

The Woodworkers' Association of NSW Incorporated

March/April 2019

From the Chair

Thank you to all members who have promptly renewed their memberships and a special thank you to those people who have also included a financial donation to the Association. It is very much appreciated.

At our last meeting, **Andrew Knight**, an Industrial Technology teacher at Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School informed us about “developments” within the secondary school system for students undertaking woodwork. He explained the choices and challenges for students as well as the difficulties for teachers, many of whom receive surprisingly little training before being called upon to guide students in complex skills.

Some members expressed frustration and disappointment at the lack of precedence that woodworking skills are now given in our schools.

What should, and what should not, be taught within our schools is a perennial debate. There is no clear or simple answer. There is so much to teach and only a limited time to cover so many important subjects. Which is why it is important that the Association encourage and foster young people who are, or may be, interested in woodwork. We do that currently by awarding prizes for

outstanding HSC woodworking projects. But perhaps we can do more by collaborating with some schools that are close to our Workshop and encouraging students to develop their skills in conjunction with our members. If you have any thoughts, ideas or suggestions on this topic, please let me know.

At our next meeting on **1 April 2019**, the current committee will retire and a new committee will be appointed. Over the last year, each of the committee members has made a significant contribution and I thank them, on behalf of the members, for their work. It has been an effective and harmonious committee.

Please consider nominating for the committee if you are interested in contributing your skills, ideas and some time to the Association.

Phil Greenwood



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Many thanks to...



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
- to promote public awareness and appreciation of fine woodwork
- to encourage creativity, design and development of skills and application by all woodworkers
- to represent professional woodworkers and promote sustainability of fine woodwork as a career
- to promote awareness of environmental issues including encouraging the judicious use of our precious native timber resources and use sustainable harvested, recycled and reclaimed timbers.

WWA Life Members

Richard Crosland

Phil Lake

Kim Larymore

Leon Sadubin

Richard Vaughan

Our next meeting ...

Annual General Meeting

Monday, 1 April, 2019 - 7.30pm

Each year we are obliged to conduct an Annual General Meeting so members of the Association can receive the Committee's report upon the financial standing and activities of the Association and elect the office bearers and other members of the Committee. Retiring committee members may offer themselves for re-election.

These formalities are important and provide an occasion for members to know more about the workings of the Association and to offer themselves for election. Usually the formalities are concluded within about 30 minutes. We are pleased to have the benefit of Gordon Joseph to act as our returning officer and conduct the election.

Surprise Guest speaker!

Following the reports and election, we have a surprise guest speaker who will address the meeting and provide an interesting and engaging talk on a topic that will be of interest to all members.

If you would like to guess who it may be, please send an email to Clare O'Reilly. Winners will be announced at the meeting and will be suitably rewarded. Members of the Committee are excluded from participating.



Members are welcome to invite family and friends to attend the meeting.

Please bring your membership name tags to make it easier for people to say hello. We will also have name tags to write on for visitors.

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.

Please join the Canada Bay Club when you arrive - it is only \$11 for 5 years! More details of the benefits of joining are on page 14 of this newsletter and another good reason to join is on page 4.

Meals and light snacks are available at the Club if you would like to partake before the meeting.



WWA Committee 2018

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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.

News, news, news

A very warm welcome to our new members -

Young Lee, Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Shane Morton, Tyson Millar, James Kim, Paul King and James Watson.

We look forward to meeting you at the next general meeting and at our Workshop. Please make yourselves known to as many members as possible. We hope you will immerse yourself in the activities and spirit of the Association.

At our last meeting, **Steve Townsend** gave an excellent and very informative presentation on the differences between the various common types of **tool steels** and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Steve offered to put the slides that he used in the presentation on the Association's website, but to make it easier for people to understand, he is going one step further and writing an article for the next newsletter.

Steve's talk helped us understand which steel gives the best edge, and which steel will hold its edge the longest. But these questions remain for every woodworker - Am I better off with a sharper edge that will blunten quicker but be easier to re-sharpen, or a slightly less-sharp edge that will last longer but be harder to re-sharpen? And would I really know or appreciate the difference anyway?

