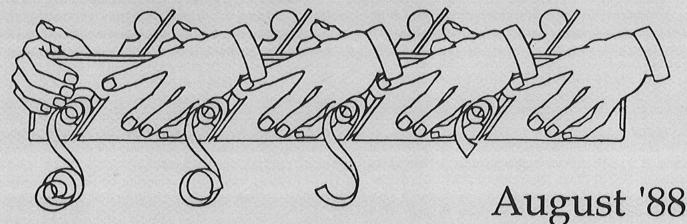
WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.



WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.

Chairman: Laurie Oliver 922 2277

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FROM THE CHAIR

Our Next Meeting - Incorporation

Our next meeting will be rather special in that it will involve some small formalities related to incorporation of our Group as the Woodworkers Association of NSW. The formalities obtained so far are:

 Application and reservation of a name. This has been done and our new name is approved.

2. Public liability insurance for 2 million dollars. This is obligatory and has the effect of exonerating committee workers for individual liability should a major claim arrive against the Group (to become an Association).

Some of the remaining formalities which must take place at the next meeting are:

- To pass a special resolution to approve a set of rules.
 The Committee proposes to use the simplified rules provided by the Corporate Affairs Commission modified, slightly for our purposes. Copies of these rules will be available at the next meeting. If any member would like a copy before the meting please let me know and I will forward some.
- 2. To elect office bearers. All the existing office bearers are willing to continue and they are:

chairman: Laurie Oliver
vice chairman: Jim Littlefield
secretary: Nick Hill
treasurer: Gayl Leake

committee:

The rules require the new appointment of Vice Chairman which Jim Littlefield has kindly consented to take. The Committee is still a bit thin on the ground. So if anyone is flat out earning a crust and keeping up with the social hurley burley as well as keeping a family content here is a job for you.

Mike Jefferys

 To pass a resolution to the effect that the new incorporated body (Association) will take over the previously unincorporated body (Group) and continue to pursue to the activities of the Group.

We will aim to make the above formal proceedings as short as possible. I will be happy to answer any query any member may have before the meeting. - Laurie Oliver.

OUR NEXT MEETING

Again we will be at the Powerhouse Museum at 7.30 on 8 August. The venue again is a seminar room. If you approach the Museum from Harris or Macarthur Streets, to level 3, the security personnel will direct newcomers to the room.

This meeting will have Leon Sadubin as guest speaker, talking about the design and making of the Parliament House benches and also of the ten years leading to the impressive undertaking.

The meeting will also be treated as our Annual General Meeting as it will herald the beginning of the Woodworkers Association of NSW Inc. This means that formal activities must be observed and unfortunately I will have to start recording minutes (I'm sure its no major trauma). The formalities will be kept to a minimum but they are to be observed so as to uphold the idea of incorporation. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Nick Hill.

Our October meeting is already organised. Chris McElhinny will be our guest with a lecture on the myth of the technical drawing. Chris is a lecturer from the Canberra school of Arts. So mark this date now and the venue is as before, the Powerhouse Museum.

OUR LAST MEETING

This meeting was again held at the Powerhouse Museum. After a short business session we were able to welcome George Ingham, DES, RCA, NDD, Artist and Designer Craftsman.

George expressed his disappointment at having had to wait for so long (since 1982) for an invitation to talk to the Woodworkers Group. But the invitation was given, the car didn't let him down this time and all was forgiven. He proceeded to give us a full history of his training and experience (Leon counted ten years). While the background of this designer was illuminating many of us humble makers were puzzled with Georges' need to establish his credentials. Isn't he a highflier, one who has made it?

George is foremost a designer. In his slide show we saw the development of his narrow-back chair; one design leading to the next. With great discipline, each new design is analysed and assessed, the idea continually refined. It is as if history was constantly written.

I would have liked to sit on the chairs. The feeling I got was that the design had been pared down to the threshold where the chair becomes uncomfortable.

The lack of sumptuousness in his chairs is amply made up for by the many ideas incorporated in George's work. The table that caters for western as well as Asian dining by 'kneeling' into a lower position is a prime example. The geometry of the sets of round legs is complex. In his review of George's exhibition at the Old Bakery Gallery Michael Bogle asked: 'Can a designer be too inventive?' The design solutions don't seem to take marketability into account and he

admitted the price of the object does not reflect the time spent on it.

