

**Woodworkers
Association
of NSW inc**

November December 2015 Newsletter

HSC student's prize winning cabinet



Huon pine veneers, inside and outside and ebonised drawer pulls provide artistic contrast

At the October general meeting, Braxton Jones presented his prize winning storage cabinet for his collection of preserved insects.

Made of redgum, Huon pine, and NSW scented rosewood, the cabinet is 600 x 500 x 1300 mm. While the drawers needed to be

deep and shallow - suitability for purpose always comes first - the frontal dimensions conform with the Golden Ratio ($\Phi = 1.618$).

Wooden blocks attached underneath hold the carcass and stand together. The door panels are made of book-matched Huon pine veneer over a plywood core.

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Association Christmas meeting 2015

7 for 7.30pm on Monday 7 December

At the workshop - 50A Spring Street, Abbotsford

This will be our last meeting for 2015 and so there will be plenty of time for camaraderie. The meeting will be less formal than normal and members are encouraged to bring an item of woodwork or a jig you have made for the meeting's show and tell segment.

Come along and enjoy a pre-holiday season convivial get together.



Brian Dawson, Chair

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If you'd like to join or assist the committee or be more involved in the association, call a committee member!

Life members

Richard Crosland, Phil Lake,
Kim Larymore, Leon Sadubin, Richard
Vaughan and Alan Wale

Chatter from the Chair

My feet have hardly touched the ground over the last two months. My travels have taken me from the tip of Cape York to the south of Tasmania.

In Tasmania, in a little place called Stanley on the north west coast, I spent a wonderful two weeks on a master class with Toby Muir Wilson.

Toby is a maker of renown who has a very recognizable personal style incorporating complex organic forms, colour, relief and non-linear shapes.

I see it as an embodiment of the finest craftsmanship with great creativity. Toby generously spent the two weeks informing, cajoling and guiding us on some of his techniques.

There were only five of us, Brent Gerstle being the only other WWA member.

We worked in Toby's large workshop, adjacent to his home and were accommodated some 500 metres away in a nearby farm.

Toby uses a range of machines familiar to most of us as well as finely honed hand tools. I was fascinated by his use of an overhead router - his "go-to" machine.

Because the router bit can be seen and manipulated in a very controlled way, it is possible to perform tasks more quickly and more accurately than with either a hand-held or an under slung router.

The textures and profiles possible are many and varied and simple tasks such as rebates or grooves are super simple to perform.

Toby had pre-made a series of box frames and our task was to tell a story in the four infill panels and lid using one or more of the techniques demonstrated, including colour.

The results can be seen on Toby's flickr page (google Toby Muir Wilson flickr). We produced five individual boxes, each tell-

Continues on page 4



Tassie oak frame, Huon pine panels, acrylic paint and oil finish



The top three drawers slide on timber telescopic sliders with pins that detach, so the drawers can be removed (to work on the specimens).

Braxton added ebonised red-gum beading around the legs and more Huon pine veneer at the leg extremities. The drawer fronts are also Huon pine with ebonised drawer pulls. He also added a hidden drawer.

Braxton has much to be proud of in his cabinet. He started in

term 4 of 2013 and finished in term 3 of 2014 for the HSC.

From entries all over NSW, he was invited to submit his project for the 2015 T&WWW show. He was awarded Best in Show from *InTech* and \$500 prize money.

InTech is an exhibition of outstanding major projects by NSW HSC industrial technology students. He also got a prize from *Australian Wood Review* for best use of native timbers.



Above: The hidden drawer.

Left: Drawers slide forward on timber runners. They're removable by releasing timber pins.

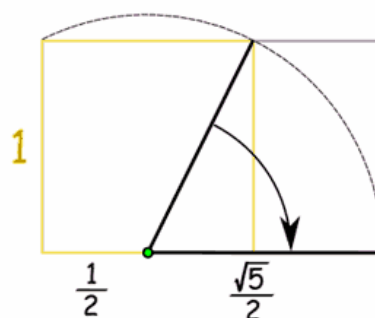
Braxton paid tribute to King's School woodworking teachers, and thanks for help and guidance from Terry Gleeson – a former association chairperson and (independent) woodwork teacher.