Which takes me to a proposal that we have received for a talk at a general meeting - the topic of **Precision. Just how precise does a fine woodworker need to be?** By contrast to precision engineers working to tolerances of a thousandth of a millimetre, when do woodworkers need to go beyond a half a millimetre in their work? We will let you know when more details are available about the talk. As always, if you have any suggestions please let a committee member know.

Incidentally, **Peter Jackson** has contributed that he has received advice not to use CBN grinding wheels on carbon steel tools as they clog the wheel - they are designed for the harder steel tools.

David Eden has kindly offered to give some **steam bending equipment** to members who may be interested in experimenting. The equipment includes a waterproof steam box, some steel straps and handles to wrap the hot wood around a former, and three 555 mm diameter formers (to make 600 mm diameter inside) wooden spoked car wheels. Please contact David to express your interest or obtain more details - david.eden46@gmail.com.

The Canada Bay Club has become our regular meeting place for the last 12 months and seems to have been well-received by members. The Club has recently mooted, but postponed, an intention to increase the room hire from \$150 to \$200 per meeting.

It would be very helpful for our negotiations if more of our members joined the Club and used the dining and bar facilities. At an annual cost of membership of only \$3.30 or **\$11 for 5 years**, it is not a big ask! Please consider.

Mike Dunbar is a legend in the world of **Windsor Chairmaking**. For 22 years he and his wife ran the Windsor Institute. He has sent us an email inviting us to inform members of his YouTube channel where people can undertake classes for free. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZ36VGhBIHqkETSnajNhMw>. Please let us know what you think.

In December, **Matt Dwight** conducted a successful Introduction to Woodworking course at our Workshop for new members (and one not-so-new member) pictured below.



Left to right, they are: **Will Hodgkinson, Frank Duff, Sharon Lee, Kayla Power, Steven Smith and Nick Hodgkinson.**



We wish to thank Matt for sharing his expertise in this way and inspiring those people to explore their woodworking passion further.

The **Bathurst Heritage Trades Trail** is being held this year on 18-19 May. Blacksmithing, saddlery, dry stone walling, whip cracking and making, glass artistry, lace making, tapestry, embroidery, carpentry and joinery, cigar box guitar making and violin making are among many unique talents to be demonstrated by local and guest artisans. Tickets are only \$12 and covers both days. More details are available on their [website](#).

We have also received an email from Graham on the Sunshine Hinterland who would like to sell some **red cedar slabs**. There is 6 cubic metres on 2m lengths. Boards are 600mm x 50mm and were cut about 20 years ago (so they are reasonably well seasoned). For more details you can email Graham at gbopal@outlook.com.

Just a reminder that the Association has a **Facebook** page that is administered by **Alex Springall**. Any members who have made (or are making) anything interesting are invited to forward photos and a bit of a story to Alex, and he'll post them on the Association's Facebook page. If you have a web page, please include a link.

In February 2019 **Takashi Nishiura** conducted a sale of some of his Japanese tools at our Workshop and demonstrated the tuning of Japanese planes.

At the conclusion of the sale, Takashi kindly donated one of his planes to the Association for use at the workshop (pictured below).



The plane is designed to be pulled, not pushed, and the blade has a removable cartridge on the end of the blade. These Japanese planes are a joy to observe being used by masters of them.

Speaking of Japanese tools, I was visiting Christian Timbs' **Japanese Tools Australia** showroom in Kogarah the other day and asked Mitch what he thought was their best tool under \$50. Quick as a flash, he responded that the **Shinto rasp** was a beauty. Pictured below, it is two-sided with coarse teeth on one side and medium on the other, or you can buy a medium/fine rasp.



Their open design means that the teeth do not clog. The rasps retail for \$37.

By the way, make sure you call 9527 3870 before visiting the showroom - the opening hours can vary.

The challenge in the last newsletter was to make a **conductor's baton** to meet a certain specification. I am pleased to report that two members have taken up the challenge - **John Evans and Richard Leniston**. Their efforts are worthy of a feature article which will be in the next newsletter.

