



AGM Issue

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March - April 2007

www.woodworkersnsw.org.au

## TIMBER & WORKING WITH WOOD SHOW SYDNEY 15—17 June 2007



This is the opportunity for all members to exhibit their work in either:

### Putting Timber on Show Gallery Competition

(for work completed in the last 12mths)

and/or

### The Association's Stand

Entry forms for the **Putting Timber on Show Competition** may be down loaded from the Timber & Working With Wood Show web site

[www.workingwithwood.com](http://www.workingwithwood.com) or by

contacting Phil Lake (contact details page 2)

The Woodworkers' Association Stand will have its own gallery showcasing members work not otherwise eligible for the Competition (eg completed over 12 months ago) and work in progress.

The Association 's stand will also feature our raffle and the host of prizes, demonstrations, as well as being an opportunity to promote the Association and member wood-skill providers.

**Be bold. Show your woodwork .** Everybody has something to gain and most importantly you the maker!!

This year all clubs participating in this show are contributing to the building of a backdrop so that the competition display will be more like a gallery .exhibition. (We deserve a quality event and we are about to ensure we are well presented)

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## Next meeting—Annual General Meeting Monday 2nd April 2007 7:00 PM for 7:30 PM

New Venue

### POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

Harris Street, Ultimo. Enter from Macarthur St. Limited parking available in grounds.

**After the AGM, Jim Davey will present a not to be missed session on sharpening.**

Meeting fee \$4-00, incl. draw for **door prize**.

**Visitors welcome** - 1st visit free!

## The Woodworkers' Association of NSW, Inc

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### **Exhibition Committee**

Leon Sadubin, Robert Chapman, Warwick Wright,  
Tracy Gumm, Adam Crosland

**Welcome to new  
and returned  
members.**

**Alec Horley**

### **Aims of the Woodworkers Association of NSW, incorporated**

- To foster creativity and the pursuit of excellence in the crafting of the wooden form.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of expertise and to foster camaraderie among those who work in wood.
- To provide for the networking of information and material supply.
- To promote public awareness and appreciation of this work.
- To be a respected voice concerning the management of our precious native timber resources and to promote best practice in land management.

Membership is open to anyone interested in woodworking, both amateur and professional. The Association meets every second month: the first Monday of every even month.

## **Design Group**

The design group usually meets alternate months  
at the Power House  
Museum

Next meeting 17 May  
Contact Warwick Wright or Paul Barton for further details.

Our apologies for the late cancellation of the last meeting and to anyone who may have attended  
Please RSVP Warwick or Paul for the next meeting

Opinions expressed in articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or the Committee of The Woodworkers' Association of NSW Inc.

## From the Chair

### The Past Year

With the AGM is to be held on 2 April, it is time once again to give the Committees' report card to members. The constitution of the Committee has continued largely unchanged since April 2005. All the hard work has paid off and the last 12 months has seen all positions filled and administrative problems largely resolved.

- Finances improved again in 2006.
  - The accounts and many administrative functions have been computerised and are operating efficiently.
  - Members have been issued with a Directory of Members.
  - Members now have an even larger range of discounts from suppliers.
  - In response to the member's interest in design, the Design Group met regularly throughout 2006.
  - A major exhibition has been arranged for August 2007 and for the first time the Association will participate in *Sydney Design 2007*.
  - An application for a further exhibition in 2008 has been successful.
  - The new website has been completed.
- Two visits have been organised for the coming months.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee and others who have provided continuing support to the Committee for their perseverance and hard work. Their efforts have turned the administration of the Association around to such an extent that the present position was unimaginable 12 months ago.

### A new venue for meetings

Our meetings for the remainder of the year will be held at the Powerhouse. Peter Stone has closed "Your Workshop" which has been our base for a good number of years. On behalf of the Committee and the many members who have used the facilities at "Your Workshop" I would like to thank Peter for

the generous support he has provided to the Association.

### Putting Timber on Show

The "Putting Timber on Show" Competition at this year's Timber and Working with Wood Show offers the opportunity for all members –including professionals and hobbyists – to exhibit their work and be eligible for valuable prizes. All members who have expressed interest in exhibiting their work are encouraged to enter the competition.

### Importance of Exhibitions

The Association was born from exhibitions which are an essential element in meeting our aim of promoting fine woodwork.