Many of the listeners thought George's position was an ideal one. However teaching at a college is not necessarily a sheltered workshop for the privileged. Time for practical and investigative work is limited. Such work is vital to remain a relevant teacher. George's urgency and frustration to get as many ideas as possible into pieces of work came across only too painfully. Leon waxed lyrical about the easy and unencumbered design environment in Australia and thought he detected an Australian influence in George and his work. Being laid back however is definitely not in the life George Ingham has designed for himself.

George's strong views and his many ideas are truly an inspiration to other makers. Thanks for the evening.

Hans Westerman.

References

Catalogue. George Ingham at the Old Bakery Gallery 1987. Michael Bogle in the Sydney Herald 26.9.1987. Craft Arts No. 1 Oct/Dec 1984. Crafts No. 50 May/Jun 1981.

WWG MEETING DATES FOR 1988

Group Meetings in 1988

August 8 October 10 December 12

Please note in your diaries that our guest speaker for the October 10 meeting will be Chris McElhinney. The topic will be 'Design and the Drawing Myth'.

Newsletter Deadlines in 1988

7 September (for October issue)

7 November (for December issue)

Newsletter articles: the Editor requires copy to be easily legible, typed or handwritten.

Photos supplied with articles: -to be preferably black and white or, if colour, only high contrast shots are suitable for screening for printing purposes. Line drawings should be in black pen.

Committee Meetings in 1988

Committee members will be advised by phone.

WHAT'S - ON - CALENDAR

Alan Wale's Basic Joinery Workshop

Saturday 13 August
A one day workshop at the Sturt School for Wood.

Alan Wale will extensively discuss and demonstrate the preparation and hand skills associated with mortise and tenon type joinery. There will be plenty of practical work at the benches.

Cost is \$30 per student. Materials are provided.

Any other ideas for workshops please contact

Henry Black (744 2822).

THE NATIONAL WOODWORK EXHIBITION

As mentioned in the last newsletter, this exhibition will be held in the Exhibition Building, Melbourne, 21 to 23 October. As of the 21 June, the organisers had received more than 75 entries but have extended their deadline to accept more entries throughout July.

If interested, please contact The National Woodwork Exhibition on (059) 68 1753. Contact address is:

Interwood Holdings P/L c/o Gembrook Post office VICTORIA 3783

AN ASSOCIATION LIBRARY?

Bob Dixon has kindly offered to help establish a lending library for our association. The idea has been proposed before but has never developed. Perhaps Bob's enthusiasm will provide the impetus this time. If interested, please contact Bob on 489 2613 with offers of books, magazines or videos and suggestions as to how the library could or should be run.

CORRECTION

Neil Scobie writes to point out that in the last newsletter our review of the AFDI Exhibition mistakenly credited Susan Wraight with 1st prize in the Woodturning section. It should have read:

(iii) Woodcarving hand carved: 1st Susan Wraight. Woodturning was in fact won by Neil for a 500 mm diameter rosewood rolltop bowl. Our apologies.

Establishment of a National Woodcraft Organisation

An Interim Committee was established by the Third National Wood Conference (1987) charged with the promulgation of the single resolution passed. The resolution is as follows:

UNDERSTANDING: that the world timber resource is in danger of severe depletion if existing rates of clearing are maintained and existing levels of conservation and planting are not increased.

RECOGNISING: that the contribution of the craftsperson in our societies is of increasing economic, social an cultural importance.

CONSIDERING: that the continuing output of craftspeople working in wood is contingent upon a satisfactory long-term supply and conscientious programme of replenishment of the wood resource.

THIS CONFERENCE of Australian woodworkers:

urges the Timber Development Association and Australian Forestry Council to accept representation upon its Advisory Board from the Australian Woodworkers Conference, Canberra 1987, and

requests the Minister responsible for forests and other appropriate organisations to support its efforts to achieve that representation in order that its voice may be heard in matters relating to administration of the timber resource.

The Committee is seeking representation at the national level and to do so feels a national 'union' of Australian woodworkers should be formed. It is hoped this can by accomplished by each local woodcraft group agreeing to support and becoming affiliated with the national body.