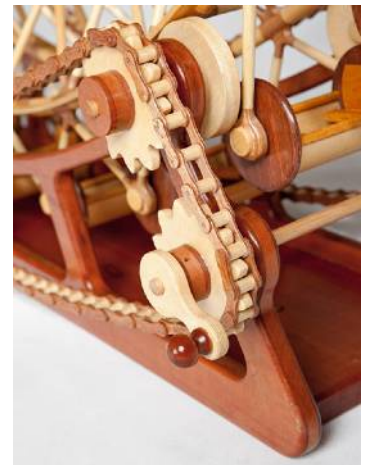
Richard Crosland's iconic working models of a **Go-Kart** and the **London Eye** are on display and for sale at the Traffic Jam Gallery at Neutral Bay from **8-29 March 2019**.




The gallery is at 41 Military Rd, Neutral Bay, just opposite the Big Bear shopping centre.

The workmanship on each piece is outstanding and fully justifies the price tag of \$50,000 each. On my reckoning, that would work out to be only about \$20 per hour of work.

The catalogue for the exhibition may be viewed by clicking [here](#).





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2019 Members' Table-making course

For four days in late January four of our members, I among them, embarked on the table-making course at **Heartwood Creative Woodworking** under principal instructor Stuart Faulkner whom many of you know. For those who don't, Stuart is a passionate teacher of fine woodworking and a lovely individual. He graduated from the Sturt School of Wood in 1997 and went on to develop courses and teach at the school. He also taught at Lidcombe TAFE, and eventually became the Full-time Director of the Sturt School of Wood.

In 2013, Stuart returned to Sydney to teach recreational woodworking classes, and after a name-change from "Sydney School for Wood", Heartwood Creative Woodworking was born. His dedication to getting "the product", as he calls it, just right is an inspiration. He cares deeply about the process as much as the result and is a hands-on teacher who is happy to get in there and help you out of any corner you might get stuck in along the way.

The Heartwood team is comprised of a number of team members. In our case, we were aided by Carol Faulkner and Nik Teply. Carol, is the course coordinator and won our hearts immediately by bringing us all cold water soon after our arrival on the first day, which was already a scorcher by the time we got there at 9:30am. She made sure that everything went smoothly behind the scenes and treated us to an amazing lunch on the last day. Nik is a German-trained master cabinet maker, restorer and conservator of furniture and wooden objects who gave us helpful tips along the way, especially when it came to surface preparation and finishing.



The project at hand was a small, elegant Shaker-style table suitable for displaying a valuable object or could be used as a side table for your armchair or sofa. The top, a two-board panel, measures 425x280x20mm and was shallow-bevelled using a hand plane underneath each edge to give a slim 8mm profile around its perimeter. The apron joinery consists of four rails with mitred, haunched tenons that attach to the square legs, which gently taper from 30mm down to 20mm at their base.

The Shaker style of furniture is minimalist in design and was

developed in the 19th century by members of the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, commonly known as Shakers, a religious sect whose guiding principles were simplicity, utility and honesty. As a result, it is free of ornamentation like carvings, inlays or veneers, which were quite common in other contemporary and pre-existing styles of furniture.

While the Shakers mostly worked in cherry, maple or pine, the material we used was rough, quarter-sawn New Guinea Rosewood – a hardwood native to South-



East Asia and the Western Pacific, which is highly sought after for furniture, carving and musical instruments. The stock was machined and dressed by the students as a first step towards the table construction. Stuart places great value on creating full-scale shop drawings to have as a reference as the project proceeds, and these were created in parallel with the milling process, so that no one was left waiting to use the jointer and thicknesser with nothing to do. The mnemonic Stuart teaches in order to remember the order of steps in milling is "FEWTEL" - Face, Edge, Width, Thickness, End, Length. That is something I will retain for the rest of my woodworking days.

The piece was finished with multiple coats of shellac and a wax polish, which feels amazing to the touch.

The course was attended by Michael Tsimnadis, Valerie Odewahn, Peter Munro and Phil Greenwood. Feel free to ask them about it if you want to know more.

