

Woodworkers Association of NSW

Newsletter

January February 2012

PO Box 1016 Bondi Junction NSW 1355



ABN: 51 544 262 364

2012 competitions

Whether you are a professional or amateur woodworker, the following passage from the 2011 Carbatec catalogue article Made for You is fundamental in clarifying one's perspective on creativity. It is also true that it can help one to think laterally about making technique.

"Working with wood is a solitary business. Sometimes it's easy to get too close to what you're making that you need to step back and see things from a different perspective. Having like-minded peers within reach to give you feedback can be a valuable circuit-breaker to the intensity of making and designing fine studio furniture."

The events we have on the calendar for 2012 have scope for all who aspire to be creative with wood. After all, we are putting ourselves out there to make an offer of connection with the world of humanity.

Inside

NEWS FROM SPLINTER

Important changes at Splinter Workshop outlined on
page 3

PARKER PART 4

The final installment of Alan Perry's very popular series on Parker furniture starts on
page 8



LAST YEAR'S SHOW STOPPER

John Brassell's guitar: for all the details go to the 2011 May June edition available on the website

And there's still a narrow window of opportunity to enter in the Royal Easter Show Arts & Craft woodwork competition. The sidebar on the right includes the basics, as well as a link to the Royal Easter Show website for more information.

Thanks, Phil Lake

More competition news next page



5 - 18 April 2012

Show your work and compete in the Arts & Craft Woodwork Display

Cut-off for online registration:
Wednesday 1 February 2012

Entry per exhibit per class: \$11

Exhibit classes

- 250 woodcarving
- 251 wood inlay/marquetry
- 252 mixed turning, mainly wood
- 253 turning, bowl or platter
- 254 modal or miniature in wood (mainly wood)
- 255 small furniture item (mainly wood) no larger than 132cm H x 165cm x 60cm*
- 256 wooden box work no larger than 450mm x 300mm x 150mm*
- 257 musical instruments*

* The NSW Woodworkers Association sponsors prizes in each of these classes

Further information

www.sydneymar.com.au/2012

Then select the following links:
Easter Show Competitions/ Arts & Crafts/ Entering the competition/ Schedules

2012 competitions cont . . .

Timber & Working Wood Show

Following the Royal Easter Show competition, the Timber & Working Wood Show, on Friday 13 to Sunday 15 July 2012, relocates to Homebush Bay (Easter Show Pavilion). Our association stand at the show is a statement of what we do as well as an invitation to share with us and become a member of the association.

Experience has shown us that work in progress (partly assembled) is of special interest to visitors and a perfect conversation opener. Talk to me to make it happen! philwoodie@gmail.com or 0403 114 712.)

If you have a piece entered in the Easter Show think about putting it on our stand here as well.

Being a volunteer assistant in the process of the show is an excellent way of engaging with your fellow members. I am eager to hear from you; there is planning and facilitation as well as hands on; some thing for every one!

The other part of the show is the competition. Think of it as a gallery to display your work; winning a prize is a bonus but should not detract from the gallery experience. The entry form and guidelines will soon be available on our website in the competitions section of the calendar page. Entries close 1 June 2012. I commend you to take up the challenge. The condition is it must be



LAST YEAR'S TWWS WINNER

Rhys Jones' Inter se chair: for all the details go to the 2011 July August edition available on the website

a fresh piece of work shown no more than in-club competition.

Professional show

After the the Timber & Working Wood Show, our next showing is for our professional members and takes place in the foyer of the Chifley Tower, Philip St Sydney for the whole of August 2012.

There is a cost involved of \$350 (\$100 deposit payable on formal entry with the balance as required).

If you did respond with an expression of interest and not yet committed to the entry document please do it now! If you have been thinking about it but haven't been in touch with the organizing committee; do it now! It is imperative that we move quickly to facilitate the PR program we envisage. Your commitment underpins this. For information and or an entry form please contact:

David Norrie
norfish@optusnet.com.au or on
0423 316 731

Richard Crosland
richard@crosland.com or on
0421 880 986

Gallery exhibition

Our next event is a gallery exhibition in Parliament House, Macquarie Street. Sydney, for the whole of September 2012. This exhibition is to be a showing of works by the whole membership of the association.