The national body would initially consist of members nominated by state or regional groups and operated by correspondence. Each group would pay a nominal affiliation fee to cover basic costs.

The first duty of such a committee would be to formulate the objects of a national body and draw up articles of association. In the long term, the proposed body would act as a lobby group for the woodcraftpersons of Australia.

As a member of the Interim Committee, Michael Gill will discuss this important matter at our next (August) meeting. He will be seeking the views of members as regards affiliation with the proposed national body.

STURT SCHOOL FOR WOOD

The School offers a thorough training for the committed woodworker, providing a sound foundation in the craft.

ONE YEAR FULL TIME

Further details from the Director, Alan Wale Sturt School for Wood Range Road MITTAGONG NSW 2575

TO EXHIBIT... OR

The What of What?

(The stripes on the beautiful brochure obscure the name of the exhibition : maybe the stripes should have extended across the doorway.)

The brochure which I purchased from the exhibition, House of Fiction (What of What) was a nicely produced booklet full of good photography and a copious number of words which conveyed very little information.

I wish the whole thing was fiction as the reality was somewhat of a nightmare, especially as the nightmare looks to have recurrences with Italian and American subtitles.

I feel the whole episode has been a disaster. This is unfortunate, as the idea was very exciting and possibly very rewarding.

My immediate reaction to the exhibition was that the designers had no idea of how to use the eucalypt hardwoods (as outlined in the brief), let alone any other wood, with the admitted exception of Leslie John Wright. The artisans, except for one or two, produced very poor pieces technically for these seeming non-wood designers. Construction was bad and finish was in most cases tacky to say the least. A lump of Pacific maple was bunged inside one cupboard to stop it collapsing!

There were a few exceptions to the mostly poor pieces but only in the fact that the essence of the brief wasn't upheld in the use of rainforest species lending themselves to the designers' whims. Even these had damage or poor construction and finish. On the whole this exhibition of 'Protypes in domestic furniture' should *not* be shown any further than the basement it is hopefully still in.

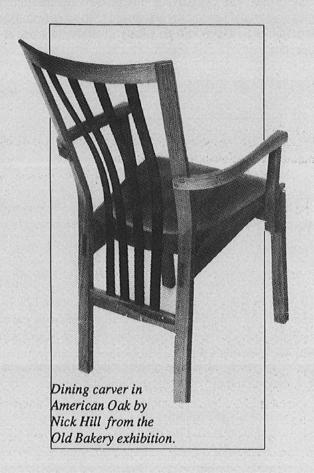
As a footnote the logic a prototype in most "designer makers'" understanding is to test a design.

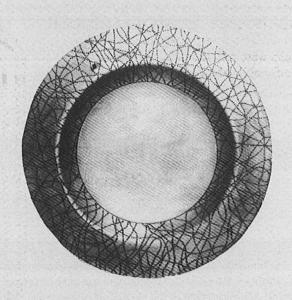
Once made, the prototype may be studied so that the final piece can be improved upon and adapted from the prototype idea. I feel rarely would one display a design prototype, as in my case it is pulled apart or adapted through various stages to come up with a final design.

The final design should have the bugs ironed out and all the inherent structural and aesthetic problems totally solved and only then should exhibition be envisaged. The prototypes in my workshop usually stay there in the form of final real mockups or half scale models or sometimes a finished chair for family use, not for exhibition.

So, in the words of the exhibition maybe the House of Fiction means the pieces are fiction, never to be seen as the finished product and only a passing vision of the blueprint in domestic furniture.

Nick Hill.





Huon Pine Bowl in gold leaf and black laquer by Terry Baker.exhibited at the Old Bakery

NOT TO EXHIBIT

Exhibition Review

I trust that most of you were able to visit the exhibition by Nick Hill and Terry Baker at the Old Bakery Gallery. I thought the exhibition was indicative of much that is happening within our association generally. By this I mean that technical competence seems finally to be joined by a mature, even refined, sense of design.

This is no rarefied state but rather the opposite; one achieved through years of work, observation and consideration. This is furniture with feet firmly on the ground.