It is hoped that Braxton will continue with his association membership and attract to us more young woodworkers.

The Golden Ratio Phi = 1.618

The goldennumber.net site is dedicated to sharing the best information on Phi, the number 1.618, with insights from dozens of contributors on its unique properties in mathematics and geometry and its many appearances in life and the universe as well as the benefits of applying it in art, design, beauty, financial markets and more.

It provides a basic overview of number 1.618 known as Phi (or the Golden Ratio, Golden Mean, Golden Section and Divine Proportion) and its mathematical cousin, the Fibonacci sequence. Learn about what it is, its



appearance in nature, the history of the mankind's application of the golden ratio and other interesting topics.

Phi appears in a number of very interesting geometric constructions. It appears in basic constructions of triangles and squares within a circle, the pentagon. It also defines every

point in 3D space in classic solids such as the dodecahedron, icosahedron and Bucky Ball. Johannes Kepler, who first discovered the beautiful elliptical nature of the orbits of the planets in our solar system described it as "a precious jewel" of geometry.

The Golden Ratio has unique mathematical properties. It is the only positive number whose square is one greater than itself. It is the only positive number whose reciprocal is one less than itself. It is also the found in limits and the Fibonacci series. These properties make it the unique solution to optimize design, in practicality and in beauty. Luca Pacioli wrote, "Without mathematics there is no art."



Unknown timbers (all supplied for the marquetry class) and an oil finish

ing a personal story. By the way, I have just bought a 20 year-old overhead router (but had to get rid of my lathe to make space).

I also attended a marquetry workshop at Sturt School for Wood in Mittagong a little while ago and was instructed by another inspiring artist/craftsperson, Katalin Sallai. The focus was on knife cutting – not a fret or scroll saw in sight!

In much the same way as Toby, we were each asked to make a box incorporating techniques being taught.

It was another stimulating week and we learned a great deal. I built a box that I subsequently sold at our recent Lane Cove exhibition

As we go to press, we are about to have our inaugural joint meeting with the NSW Wooden Boat Association.

I spoke to Ross McLean, their president, some time ago about some kind of co-operation and we both hope that this will bring together like minds and some exciting cross-fertilization.

Brian Dawson

If your listing or advertisement is no longer current, or needs amending, email me, Jo Healy-North, jhn@bigpond.com (or call me on 0417 667 367)

2016 Creations in Wood Exhibition

Get in early on the 2016 exhibition and contact a committee member now!

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More on finishes

Following on from information on finishes in the previous edition of the newsletter, Tom Paley looks into appropriate finishes for outside furniture.

Finishes, whether clear or opaque, generally fall into two distinct classes, based on polyurethanes or wood oils, as distributed by the major manufacturers.

Both have major disadvantages that come with their principal advantage, which is ease of use.

They tend to form a hard skin, which, over time - say a year, tends to break down, lose adhesion and separate from the underlying timber. This is caused

by moisture, seeping through or trying to escape from the timber through the finish, accelerating the eventual breakdown of the surface. This is prevalent where joints allow water penetration.

Hard by nature, the skin becomes more brittle with age, particularly with absorption of UV (sunlight). Re-finishing or refreshing is difficult, more so if left for too long.

Continues next page



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Contact a committee member
for more information.

See page 2 for committee
member contact details.

More on finishes

Complete removal of the old finish is required, which is a long and painstaking mechanical process. Cured polyurethane, by its nature, is resistant to most chemical strippers. At best a patchy result is inevitable.

Advantages of polyurethanes

Whether one-pack or two-pack, they are easy to apply with one or more coats giving a serviceable finish.

For application by brush or spray, most poly-finishes (and oil-finishes) are formulated for the DIY market, for cheap and easy application, with minimal labour.

Disadvantages of oil finishes

For external use, "oils ain't oils"! These oils are often very thin (the consistency of turpentine) and require a large number of coats to build up the finish. Oil finishes tend to attract dust and dirt, which, over time, affect the appearance of the finish.

Advantages of oil finishes

It is very easy to re-coat, at any time, to restore the finish. And grittiness or discolouration can be removed with dilute cleaners or thorough hosing. Some oils, especially linseed, grow a black fungus. Most oils also contain a small amount of polyurethane (or wax) to increase durability.