It is intended to showcase the community interest in creative woodworking. We envisage that you all will participate; it is not necessary that the piece you put on show be a fresh piece.

Again, don't be faint hearted about your abilities, we are not there to judge you or to be judged. There is organizing to be done to facilitate this event. To get involved please talk to me!

Thanks again, Phil Lake

Meeting venues for 2012

2 April – Putney Tennyson Bowling & Community Club
4 June, 13 August, 8 October and 3 December – Powerhouse Museum

Deadlines for the 2012 newsletters

Friday 2 March for the April edition
Friday 4 May for the June edition
Friday 6 July for the August edition

Friday 31 August for the October edition
Friday 2 November for the December edition

Silas Kopf Marquetry

**Saturday 10/Sunday 11
March 2012**

The workshop focus will be double bevel sawing. Silas will demonstrate the technique and participants will have the opportunity to practice cutting using hand fretsaws with Silas's supervision. Silas will also discuss basic inlay, marquetry, banding, Boulle technique, and using marquetry as decoration on furniture and how it's been used over time.

There will also be opportunity to ask questions about individual projects.

Silas Kopf is a leading practitioner of marquetry in the US. He apprenticed with Wendell Castle and studied traditional marquetry technique at the École Boulle, in Paris. He's been making furniture for over 35 years. He's the author of *A Marquetry Odyssey* and has produced *The Master Techniques of Marquetry* DVD. Examples of his work can be found at www.silaskopf.com

Only 15 places are available, so 'first in, best dressed'.

Let Gordon Joseph know if you would like to attend: secretary@woodworkersnsw.org.au, or 02 9488 9191.

(Location and cost TBA.)



Changes at Splinter Workshop

The members of Splinter Workshop would like to announce some changes to our organisation that may be of interest to other WWA members.

Casual membership

First, we recently opened our doors to a new class of membership with the aim of providing serious hobbyists access to a fully equipped workshop. We now have a dedicated space for up to four casual members at a time. Casual members pay an hourly rate and provide their own hand and power tools but have full use of the static machines.

So that we can maintain a high level of safety, casual membership, as with full membership, is subject to an application and acceptance process.

Safety is a high priority at Splinter and we are constantly working towards providing a safer working environment for all our members.

We have recently installed a new Felder table saw and a fully ducted, clean-air extraction system.

Classes in 2012

Second, woodwork tuition will be available in 2012, conducted by Paul Nicholson. Paul has been a member of Splinter Workshop since he graduated from the Sturt School for Wood in 2003 and is passionate about the traditional aspects of wood craft and the use of hand tools.

Like many Sturt graduates, he feels a strong affection for the school and was pleased to be invited by Stuart Faulkner to conduct a weekend course for beginners early in 2011.

This led to a stint as a guest teacher for the Certificate IV course and Paul recently returned to Sturt to run a class as part of the annual Summer School.

... more next page

Next meeting - 7 for 7.30pm, Monday 6 February 2012

Putney Tennyson Bowling & Community Club, Frances Road, Putney

Speaker: Mike Hendrickson on the secrets of wheelwrighting

Mike has spent a lifetime steam bending, wheelwrighting and blacksmithing. He was wheelwright at "Old Sydney Town" until a bush fire destroyed everything there. Subsequently he moved what equipment that was salvagable to Sovereign Hill in Victoria, and for several years continued with the craft.

Splinter Workshop

Building 1, Factory 1, Level 2, 75 Mary Street, St Peters.
Park in Mary Street or in the car-park (entrance on Edith Street). 02 95172212 (workshop) or 0430 032 767

Classes at Splinter will focus on hand skills and the use of hand tools. A range of project-based formats including evening classes, weekend courses, and one-on-one tuition will cater for all levels of woodworkers. Splinter Workshop is an ideal venue for woodwork classes: located in the Inner West with access to free parking and just a five minute walk from both Sydenham and St

Peters Railway Stations. The workshop is on the second level of an old factory building with timber floors, abundant natural light and views over the inner west roof tops. The static machines are located in a separate room behind near-soundproof doors. If you are interested in tuition, casual membership or full membership drop in or call any time.