In view of Nick's reaction to 'House of Fiction', I regret even more not having seen that exhibition as I'm sure a comparison would have been fruitful. I'm certain however that we haven't heard the last on that issue and others may like to compare and contrast as they see fit.

With the exception of Nick's chair's in American oak and some use of MDF board, all timbers were Australian hardwoods. The simple elegance of most of these timbers never ceases to surprise and please me. The irony of this (no pun intended) is that this beguiling elegance, even softness, could deceive one into thinking that the timber is not the intractable blade burning stuff it usually is. Designers take note?

As far as I'm concerned, Nick's joinery and construction techniques are impeccable. Though some of the joinery is complex, particularly in the chairs, there is no attempt at virtuosity, an approach I heartily approve of. Nick's boxes I found least interesting, even including a large blanket chest,

though the tapered rim and overhanging top on this piece was particularly attractive. The chairs were very fine indeed; sound, comfortable, beautifully sculpted. But most interesting to me were the tables. These expressed a sense of architecture that would enliven the domestic environment. There were subtle permutations and variations on geometric themes that one wouldn't tire of. It looks so simple, but ...

I do not feel so competent a judge of Terry Baker's turnings, only that 'I know what I like'. And I did. Like the work that is. Unable to comment on turning techniques, I can say the bowl form lulled or lured one into a contemplative state. Nothing shocking here but rather thoughtful, restful pieces suggestive of natural forms; a crescent moon, tidepools, the cupped and spherical shapes we are surrounded by and so tend to ignore.

Terry's use of pokerwork shows much promise, suggesting as it does the insect patterns on gum trees as well as the patterns of the desert painters. I also liked the somewhat autumnal look of some of the gold and silver leaf work but, like his lacquer work, I think the best, or better, is yet to come.

Our built environment is now so eclectic that we, like our Victorian predecessors, risk becoming cultural gadflies. Some of us also run the risk of becoming reactionaries; understandable enough when swamped by post-modern, post-punk, post-neo-classical, all heavily hyped and financed. To steer one's way through this maze is not an easy task. I commend Nick and Terry for keeping off the dross.

attempt at k's boxes I inket chest,

Crest, made of Tasmanian Myrtle by Leslie John Wright exhibited in The House of Fiction.

A VISIT: Garry Knox Bennett

The June issue of the Victorian Woodworkers

Association newsletter announces the imminent
(October 1988) visit of Garry Knox Bennett to

Australia and, in particular, Victoria,
The VWA are financing this visit and would
welcome support and suggestions from other
woodgroups, craftspeople and commercial sponsors,
The following re-print from the VWA newsletter
should whet your appetites:

ACTIVITIES

To be based at the Melbourne School of Woodcraft, where he will design and construct a major item of furniture. Item(s) to be exhibited at the Meat Market and the Exhibition Buildings.

Would be open to visits from craftspeople at this studio.

Lecture to be presented at Melbourne State College (Melb. Uni).

Visits to Victorian woodwork groups and two interstate clubs can be arranged.

Assist in judging exhibitions such as the VWA's and others' by arrangement.

PROFILE

Garry Knox Bennett, among other things, is a modern furniture designer and maker from California. Although he had no training in traditional woodwork, he has had a major influence on woodworkers and is recognised as one of the top ten contemporary American woodworkers who have made 'profoundly significant contributions to the craft'.

Bennett's background includes a fine arts degree, working as a sculptor, running a metal electroplating and jewellery business and turning to wood work in the late 70s. Because of this training and experience with metal and sculpture, he holds no preconceived notions of how furniture is made or what it should look like. He frequently combines aluminium, brass, paint and glass with wood. His style includes the use of bold geometric shapes, 'the antitheses of the organic style of other Californian woodworkers epitomised by Sam Maloof':

"His use of form, colour, texture and materials is freer than most American woodworkers because he is not limited by sentimentality for the material or a formal education in its methods. His irreverance for traditional woodwork borders on hostility." (M.A. Stone, Contemporary American Woodworkers, 1986)

In 1979 Garry infuriated many people by hammering a 6" nail into an elegant display cabinet he had built for an exhibition: "I just wanted to make a statement that I thought people were getting a little too goddamn precious with their techniques". The American Crafts magazine (1986) has quoted him to detest erudite conversation on symbolism in

crafts and other arty pontifications:

"I'm making furniture. My big concern is to make it as good as it can and still function. These people get to call themselves artists because they're getting away from the functional aspects ... They're using chairs as metaphors ...