However, times have changed since the early exhibitions and the competition for gaining public interest has intensified to the extent that a stand-alone exhibition is no longer feasible without subsidised exhibition space and sponsors willing to fund pre-exhibition publicity. The traditional exhibition spaces have either become far too expensive, ceased to exist or considered unsuitable for future exhibitions.

In October 2006 we applied to Parramatta Council for free exhibition space at the Heritage Centre. However there was no prospect of being granted the space until 2008. In the meantime the search continued for other alternatives.

One other option was to join "Sydney Design" hosted by the Powerhouse Museum. I have visited a number of exhibitions over the last few years and have been impressed with the vitality yet disappointed that there has been so little quality Australian designed timber furniture. There have been some innovative prototypes but nothing coming close to the unique designs and craftsmanship of so many of our members.

We contacted the Powerhouse in late 2006 and received encouraging support from Curator, Anne Watson. However we were advised that we would have to



find our own exhibition space. We had all but given up on finding exhibition space when Danks Street advised they had a cancellation for the period 13 to 25 August 2007.

In view of the financial commitment we had to have some indication of willingness of members to participate. We received enthusiastic support from sufficient members to justify booking the gallery and make a formal application to the Powerhouse Museum to be included in the *Sydney Design* program for 2007. Our application was successful and our acceptance into the program has now been confirmed.

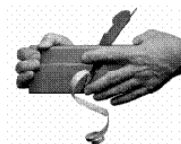
This is a turning point for Association Exhibitions. *Sydney Design 2007* offers the chance to participate in a high profile and well-publicised program of exhibitions and put fine woodwork back on the exhibition calendar.

Since the last newsletter we have been notified that our application of October 2006 for **a general woodworking exhibition at the Parramatta Heritage Centre in 2008 has been successful.**

The Committee is yet to decide whether to accept the offer. As with Danks Street, we need sufficient commitment from a core group of members prior to entering into the required contract. We also need members willing to help organise the exhibition. Expressions of interest are welcome.

Cheers

Warwick Wright



## Member's Classifieds

### Richard Crosland's School of Fine WoodWork

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### Terry Gleeson furniture maker and woodwork teacher

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[www.diywoodworks.com.au](http://www.diywoodworks.com.au)

## Timber & Working with Wood Show

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**Our stand at the Show** This year we wish to centre stage members' works with a highlighted area. Have you a piece/s that doesn't qualify for the competition but would be pleased to show (pieces completed pre June 06), more importantly work in progress is stimulating to our audience; don't be afraid or underestimate the audience interest (works at any stage of completion and or special jiggling etc)  
I'm sure if you are there to help and meet the public and support your work you will gain from the experience.

**Other stand activities** Members offering woodworking skill based tuition to the public are invited to promote their facility (please talk to the under mentioned if we missed contacting you) Members who would be interested in demonstrating particular skills in a small way (not in our organized seminar area). There will be a workbench and some machinery available, please contact the under mentioned. Promotion of the Association and membership drive. Fund raising – The raffle has been an important fundraiser for our Association and is our main source of income apart from member subscriptions.

**Seminars** – A separate seminar area is provided. Four seminars will be run each day during the show beginning at 11am and finishing at 3.45pm. Each seminar will be for 45min with a 15min break. The seminar program will be posted on the Working With Wood website and on the stand. If you wish to present a seminar please contact the under mentioned by 30<sup>th</sup> March.

Continued next page



## Timber & Wood Show continued HELP !!

**The raffle is on again. This is our main source of revenue and every ones help is required. You will be sent a book of tickets. Please sell them or buy the book at the discounted rate.**

Apart from the raffle, to set up the stand, act as hosts during the show, sell raffle tickets and dismantle the stand at show end. We also need transport for our accoutrements for the stand from storage and return to storage at show end.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO

– Notify Phil Lake

PH/ FAX 02 9518 4150

Mob 0403 114 712

Email philjanlake@yahoo.com.au

### Important Dates

Display pieces – by 16 May

Transport – by 25 May

Stand Build – by 25 May

Stand Host – by 25 May (1/2 or full day/s)

Dismantle stand – by 25 May

**YOUR BENEFIT-** Members providing assistance with the show will receive a show pass and a parking subsidy in the adjacent car park (each day on full day basis)

Phil Lake

## Brush the Dust Off and find the woodie below

This month our interviewee refers to himself as a piece of furniture. He has also served two years as chair of this association. I am referring to, of course, the Chairmaker and all around good guy, Mr Terry Gleeson. Let's see what he is on about.