Paul Nicholson



Paul Nicholson with some miniatures



Some full-scale Paul Nicholson pieces

Standing desk (photo by Julia Charles), Sideboard (designed by Christianna Fantl, photo by Peter Bateman) and 'Here's your hat' (photo by Peter Bateman)

2012 association membership fees now due

This year's membership renewal form includes the association bank account details so you can renew by direct deposit. Please be sure to follow the instructions provided.

In particular, make sure you record your name and membership number and send our treasurer a confirmation email of your payment, so we know who has paid.

What's your woodwork story!

What started it and what do you still love about it?

It's too easy: 600 words, 3 images to jhn@bigpond.com

Prizes for the best stories: watch this space for more late-breaking details



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Association Show Subcommittee

Your association is looking for members to get involved with the sub-committee to organise the association's part in the Timber and Working With Wood Show. This is a lot of fun so please let our chairman know if you can assist.

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Do Not Miss this Opportunity!



This Expo is a must for anyone studying art or industrial technology subjects, who dabbles in crafts or tradies looking for tools & ideas. Perhaps you just appreciate the work of skilled artisans.



Artisans Retreat at Mondrook (near Taree) presents a rare opportunity to see demonstrations, catch up with suppliers and get the latest tools, supplies and hints for working wood and many other materials.

Demonstrators will include:

- Alan Williams** Australia's finest maker of beautifully sculpted bandsawn boxes
Book for Alan's workshop after the expo
- Doug Moseley** Blacksmith - Artistic and functional work in iron
- Peter Minson** 3rd generation glass blower
Book for Peter's workshop after the expo
- Howard Archbold** Magnificent chairs using only hand tools
- Warren Targett** Luthier - making magnificent guitars
- Anne Mitchell** Genesis Creations - silk painting

and many more

*Speak to leading suppliers of tools, timber, consumables and education.
Take advantage of Expo specials to stock up on equipment and supplies.
Trend Timbers & Hardware for Creative Finishes will be there.*

ENTRY IS FREE, BBQ tent by Manning Woodworkers and Artisans Retreat's amazing gallery and coffee lounge will also be open.

Bus & Coach facilities available - please contact Peter to book an arrival time.

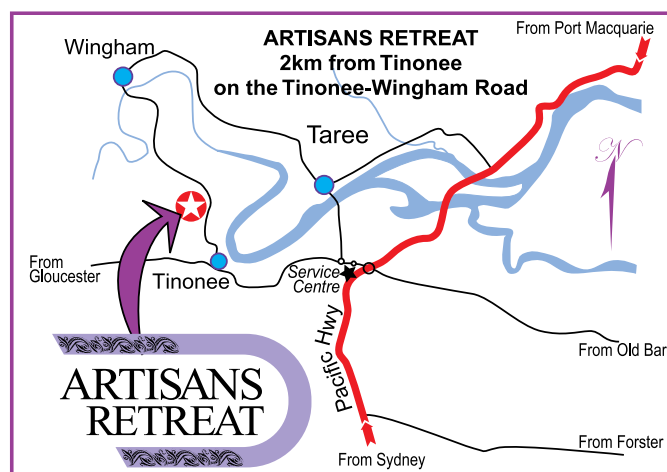


When
Friday 24th & Saturday 25th
Sunday 26th February 2012

Where
Artisans Retreat
702 Tinonee Road, Mondrook
(Near Taree).

An indication of attendance will help with catering.

Contact: Peter on 6553 1199
Email: expo@artisansretreat.com
Web: www.artisansretreat.com



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I own a piece of Parker furniture - integrity and perfection

Every year, as an apprentice cabinet-maker in the 1950s, and as a furniture designer and teacher during the second half of the 1900s, I eagerly visited the annual Furniture Exhibition, in Sydney, to see the Parker stand.

Parker, with a few other manufacturers, showed the lead in innovative design, new timbers, and veneers and hardware, which created design trends in Australian furniture. Making my own furniture in 1961, I was influenced by Parker design (and of others): teak veneered board, teak and Blackwood solid timbers, and oiled finishes in a Scandinavian Danish design.

Parker's showroom at Seven Hills was full of quality, well-designed, functional furniture. When I visited apprentices at Seven Hills as a Technical Teacher, the factory lay-out, with the latest machinery, gave apprentices the highest training available. And throughout the last half of the 20th Century, people were proud to say: I own a piece of Parker furniture.