'... he is not limited by sentimentality for the material or a formal education in its methods'

Those chairs you can't sit in: they're some damn thing you stick against a wall and everyone goes 'God, its art? I suppose you can get a little more money for it"

Garry Knox Bennett is certainly not a traditional woodworker - his designs might be categorised as similar to the 'new wave' or 'noveau-wave' style, with which a number of Australian woodworkers are currently experimenting. This visit will be one of the important events for 1988.

Please direct any enquiries or offers of support to any of the VWA Committee or Alan Wilson on (03) 870 7533.



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A New Timber Service

I had an interesting trip out to the Tamworth area a couple of weeks ago when I went to have a look around a new timber yard run by Barry Wilkins.

He's been living in the New England area and surrounding districts for the best part of his life and knows a good deal about timber and forest life in general. Eighteen months ago he started setting up a mill with large air-drying sheds. The property is actually three large poultry sheds, so the floor area is very big. The first shed contains the machinery, principally a 24" band re-saw and then a rail track and trolley system.that leads through to jointer-thicknesser, moulding machines and a good-sized immunisation tank.

The two other sheds are full of air-drying timber that was very interesting. The timber that he advertises is Scrub Wilga, Ivory Birch, Tulip Oak, Malletwood, Yellow Carrabeen, Ebony Myrtle, Bollywood, Red Oak and, at the time, some reasonable quantities of Rosewood and Cedar.

The sizes drying at the moment vary between 1", 11/2" and some 2" boards up to 4 metres long but I can't be specific scause it all depends on what comes in on the truck.

The immediate reaction is 'these species are so unusual - are they in fact what he says they are?' He settled my doubts by saying that he's had all these species individually identified by a friend in a science department at the University of New England who is supplied with the leaves, seed pods, bark and timber samples. So when I looked at some very beautiful Muskwood and Dorrigo Maple I had no doubts that that's what they were but their availability and size depends once again on what comes on the truck. The address is:

Top Timbers Acacia Sands Road KOOTINGAL NSW 2352 Phone: (067) 67 3905

... thats a few miles up the New England Highway from Tamworth on your way to Armidale. Definitely worth a trip.

Geoff Hague.

Exhibitions Ad Infinitum

I still haven't received all the replies about the small exhibitions so please try to send them back even if you never plan to exhibit again.

The venues confirmed so far are the 3rd Australian Craft Fair and the Old Bakery Gallery at Lane Cove will open their doors to our work for two months, i.e. in February and March 1989.

This show will be a showroom style exhibition with no major opening, giving flexibility to later arrivals and a staggering of exhibitions over the two months. We found the Old Bakery propose to advertise in one or some of the glossies such as Vogue, Belle, etc. for the show so we are hoping for big things from this one.

I will be keeping you informed of the ongoing details as they come to fruition.

Nick Hill.

CLASSIFIED ADZE

A Travelling Cabinet Maker

The Editor has received a letter from a young English cabinet maker seeking employment in Australia. He intends coming to Australia next Christmas to join his sister. Since completing a course in furniture design and construction at Leeds College of the Arts he has worked at antique resotration and is currently employed making high quality, hand made pianos. If you can help, contact:

Timothy Garside
Fairfield, Layton Rd
Horsforth Leeds Yorkshire England

Timber Auction
Ian Lauder & Son P/L
WINGHAM
(065) 53 4467 or ah 53 4623

We wish to advise that our annual Softwood Auction at Machin's Mill, Comboyne Road, Wingham, will be held on Saturday, 3 September, 1988. We again look forward to your company and will forward a brochure to you before the sale.

... and More Timber

'Turncraft Timbers' - suppliers of specialised timbers in Bellingen in northern NSW advise the supply - in quantity - of Camphor Laurel, Wattle, Rose Sheoak, Rose Gum, Red Mahogany, Blueberry Ash and other, rainforest, species, subject to availability.