Our thanks again to Stuart and Carol.



Michael Tsimnadis

Dates for the diary

Remember that our Workshop at 1 Spring Street, Abbotsford is open to members each Wednesday and Sunday...

1 April	WWA Annual General Meeting, Canada Bay Club
11 May	Members' course: Introduction to carving with Fred Blake
18 May	Members' annual sharpening day
18-19 May	Woodturning course with Western Sydney Woodturners
18-19 May	Bathurst Heritage Trades Trail
3 June	WWA General meeting, Canada Bay Club
7-9 June	Timber, Tools and Artisans Show at Rosehill Gardens
13 July	Introduction to Woodworking course with Matt Dwight
22, 23, 25, 26 July	Members' annual box-making course with Alex Springall
14 September	Members' course with Kerry Carter
12-13 October	Illawarra Festival of Wood at Bulli Showgrounds
14, 15, 17, 18 October	Members' course: Veneering course with Peter Harris

Meet a Member - Kerry Carter

Hi members, I am going to introduce you to one of our members. Her name is Kerry Carter. Kerry has been a member of NSW Woodworkers Association for a few years now having emerged from the world of woodworking Instagram.

Kerry lives in Sydney and is married with 2 children. She teaches woodwork to kids and ladies in her "Toolschool" and has worked for Ryobi power tools as a brand ambassador and pops up as an author in the Australian Wood Review a few times a year. Kerry has appeared on Better Homes and Gardens and is about to start filming a new series for kids on Channel 7 mate called "Get Arty". Most recently Kerry hosted the Yarns evenings at the Wood Dust Festival where she interviewed live on stage: Thomas Lie Nielsen, Michael Fortune, Matt Kenney, Vic Tesolin, Kevin Inkster and Terry Gordon. Kerry has always struck me as a person who can't waste time because she has no time left to waste.



Q: How did you start woodworking?

A: The simple answer is that my Dad was a woodworker. I got the bug from him. I grew up in Newcastle in quite modest circumstances but because my Dad was an industrious and inventive person we lived in an amazing house where lots of exciting things were made. I would say my Dad was a man of perpetual motion - like many reading this article right now. If it wasn't a new kitchen, he was putting in, it was new closets, a new desk for me or my brother, a BMX bike made of junkyard scraps.

Before woodworking he spent his working life as a boilermaker in the steel making industry. His existence was a hard one. He not only put his life and limb on the line daily but his workplace was tough and unforgiving. He told a story about being asked to come back to work as he was leaving on his honeymoon. Given he was working literally in and around the giant boilers and up the tall smoke stacks, and it was pre the



era of OH&S, he unfortunately saw a lot of injuries and deaths. When I was a child, I would watch him in his workshop at our house with such interest that he made me promise that I would not follow in his footsteps into his blue-collar work. He wanted me to be a white-collar professional who sits safely behind a desk. So, I followed his instruction. I did not take woodworking in high school and I became an accountant and then a lawyer. I worked in a big law firm in the city in corporate law.

My father then taught woodwork and metalwork in high schools in the Hunter for 30 years. His longest and last post was at Newcastle High. When he died his mates, who are all wood and metal workers, helped me pick up his tools, machines, jigs and the threads of his working life to help me cobble together a workshop in my house that was deserving

of him. I miss him more than words can express and woodworking has helped me pull myself out of a giant hole of grief.

Q: It looks as if you picked up a lot of knowledge by watching your Dad, but have you had any formal training?

A: Even as an adult I often asked my father when he would allow me to work with him after hours and on weekends but he was also worried about my fingers so he consistently fended me off. So my first, real workshop training was not with him but with Stuart Faulkner. I'm sure my dad would be pleased that I learned from someone so nice and caring as Stuart. Stuart also made sure I still have all parts of my fingers.

Q: What was your first significant woodworking project.

A: My first significant woodworking project was a rolling tool cabinet with 6 drawers. It was basic but did the job - each drawer was an individual and complete toolbox for a student. I still have it and when I look at it I see it for the crude work it is but I also see it as an important step toward my authentic self.