Alan G. Perry

B.Ed.(Tech), Dip Teach.(Tech)

Cabinetmaker, Designer, Restorer

Alan Perry started at Sydney furniture manufacturer Ricketts and Thorp in 1954 as an apprentice cabinetmaker in the sewing machine section and cabinet shop. He went on to become a draughtsman and furniture designer, estimator and site supervisor.

In 1973 he joined TAFE, where he taught cabinetmaking to apprentices and tradesman of all ages in colleges in Sydney (as well as a year at London College of Furniture).

In 1989 Alan became Head Teacher of Cabinetmaking at Lidcombe TAFE, where he then taught for 10 years, only retiring in 1998. Alan was involved in the National Curriculum in Furniture Trades, visiting industry at as much as possible and working with employer groups and State high schools.

He has a special interest in late 19th Century Arts and Crafts furniture. He's published histories of several NSW 20th Century furniture manufacturers and he presents to societies and interest groups on the furniture industry and specific woodworking skills. He is a founder of the Furniture History Society (Australasia) and a Woodworkers Association of NSW member.

A piece of Parker

A history of Parker Furniture: 1935-1995, by Alan Perry



Modern 2000 series wall units in natural or smokey oak

Part 4 - final

So far . . .

By the end of part 3 in the last issue, we get to where Parker was selected to supply dining room and reception chairs to the new Parliament House in Canberra (opened 1988), individually designed by the architects. Each new Parliament house chair was upholstered to enrich the surrounding appointments and reflect the consistency and quality of workmanship of the House's interiors.

Parker's designs during the 80s had a mixture of classical, cottage and modern furniture with dining tables with stylised cabriole legs or splayed feet, and tall backed dining chairs of Empire Line styling. Classic, fully upholstered lounges, as well as the classic Stuart being made since 1961, were popular as well as the low-line and highline style of wall units. A full range of bedroom and occasional furniture was also manufactured.

All panel surfaces were teak or American walnut finished in natural teak or Parker walnut toning. Panels were veneered on a new material, medium

density fibreboard, (MDF). This board was a good substrate to veneer and had advantages in joint construction.

The 1980s furniture appealed to the older buyer or people purchasing their second home furniture. A lot of the furniture was suitable for home units, villas and smaller homes, with wall units being modular to fit in and smaller extension dining tables.

Market research indicated Parker furniture to be significantly the best known brand of furniture in Australia. The company put great emphasis on its design and fashion statement. In fact, 20 per cent of turnover was spent on design, sales and marketing costs, including magnificent brochures produced annually.

The latter part of the 1980s saw designs in lighter colours using Australian mountain ash and golden elm veneers. Clean lines in design of dining and bedroom furniture added a semi-circular hooded cabinet to the tops of buffets and in the "Moderns" interchangeable wall units. Light coloured elm and smoky ash proved popular in modern lighter coloured interiors. Wall units

. . . more next page

. . . more Parker part 4

were made with an angled hood rather than rounded in the 800 series.

Chairs averaged in price at \$260.00 each, dining tables \$850.00, a 3-door buffet \$1,000.00, 'Stuart' 3-piece lounge \$3,000.00 and an occasional table \$350.00

Parker Furniture also was involved in a 5 year contract to furnish Australian embassies and High Commission residences overseas. A great number of residences were completely furnished including, Hong Kong, Manila, Los Angeles, Cairo, San Francisco and Nairobi.