Of special interest to beginners or those craft people who may only need short lengths of timber, Turncraft Timbers also offer 'Craft Boxes'. These are cartons full of useful off-cuts suitable for smaller jobs.

Turncraft Timbers stress that they are interested in anything to do with fine timbers and would welcome any enquiries craftspeople may have. Turncraft Timbers can be contacted by phone on (066) 55 1058 or by post at P.O. Box 99 BELLINGEN 2454



Earning Your Money

The following article was extracted from the *Kitchen and Bath Design News*, May 1988, and appears in the June Bay Area Woodworkers Association Newsletter (San Francisco, California). I know from personal experience how painful not using a logical, business-like approach to pricing can be and thought others might find this useful or at least interesting, as I did. - Ed.

'You don't need to be a mathematics professor to calculate your price'.

'In calculating markup,' Blau noted, 'there is a basic principle that you should lock inside your memory forever: the overhead and the profit percentages are percentages of the selling price, not the direct cost or purchase price.

According to Blau, the most common mistake made by contractors and dealers is to calculate overhead and profit as a percentage of *direct* cost, and then to add those numbers to the direct cost to come up with a selling price. The result, he noted, is a selling price that is too low. Blau maintains that dealers must determine a selling price before they know what their overhead and profit will be.

Assessing overhead

Blau feels that there is some confusion over exactly what 'overhead' is. He defines overhead as all business expenses that cannot be accurately pegged to one particular job or charged to a specific customer - and cites utility bills, payroll, tools, equipment, advertising, liability and health insurance costs as part of this category.

Blau discourages going to competitors, finding out what they charge for overhead and then applying the same percentage. He explained the method's futility on two counts: 'First, your friendly competitor might be a good guy, but he might not understand the principles of simple markup. Second, your overhead expenses might be quite a bit more than his'.

When a dealer has correctly assessed his or her overhead, the chances for arriving at the right selling price will improve. According to Blau, the next step is to assign the overhead cost as 15% of the selling price and the net profit cost as 10%. Added together, these items should represent 25% of the selling price, which is calculated at 100%.

By subtracting 25% from the 100%, Blau said, the result is 75%, which represents the amount in direct costs that are known. In reality, the direct cost of a job will always be known, at least in the form of an estimate, he added. By constructing a simple algebraic formula using proportional ratios, Blau explained, dealers can determine the correct selling price for a job.

In an example in which \$1,000 was assigned as the value of direct costs, Blau calculated the selling price using this equation:

$$\frac{.75}{1,000} = \frac{1.00}{X}$$

The unknown selling price is represented by the 'X', noted Blau.

'If we recall our high school algebra, we know to first multiply the diagonals. To find the value of 'X' we must divide 1,000 by .75, which gives us \$1,333.33. That is the correct selling price,' he concluded.

To find the correct amount of overhead and profit, Blau commented, dealers should multiply the overhead and net profit percentages of the selling price. So, \$1,333.33 x .15, or \$199.995, rounded off to \$200 in overhead cost, noted, while 10% net profit is \$1,333.33 x .10 or \$133.33.

Blau urged that the calculations be done carefully. 'To come up with a selling price where costs and desired profit are known, you must divide, not multiply, by a decimal representing some fraction of 1.0. When you divide by a fractional decimal, the result will always be higher than the base number; when you multiply it will always be less than the base number,' he explained.

'Guessing or miscalculating a selling price will hurt the contractor in the long run, Blau stressed. For example, if you charge \$1,250 as a selling price, instead of the correct \$1,333 for the sample problem, the unfortunate result is that for every \$1,000 of direct cost, the contractor shortchanges himself \$85, Blau warned.

'Instead of a net profit of \$133, he ends up retaining only \$50,' he observed. 'Instead of the net profit target of 10%, he realises only 3.8% - although he *thinks* he is making 10%.'

If that process were to continue job after job for an entire fiscal year, Blau noted that there would be 'a big surprise' when an accountant reveals the bottom line. As for the contractor, he would be totally bewildered as to how that had happened, Blau noted.

According to Blau, charging the correct selling price is matter of 'basic arithmetic'.

'You don't need to be a mathematics professor to do these calculations,' he pointed out. 'Even if you transpose a couple of numbers, you can catch it by using simple common sense.' - Linda Longo.