**dh-** How long have you been involved in woodworking?

**tg-** Since 1975, 32 years as a professional.

**dh-** What training have you done?

**tg-** An apprenticeship.

**dh-** What aspect of wood working is your speciality?

**tg-** Now my speciality is teaching but it was antique restoration and reproduction.

**dh-** Do you have a favourite wood species you like to use?

**tg-** South American Mahogany but I haven't used it for at least five years.

**dh-** Do you prefer to build then sell or to accept commissions?

**tg-** I prefer to accept commissions,

**dh-** What is your favourite item of woodworking that you like to make?

**tg-** Chairs (of course, how stupid David)

**dh-** What is your favourite finish?

**tg-** None in particular. I choose the finish to compliment the project.

**dh-** Tell us about the Terry Gleeson School of Woodwork.

**tg-** I started it in 2003. I have classes twice a day for 3

days per week. Each term is 6 weeks. Each class typically has 4 students (Max of 6). I have one student who has stayed with me for 5 years. Some students double up.

I tutor people to know what they need to know for their specific project.

**dh-** How can fellow woodworkers contact you?

**tg-** My phone is 02 9651 1012. Email

"thechairmaker@ozemail.com.au"

**dh-** What would you like to tell your fellow woodworkers?

**tg-** BE PATIENT. I served a 4 year apprenticeship and have been in the trade for 30 years. You can't learn it all in a microsecond.

**dh-** Do you recommend woodworking as a career?

**tg-** Not for financial gain, but it is an enjoyable pursuit.

**dh-** Is there a particular era of furniture you like and if so do you make pieces in that style?

**tg-** One particu-

## Brush of the Dust cont'd from page 5

lar maker. The Barnsley workshop in Petersfield UK. Edward Barnsley was the son of Sid Barnsley who along with a guy named Gimson were among the leaders of the Arts & Craft movement. The pre-war Arts & Crafts weren't all that flash but after the war Barnsley incorporated some Georgian influences which produced some exquisite contemporary pieces.

**dh-** What is your favourite thing about woodworking?

**tg-** Producing a beautiful piece of

furniture out of rough sawn timber and knowing people are going to enjoy using that piece for decades.

**dh-** Least favourite?

**tg-** Ignorant clients.

**dh-** What has been your greatest success?

**tg-** The restoration of the ground floor of the NSW Masonic club. (169 Castlereagh - it looks fabulous-dh) That was in the early 90's and I was nominated for the Craft section of the NSW Institute of Architects Awards.

**dh-** Would you like to share a woodworking embarrassment?

**tg-** Yes we all make mistakes. I once made a kitchen that was a metre too long (better than a metre too short-dh).

**dh-** What is your favourite joint?

**tg-** Long and short shoulders on a mortice and tenon joint.

**dh-** Do you prefer machine power or are you a traditionalist?

**tg-** Both.

**dh-** Any closing comments?

**tg-** I feel I have made the right decisions in life.

**dh-** Thank you for your time and all the best success.

## Workshop Visit, Phil Gould's workshop, Nowra 28 April

**Join members on 28 April** at Phil Gould's workshop and timber supply business Allwood Timbers at 8 Geary Place Nowra. Phil will give a guided tour of his workshop, timber stock and new showroom at 10:30. We will have a barbecue lunch at 12:00.

Coming from the north, turn right from the Princes Hwy (immediately before the bridge) into Illaroo Rd proceed to the first the roundabout and take the first left into McMahons Rd. Proceed until the Stop sign, turn right into Pitt Rd, then take the first turn right into Geary Place. Contact Warwick Wright

## The Powerhouse Discovery Centre Collection Store, Castle Hill 12 May

The Woodworkers Association has arranged a special group visit on 12 May to the recently opened Collection Store. We will have exclusive access to the furniture store which is not yet open to the public. Please be there by 10.30 AM.

The site comprises six large warehouse-style buildings covering 13,000 m<sup>2</sup>, over 2.8 hectares, the previously off-limits 40% (by volume), 50,000 objects - one of the world's greatest collections of science, technology, design, decorative arts and social history. More information at - [www.powerhousemuseum.com/castlehill](http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/castlehill)

Normally, entry is \$8 adult; \$5 concession/school student; FREE to PHM members, seniors, pensioners. WWA entrance fees are being negotiated. Remember to wear walking shoes! No **flash** photography: Bring cameras but use the no-flash setting.

