A Steam-box with Steam Bent timber

Carving Spoons with Carol Faulkner



Serving Spoon carved by
Benjamin Bywater

On April 24th the Association held a short course on carving spoons. The course was attended by six of our members. What follows are accounts and reports from Benjamin Bywater and Claire O'Riley.



Benjamin Bywater Carving his Spoon

The recent spoon carving course was an excellent opportunity to learn and reinforce skills and techniques under the guidance of Carol Faulkner and Clare O'Reilly. The course covered a variety of carving techniques, correct tool selection, and finishing techniques but most importantly the course was designed in a way that catered to all skill levels of the attendees of the course.

A few of us have had carving experience in the past where others had no previous experience but this didn't take away from the course as Carol and Clare provided invaluable one on one education with each attendee to help all of us get the most from the day, including design recommendations and advice on how to tackle each stage of the spoon. I personally found this to be highly beneficial and walked away with new ideas, skills, more tools for the wish list (the Veritas draw knife is a must-have) and a new spoon!

I highly recommend attending the courses offered by the association and I will definitely be attending more in the future to improve my own woodworking skills while forging camaraderie with other members. **By Benjamin Bywater**

Our recent spoon carving course was another enjoyable, productive day for new and experienced woodworkers. Carol Faulkner led the class, showing students the key steps to turn a spoon blank – a roughly sawn shape - into a bespoke carved spoon that is both beautiful and functional. Unlike much of woodworking that requires different tools, machines and space, spoon carving requires a few tools, some nice timber and patience.

Spoon carving is a meditative pastime that can be picked up when sitting in the sun, or next to a fire, out camping or at home. It can be creative, sculptural or functional, depending on the timber and the carver. But as we all experienced, it can be hard to decide when it is finished!

All students took home a finished – or nearly finished - spoon, and a take home pack of tips and tricks to make another spoon, and the confidence to keep carving. **By Claire O'Riley**



Our New Festool Domino

By Steve Townsend



After some years of discussion and deliberation, the committee recently decided to buy a Festool Domino DF500. This makes it quick and easy to do mortise and tenon joinery.

The Domino machine cuts mortises very accurately into each side of the joint and then you slip in a special “floating” beech tenon, add some glue and, voila, you have a tight, strong joint.

The Domino machine is similar in operation to a biscuit cutter but provides a much stronger joint because its tenons are much thicker and longer than biscuits and they are set more deeply into each side of the joint.

The committee's long deliberations on buying the Domino machine were due to the high price (\$1750, plus a vacuum system still to be bought) and the risk of having the many small parts of the system being misplaced.

It was decided to keep the system in a locked cabinet in the back room and ensure it is used only under the care of a workshop supervisor. The Domino machine comes in a special box (called a “systainer”) and has several small parts for changing the size of cutters.



The Domino tenons come in several thicknesses: 5, 6, 8, and 10 mm and there is a cutter for each of these sizes. There is also a 4mm thick Domino but we don't have the cutter for that yet.

The machine needs to be plugged into 240 volt power and also needs a vacuum hose to suck out the swarf from the mortise as it is being cut. Like all Festool tools, the Domino's controls are a bright green for easy identification.

Long-time association member Peter Dunn gave a course on the Domino recently for our workshop supervisors. “I like the Domino,” says Peter Dunn, “because it is capable of far more finesse.

“If you're using expensive timber, there is a considerable amount of wastage in a mortise and tenon joint. With a Domino there is no wastage. But I think speed is the main advantage. It saves an enormous amount of time.

“The domino is easy to use but there are a lot of little tricks you need to learn. The best thing to do is watch some of the many videos about it on YouTube.”

A Processional Cross

By Frank Duff

In Catholic liturgies - and those of the high Anglican Church - a leading role is given to a formal, often ornate, Cross - actually a Crucifix (Cross with Corpus) - carried in procession between the Sacristy and the assembled people in a church where the Cross is to have its place on the Sanctuary. The procession is led by the Crucifer, followed by Acolytes, the bearer of the Gospels; finally the Celebrant or Presider.

Frank Duff reports on his acquisition of a home Crucifix and its adaptation for processional use in the newish Parish of Marsden Park in Western Sydney.

Advice and assistance were provided by WWA members et al, who were prepared to do this 'work' on a Sunday: not any Sunday, but on both Passion (Palm) Sunday and Easter the Day of Resurrection itself: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." St Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:14 KJV.

Attachment of the Cross to its staff was with six tapered wooden nails, glued & driven into tapered holes, two from the front, four from the rear. Glue was allowed to dry for some hours, untouched.

A 1.8 m long 30mm nominal diameter dowel from Bunnings was successfully run over the workshop jointer to flatten only the overlap with the 30 x 18 mm Cross section.

For the stands, a baulk of heavy timber (Eucalyptus Idunnnowhich?) was found in the WWA store, dressed & cut into pieces: there are two stands, one for the Sanctuary, the other for the Sacristy.

Large holes drilled with a 30 mm Forstner bit were found to be on size! But, as expected, the Bunnings dowel was actually 28.6 mm in diameter. A major problem, as the Cross would not stay truly vertical. Attempts were made to use a copper shim. Instead, a 58 mm long Bronze ferrule 30 mm OD (c26 mm ID) was turned to sheath the foot of the staff; accordingly, the foot needed to be reduced slightly to fit the ferrule. The staff was held horizontal on the WWA router table, a square-ended cutter being used to give a crisp shoulder.

The staff protrudes through the ferrule, in case there be a marble floor...

Depending on the dimensions, the ferrule might or might not be visible.

Underneath four recesses were cut for felt pads.



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