Q: You've really done very well from social media and have been an advocate for woodworkers embracing rings changes over the last 3 years?

A: Social media has a lot of positives but comes part and parcel with some obvious, and not so obvious, negatives. It's a time-consuming balancing act to try to walk the line between the two.

I'm currently having a break from social media because I would like to direct my time and effort this year to new challenges like building a kitchen, making a piece of period furniture with traditional mortise and tenon joinery and trying hide glue. I would like to do all this as my own personal journey. I am hoping that having a period of learning that is not shared with the world will make me happier and a better woodworker.

Q: How do you find teaching kids?

A: Teaching kids is as you would imagine, highly rewarding when you can see that your efforts have had a positive effect.



Kerryn interviewing Michael Fortune at WoodDust



Q: Do you use real tools in your classes?

A: I do use real tools in my classes and touch wood I have not had a safety incident in any class. I have rules which my students follow. I have been asked a few times whether I specifically use chisels in my classes and the answer is no. There are other tools that I use to work around the fact that I don't feel comfortable with the kids walking around with chisels - for example we use surform planes and rasps. Other tools I like are the Japanese saws and the old-fashioned manual drill press. I like teaching kids and have to come to learn from them in turn.

Q: What is your plan for the future?

A: My plan is to keep learning new things whether it be woodworking or not. I am currently playing the ukulele, very badly, and unfortunately for my neighbours, intend to persist. I would like to improve my Japanese so that when I go to Japan every year with my family, I can at least express the basics with some degree of manners.

Peter Dunn



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A WOODIE'S TRAVELS IN USA

The Gamble House - Greene and Greene's "Symphony in Wood"

If you are travelling to North America, you will probably arrive first in Los Angeles. After that long and tiring flight it's good to have a day's rest before travelling on. That will give you the opportunity to visit Pasadena, a town in the hills east of Los Angeles, an hour's taxi ride from the airport. It cost me about \$50.

In the early 20th century Pasadena was a resort for wealthy families to escape the harsh winters of the east coast and mid-west, for the much milder winters of southern California. In particular, tuberculosis was common, and escaping the winter was one way of reducing the risk of catching this. One such family was the Gamble family. David Gamble was co-founder of the Procter and Gamble company, today still a major manufacturer of soaps and shampoos. The founders made their fortunes selling soap to the Union Army in the Civil War. The Gamble family invited the architects Henry Greene and Charles Greene to build a house for them and gave them carte blanche to design it. It was completed in 1909.

Greene and Greene are the most famous exponents of the Arts and Crafts style, which was prominent in the first decade of the 20th century. The Arts and Crafts movement represented a wish to return to a more handcrafted ethos as a reaction to the rapid industrialisation of the late 19th century. Readers who peruse the American woodworking magazines will see many examples of Arts and Crafts design and Greene and Greene furniture designs in particular. It bears some relation in both period and manner to the Australian Federation style.

Here is a table designed by Greene and Greene from the Gamble House showing many hallmarks of their style. You can see lots more Arts and Crafts style furniture by going to Google Images and entering Arts and Crafts furniture.



The part of Pasadena built during this period has a number of streets of houses built in this style and one can stroll around and admire these, rather like walking down the Appian Way at Burwood. The only house which is in original condition with all its original

furniture is the Gamble House. It was donated to the City of Pasadena and the University of Southern California and is maintained as a museum celebrating the genius of Greene and Greene.