Marine varnishes

These are formulated on a tung oil base for severe weather resistance. Being relatively soft, they are unsuitable for high-wear situations, and have low resistance to foot traffic.

But they are long-lasting. Breakdown results from surface self-sacrifice, the speed of degradation depending on the amount of UV inhibitors in the formulation.

Refreshing can be done, usually annually or biannually, after first lightly sanding the entire surface. The main disadvantages with these finishes are the high cost and high fibre content.

Sikkens marine varnishes

These are based on alkyd resins and oil. They are long-lasting, expensive, and require multiple coats to build up a serviceable and decorative surface.

Six coats are recommended, with 10 to 16 hours between coats - very labour intensive. The alkyd resin gives a porous breathable coating.

With good UV inhibitors, it is available in lightly tinted from clear to dark, which may be varied as finishing continues, to give a lighter or darker result.

Self-sacrificing and refreshing applies as mentioned above. Alkyds predate polyurethanes and

Continues next page

Welcome to new members:
Andrew Davidson, David Glasson and Larry Guo



Finishes finishing, till next time

in many cases provide superior service in extreme conditions.

The downside is the need to apply multiple thin coats, and the relatively long drying times.

A highly serviceable finish might take five or more days with one to one and half hours for each

coat plus a day between coats. They can't be applied in hot or damp weather. But in other matters, simply follow good painting practice. This is the Rolls Royce of exterior varnishes.

More on Sikken finishes coming in the next edition.

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Wood
REVIEW

How to enter >

*For all the info on the competition,
look for the tab (as above)
on the AWR website.*

This *Australian Wood Review* Australian secondary school competition is for students enrolled in Years 11 and 12 in 2015. There is no entry fee. Prizes to schools will be awarded to schools attended by the three best judged student entries.

Student awards are for:

- Overall best
- Best design
- Best hand skills
- Best use of native timbers
- Best turned piece
- Best carved piece
- Popular choice award

After the 15 December 2015 deadline, one image from each entry will be uploaded to the AWR Facebook page.

A popular choice award will be determined by Facebook 'likes'. Facebook voting closes at midday 27 January 2016.

The Popular Choice winner will be announced in the January 2016 AWR eNewsletter.

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The most northern tree on the Australian mainland, species unknown. Photo from Brian Dawson. Great photo!

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at jhn@bigpond.com



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Stories

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And tell them what stories you'd like to read in the magazine (or if you'd like to write for them.)

Contact Linda Nathan, Editor

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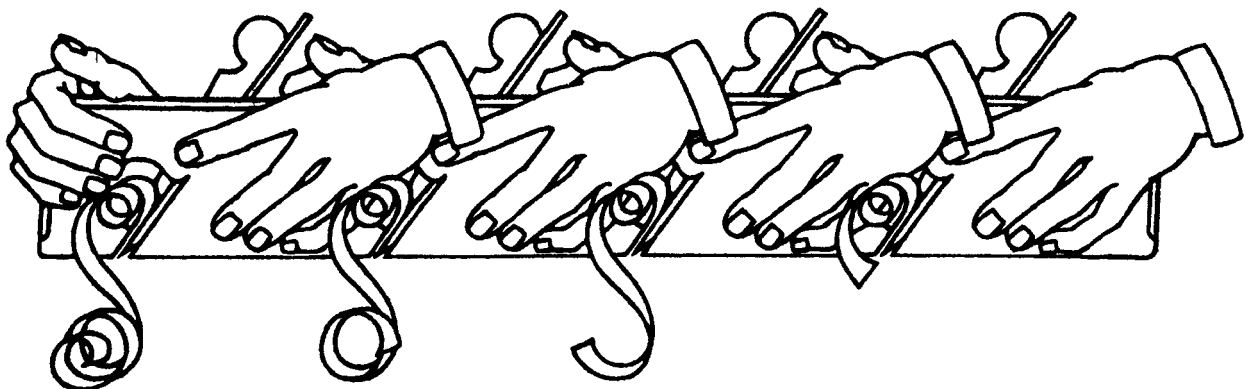
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