The complex is at the northern corner of **Windsor Rd & Showground Rd**, access is via Baulkham Hills TAFE, entrance via **Green Rd** (the extension of Victoria Ave). Brochures will be available for members at our April 2 (AGM) meeting. Contact Frank Duff.

## A students perspective....an interview with Tracy Gumm

**Tracy attended the last meeting and presented to us on her experiences as a student at the Australian School of Fine Furniture. We captured some of her comments in this interview.**

**There are not a lot of options for people wanting to be trained in the art of furniture designing & making. What made you choose the Australian School of Fine Furniture (ASFF)?**

Three things attracted me to ASFF.

The opportunity to learn from Neil and Pam Erasmus. They were the Academic directors of the school for the 2 years that I was there, and between them have an incredible wealth of knowledge and experience in making, teaching and running a business.

The visiting master craftsmen program. There is nothing like learning from the best. It's inspirational and makes you learn faster than you could ever thought possible. Each person has a unique approach, and you quickly learn that there is never just one way to do things. We not only learnt from these people but also became good friends.

The school environment. We were located in a downtown heritage building, with real character and lots of space. The workshops were spacious and we had a library, computer lab, and great machine shop. We were all happy to be there, and besides the great teachers we got lots of hands-on experience with a broad range of machinery and technology.



**ASFF in Launceston**

**ASFF is modelled under the classical master/pupil model? How did you find working with master craftsmen?**

This was definitely the highlight of my 2 years. We were lucky enough to be taught by some of the finest woodworkers in Australia. Each teacher

had their own approach, specific skills and experience, and I felt very lucky to be spending time with them, for me this included:

Geoff Hannah – Marquetry  
Leon Sadubin – Chair Making  
Susan Wraight - Carving  
Malcolm Harris – Production Item  
Alan Livermore – Steam Bending  
David Uphill Brown – Commission Project  
Neil Erasmus – Cabinet on a Stand

**Tasmania is famous for its timber. Did you enjoy working with Tasmanian Timbers?**

Of all the Tassie timbers I enjoyed working with Blackwood and Celery Top the best. I found Huon too soft, Myrtle too pink and Sassafrass Blackheart a bit overwhelming. The highlight for me was meeting the timber sellers, people like those at Corrina Timbers and independent operators like Paul Noordanus in Deloraine. Paul



salvages wood, and when you buy timber from him it's like buying a vintage wine, you feel personally acquainted with its heritage, and feel a responsibility to create something beautiful that will last a long time.

**ASFF seems to have had an emphasis on traditional joinery. Did you get exposure to contemporary woodworking technologies?**

It's true we spent a lot of time in the first year doing handwork joints; small dovetails, angled dovetails, Japanese joints and bird's-eyes, at times it seemed like "Zen and the art of dovetailing". But aside from a strong foundation in hand skills, we were also educated and given practical hands-on experience with spindle moulders, CAD design, CNC machines and multi-routers. We were encouraged to have confidence in our handskills and to practice, but also to do grunt work with modern helpers like

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the router, and finish special areas by hand.

**Design is often highlighted as a critical success factor for Designer/Makers. How did the ASFF tackle something that woodies often seem reluctant to deal with?**

Around 1/3 of our total time (and marks) was dedicated to design and design-based learning. I am not saying everyone liked this, but it was a core part of the curriculum. We studied all aspects of design; creative drawing, life drawing, painting, industrial design, technical drawing, model

making and design theory. During our major projects 1/3 of the time was dedicated to sketching, model making and prototyping, and at each stage we had critiques and reviews, sometimes they were with external guests such as architects, curators and other designer-makers. We were encouraged to voice the story behind our pieces, and discuss improvements or potential changes.

**You've worked hard and achieved a lot. What's next for you?**

I've recently moved back to Sydney and have jumped feet first into setting up my own workshop, which we've named Irminsul. The plan is to

design and make a small production range of furniture and giftware, and also run some classes. My first class starts at Easter, and I am planning a veneering masterclass with Neil and Pam Erasmus in August. If anyone would like more details send me an email (tracy@irminsul.com.au) or give me a call (9516-0380).

If you are wondering where Irminsul came from, it was an ancient oak tree worshipped by the Saxons. It survived a lightning strike, and its sideways growth made them believe it was a conduit between heaven and earth.