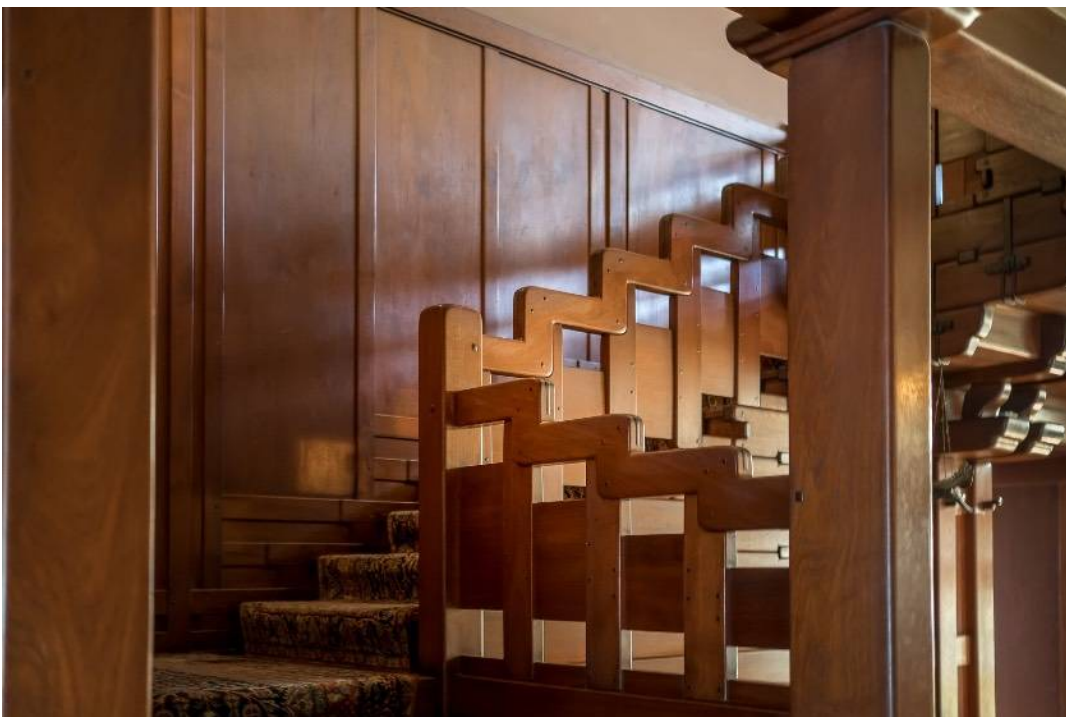
An important feature is that every element of the house was designed by Greene and Greene, not only the building itself, but all the furniture, every door knob, every latch, every light fitting. Even the utilitarian fittings in the kitchen and laundry. This extends into the gardens. Timber is the dominant material used throughout the house. Greene and Greene designed each room from a different type of wood. The formal dining room is all mahogany. There is also an oak room, a room of Douglas fir, one of Port Orford cedar and also a room of Burmese teak, and others which I forget. Even the piano in the parlour is housed in a specially made cabinet designed to match the style and wood of that room.

One cannot convey the incredible sense of harmony that this unity of design within the room creates. No pictures can do it justice, but I can recommend clicking on the links below to give you some idea. One really has to be within the room and just look around to experience the beauty and the sense of calm of each room and the house altogether. Here is the beautiful entrance hall.

Public tours of the house are available every day, but woodies will want to book for the specialty tour - 'The Details and Joinery Tour', which runs monthly. It's heaven for woodwork nuts! The guide for this tour is the connoisseur woodworker Jim Ipekjian.



Jim is an expert on Greene and Greene cabinetry. He has been commissioned to reproduce the furniture for a number of the other Greene and Greene houses in Pasadena, whose furniture collections were sold off over the years. He has reproduced it using exactly the techniques and the materials of the originals. Jim conducts a small group tour, which goes for two hours. He started by saying we could stand in any room and spend the whole two hours there, just looking, examining and admiring all the details, and he was absolutely right.



The cabinetmakers who built the woodwork to the Greenes' design were another pair of brothers, the Hall brothers. An influence was the emerging appreciation of Japanese design, and the house has a number of elements which incorporate

Japanese styles. There is also on display Charles Greene's collection of decorative handguards found on Japanese swords. One can see various features of these objects reproduced in elements of the house.

The house was one of the early adopters of electric lighting, and the globes were unreliable and frequently exploded, and so the need to protect from this influenced the design of all the light fittings. Here's one example.