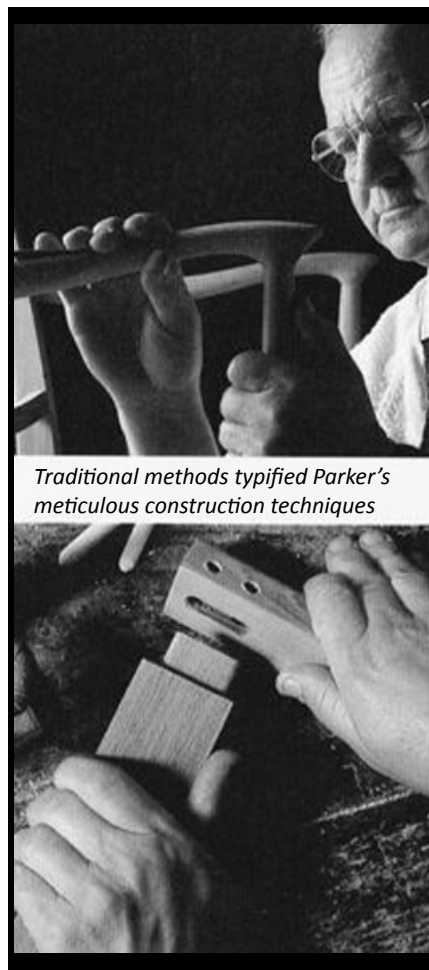
The 90s

Having great success with their Regency styled furniture, Parker encouraged buyers to visit their Sydney showrooms at Seven Hills to view classic chairs with regency styled backs, dining tables with splayed feet, buffets with solid timber framed doors, American oak veneered tops with solid timber edge moulds, polished in Walnut or mahogany colour, occasional pieces in regency styles, hall tables, drop-side tables and coffee tables.

During the early 90s, the Parker Furniture range was split into various style categories, and a separate, smaller brochure was produced for each style. Titles included *The Collectables* and *The Moderns*, showing light coloured furniture in natural oak and smoky oak, *Parker Country* inspired by the Australian landscape with designs that are elegant with clean lines, some follow-

ing Shaker simplicity, and *The Parker Traditionals*, which featured regency and classic designs in mahogany, walnut and teak.

Parker's subtle shift in design in the 90s with its *Country style*, *Rural Accents* and *Farmhouse* look influenced other manufacturers to follow. The *Country Collectables* range had a Shaker influence with slender legs and shallow



Traditional methods typified Parker's meticulous construction techniques



drawers, simple square sectioned members allowing the furniture to age gracefully.

Parker brochures included product features and product knowledge highlighting the use of traditional skills and hand finishing. While the factory was highly mechanized, it was the tradesmen's skills and hand finishing that identified the Parker product.

The Closing

In 1995, the Company was sold to a company led by Mr. Bill Humphreys. His background was senior executive roles in large engineering companies.

Unfortunately, Mr Humphrey passed away in 1997 and the Parker name was no more, except for the wonderful legacy of 20th century furniture left for many generations to enjoy.

There is now an appreciation of 20th century furniture, especially in the Danish-Scandinavian design of the 1960s and 70s. Many websites including Carters Everything Vintage list Parker Furniture, showing for example a 1970 sideboard \$645 to \$745, a 1970 coffee table \$230, a 1960 sideboard \$800 and armchairs \$100.00 a pair, also a "teak veneer sideboard with cats' eyes handles by Parker Furniture Australia, 1960, 137 long, 74 high, 45 deep for sale \$1700-\$1800".

A group of former employees founded the company Covemore Designs in 1999 specialising in the refurbishment of Parker Furniture.

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Parker series acknowledgements

My sincere thanks to Mr Ross Parker for his time in supplying most of the information and editing the draft and to Tony Parker for taking the time to read the draft.

Also Graham Howard and Sean Greening from TAFE, Lidcombe, ex-employees of Parker furniture, for providing catalogues.

The Australian Furnishing Trades Journal, October 1985

The Australian Forest Industries Journal, July 1987

Asia Pacific Forest Industries, May 1989

Australian Wood Review, Tom Darby. 1995

Manufacturers Monthly, July 1971

NOTE: The Sydney Powerhouse Museum Collection, includes 14 pieces of Parker Furniture stationery, including letterheads, envelopes, invoices and business cards 1963. Powerhouse no. 90/504



Bandsaw Boxes

Alan Williams workshop

Two days, hands on

Tue 28 & Wed 29

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Limit of six participants

For more information
and registration, contact

Peter Calabria

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For sale

• AngleMag saw guide \$75 for members

\$100 for non-members

Contact a committee member (details page 12) for more information or to buy.

• Triton workcentre and router table

Contact Peter Harris or Kim Larymore (contact details as above)



*Terry Gleeson
maker of
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• Terry Gleeson's
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To update a listing and for new listings email jhn@bigpond.com

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If you'd like to join the
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