## ON TECHNIQUE

by Bob Howard

**The following is an abridged version of an article by Bob Howard in Australian Wood Review # 11 June 1996. It is reproduced with the permission of the author and publisher.**

The marvellous thing about teaching is that you are quickly forced to confront a lot of things that you otherwise might easily ignore, avoid, or be simply be unaware of. The pressure of having to know what you are talking about when you teach has a wonderful power to focus your mind, to force you to understand explicitly and specifically what you are teaching.

If we wish to teach something such as cutting dovetails, the first thing we need to work out is a procedure - a methodical, step-by-step, recipe for the job. Just about any book on woodworking will give a version of this. This tells us what we are going to do, and when. What we now need is the HOW, and it is here that the literature tends to fail us. If you follow the recipe of a how-to book, you will end up with a dovetail at the end, but the chances are it won't be a really good one. So, what have you done wrong? Usually you will look in vain for the equivalent of the trouble-shooting guide common in car manuals; "If you have an even gap under all the tails, check the following . . ."

When you start to look for what you have done wrong, you will eventually start to think about how you might go about the work so as to minimise the chances of that mistake happening again. Once you start doing this you have entered the world of Technique. This will encompass the way you use the tools, how you choose the wood, which method you adopt, how you organise your workspace, which tools you use and how they are prepared, and even that fathomless world of your mental attitudes (Robert Pirsig, in his marvellous book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, mentioned the instructions for the assembly of a Japanese motorcycle which began: "Assembly of Japanese motorcycle require great peace of mind . . .").

Over time, as we work up a collection of knowledge, procedures, tricks of the trade, mental notes, methods of working, hard experience and so on, as well as a level of skill with our tools. If we are disciplined enough, all this adds up to a particular way of working, our own individual approach to doing the various wood-

working tasks that confront us. It is this that I refer to as our technique.

There are three things that need to be said immediately about technique.

The first is that technique is something that evolves. You can begin with a technique that you learn from someone else. This was the old way, where apprentices learnt from their masters and, by doing so, stood on the shoulders of all those who had gone before them. Your techniques will evolve from this point as you learn by trial and error or by interaction with your peers. It will also be affected by changes in technology in tools and materials.

Secondly, the technique that is best for you will depend on your level of skill. In the beginning you will need a technique that is safe but probably slow. As your level of skill rises, you will be able to do safely things that were previously too risky, so your technique can be adjusted accordingly.

Finally, and probably most importantly, the best technique in the world is utterly useless if you don't use it.



In other words, technique has to be accompanied by discipline, and in my experience as a teacher, this is the bit that separates the best students from the rest. Once you evolve a successful technique, you will need to use it all of the time - not some of the time, not most of the time, but *all of the time*. *Every time*.

The best analogy that I know of in this regard is sport. Modern sports people pursue excellence with a passion that is probably unrivalled by any other people in the world. Where is the woodworker who gets up at 5:30 am to cut ten dovetails before breakfast? Or the one who practises basic woodworking skills for two hours every afternoon? Sports coaches have long twigged to the importance of honing basic skills until they become automatic, so they will stand up under pressure. They spend hour after hour, using highly sophisticated equipment, analyzing technique, seeking better ways or probing for weaknesses. Pity the poor batsman who has a deficient defensive technique. By the time he gets to the crease his opponents will have set a field and planned a bowling attack carefully designed to exploit his weakness.

We can develop for ourselves some exercises that we can do every day so as to hone our basic skills. You might, for example, take a piece of 50 mm x 25 mm wood, square a line around it about 5 mm in from one end, then take your saw and cut it off, trying to split the line on all four faces. It is important when marking that the end of the marked line meet exactly the beginning. These tasks need to be practised until they can be done routinely.

As you struggle with them, you will evolve your own technique for doing them. This might include some tried and true elements, such as always working with the square from

one reference face and one reference edge. Other things you might work out for yourself, such as always rolling the wood away from you as you move to transfer the line from one face to the next. This ensures that you are always marking from a far face towards you, which is much more comfortable, and hence more likely to be accurate, than working from the near face and away from you.