One fascinating feature of the house is that it could be called a Masterpiece of Imperfection. There are various design details which appear to be mysteriously wrong! You can't quite see it on the photo below, but one brick to the right of the grate at the back has the maker's stamp facing upwards whereas all the other bricks don't show that stamp and are fitted in perfect symmetry. Similarly, the wall at the side of the staircase is embossed with a design of small rectangles superimposed on a 4-pointed star. This is repeated many, perhaps a hundred, times. But one star has one point missing!



Are these variations or random errors?

Jim Ipekjian explained that they are deliberate acknowledgements of the Japanese Zen idea that perfection is only achieved through Satori, or enlightenment, and we ordinary folk do not pretend to that state.

For a quick video tour, paste this link in your web browser:

<https://www.houzz.com/houzz-tv/houzz-tv-meet-the-gamble-house-a-symphony-in-wood-htvvw-vt~5488347>



Pictures in this article are copied from the link below and there are numerous other great pictures:

<https://galleries.neighborhoodtravels.com/Portfolio/Gamble-House-Pasadena-CA/>

Stewart Einfeld

Editor's note: Thanks Stewart. I love the idea that every time I make a woodwork mistake I can say it is part of the Zen of the piece!

ESSAY ON WOOD

by James Richardson

At dawn when rowboats drum on the dock
and every door in the breathing house bumps softly
as if someone were leaving quietly, I wonder
if something in us is made of wood,
maybe not quite the heart, knocking softly,
or maybe not made of it, but made for its call.

Of all the elements, it is happiest in our houses.
It will sit with us, eat with us, lie down
and hold our books (themselves a rustling woods),
bearing our floors and roofs without weariness,
for unlike us it does not resent its faithfulness
or question why, for what, how long?

Its branchings have slowed the invisible feelings of
light
into vortices smooth for our hands,
so that every fine-grained handle and page and beam
is a wood-word, a standing wave:
years that never pass, vastness never empty,
speed so great it cannot be told from peace.

Contributed by Peter Munro.

From a book of poems called "During" written by James Richardson and published by Copper Canyon Press.

Canada Bay Club membership

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More details at
<https://canadabayclub.com.au/membership.html>



Members at our last meeting enjoying the spacious auditorium at the Canada Bay Club

Many thanks to...

Takashi Nishiura for the donation of a Japanese plane to our Workshop collection.

Peter Harris for acting as our Workshop Manager and undertaking ongoing maintenance of our machinery and keeping things sharp and running smoothly.

John Kirkwood for his many donations to the Workshop and his ongoing repair and enhancement of our Workshop.

David Palmer for his tireless work as Secretary of the Association, with all that that involves, and also being the Workshop Supervisor Organiser (WSO).

Our Workshop Supervisors for February/March - **Gordon Joseph, Peter Harris, Peter Dunn, Peter Munro, Brian Dawson, Phil Nanlohy, David Palmer, John Kirkwood, Matt Dwight**

Contributors to this newsletter -

Stewart Einfeld, Michael Tsiminadis, Peter Munro, Peter Dunn and Kerry Carter

Peter Hunt for maintaining our membership database, issuing subscriptions notices and membership cards and distributing the newsletter

Oliver Addis for looking after the finances of the Association and dealing with the day to day expenses.

Gordon Joseph for acting as our Course Co-ordinator and Returning Officer.

Clare O'Reilly for organising our surprise guest speaker for the AGM.

Richard Leniston for taking on the role of organiser of troops for our stand at the upcoming Tools, Timber and Artisans Show.

Steve Townsend for being Richard's trusty side-kick for the Show and for looking after our website and updating it as required.

In anticipation, all those members who volunteer to assist with the Show.



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Boutique Timbers
256 Spokes Road, Ballengarra

16km west of Pacific Highway, turn onto Rollands Plains Road at Telegraph Point. Follow road for 16km, turn left at Spokes Road and travel 2.5km of gravel road. Visitors welcome from 7 to 7, 7 days a week.

Phone Mal or Greg - 02 6585 8296 or 0416 096 827

Sydney enquiries - 0407 613 002
boutiquetimbers.com.au

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Why do people do that??