**“The technical side of woodwork is ruthlessly logical”**

It is worth remembering that the technical side of woodwork is ruthlessly logical. The wood doesn't care whether or not you are a good person. It pays no attention to how hard you have tried, or how much you deserve to succeed. There is no room for wishful thinking, for just hacking away in the hope that it will be all right at the end. The only possible way for that method to succeed is sheer luck - the woodworking equivalent of the infinite number of monkeys pounding away at an infinite number of typewriters. Just one of them will eventually type out the Lord's Prayer, so too might you one day hack out a perfect dovetail. But don't hold your breath while you wait.

However, once you accept the reality of this logic, you can turn it to your advantage. It will tell you what you have to do. It will also tell you what is wrong if you are not successful. It is one of those laughable truisms to say that if a joint is marked out accurately, and cut accurately, then it must fit. Logically, this must be so. There is no other possibility. But the corollary is also true: if it is not marked out accurately, or not cut accurately, it won't fit. It is my experience, though, that a lot of woodworkers only pay lip service to this truth. They say that they believe it, but proceed to act as though they don't, as though they

secretly believe that, somehow, you really can do it all wrong and have it magically turn out perfect. Think about it. How much care do YOU take to make sure your marking out is as perfect as you can make it? And if it isn't how do you expect to get the result you want?

When you have cut your joint and it doesn't fit, you can again use the logic of the result. Clearly, if it doesn't fit there is a logical reason why it doesn't. All you need to do is to look and think until you find it. Again, this seems to be childishly simple when stated like this. But I hate to think how many times I have had to help puzzled students understand that the reason the joint won't close up is because they have left a whopping great splinter of wood in the corner of one half of it, or that they do not have two flat surfaces coming together but two rounded ones.

**“Begin to accept the reality of what you see, rather than pretending to see what you wish was there.”**

When you start thinking about your work and what you are doing, and begin to accept the reality of what you see, rather than pretending to see what you wish was there, you are well on the way to developing a good technique. What will inevitably happen is that you will develop a feedback loop. If you make a mistake once you might be content to dismiss it as carelessness, telling yourself that you will be more careful next time. If you make it twice, and especially if you do so in spite of your most attentive care, you will start to think about ways and means of changing your technique so as to make it impossible for that mistake to ever occur again. Or, failing that ideal outcome, of at least giving yourself a much improved chance of it not happening again. Over time, with this sort of approach, you will

## Discounts for Association Members

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**On Technique from Page 9**

progressively tighten your technique until you can routinely produce excellent work.

It is important to realize, too, that this process needs to cover the entire range of factors that affect our woodwork. We need to pay attention to our workspace, our tools, and our raw materials because these are all important parts of a comprehensive technique. Remember that good technique is all about maximizing the chances of success and minimising the risk of failure. It should be obvious that the quality of our workplace, tools and materials will contribute to this. It would be easy to devote an entire article to the importance of a good vice and a good light, for example - two highly under-appreciated and most definitely under-worked tools.

Why struggle to mark out a dovetail on a piece of wood that threatens to slide about the bench all the time when the simple and quick expedient of holding it in the vice immediately and

painlessly gives you a far greater chance of achieving the accuracy you need? And if you mark with a knife (which is so obviously superior to a pencil when it comes to both marking and cutting accurately) you can use a light to throw a shadow across the knife cut and thus make it so much easier to see. Similarly, you can use the light to throw a shadow across a pared joint and so highlight any humps that remain in the surface, or use the light with a ruler to check for high spots or hollows. These simple tricks can take the guesswork out of cutting a joint, and allow you to work knowing what you are doing instead of working blindly and in hope.

**“Fine woodwork is a very *deliberate* activity.”**

Another general point that I might mention is that fine woodwork is a very *deliberate* activity. By this I mean that we need to position the tool, stop, think, and check that it is where it ought to be before proceeding to cut. Too often I see people place the tool and cut in the one motion.

Another basic point is that when using a chisel we always need to be connected to the work. In other words, some part of the hand holding the chisel, or if necessary the arm, should always be on the work, or on the bench by the work, or on the vice holding the work. This makes for a far higher degree of accuracy than having both hands in the air and stabbing at the work with the chisel.

Now, none of these things are particularly earth shattering revelations. They are little more than simple common sense, but they do have the power to vastly increase the quality of our work. The point of this article is not to attempt to lay out a comprehensive technique, but rather to raise technique as an issue for you to think about. Over the last few years I have watched a lot of different people work, and I have been driven to wonder why it is so easy for some and so terribly difficult for others. Technique is not a complete answer to that question, but I am sure it is an important part of it.

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