

# WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.



## WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.

**Chairman:** David Lockwood  
16/26 Tupia Street, Botany, 2019

**Secretary:** Laurie Oliver  
2 Collette Place, East Killara, 2071

**Treasurer:** Eric Rayner, 229 Abercrombie Street  
Chippendale, 2008

**Newsletter:** Nick Hill, 19 Pearson Avenue, Gordon, 2072

**Editors:** Phillip Bohringer, 22 Allen Street,  
Leichhardt, 2040

**Wood Resources:** Gerard Gilet, 34A Beatrice Street  
Balgowlah, 2093

**Tools:** Henry Black, West Bldg. 119,  
22 Lord Street, Botany, 2019

**General Assistance:** Mike Jefferys, 66 Narrabeen Park Road  
Warriewood, 2102.

### FROM THE CHAIR:

David Lockwood sends his apologies for the lack of written report due to his commitment to the second or third deadline for the ENA Steamship restoration.

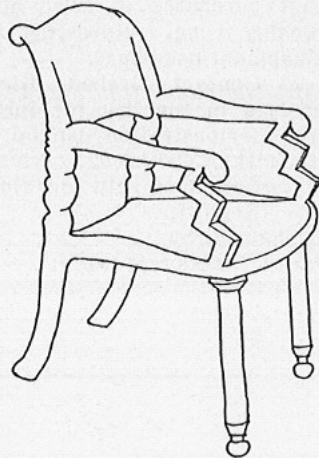
From the last **GROUP MEETING** on 10 August:

"Many thanks to Rod Henderson for catering for the members and showing his timber stocks at ANAGOTE TIMBERS. Pricing of timber on retail and wholesale bases was described by Rodney, basically related to volumes of orders. Anagote Timbers

mainly stocks Australian native timbers such as Rosewood, Coachwood, Sydney Blue Gum, Tulip Oak, etc., and small stocks of imported species. Generally sales are on a per-stick-basis at retail rates, with pack lots at half retail price. Members questioned whether an Australian Standard exists for specifying grades for cabinet timbers. A standard does exist which will be described in the next WWG Newsletter - sorry, I can't remember which one and this goes to the typesetter tomorrow!"

David Lockwood's suggestion in the last Newsletter of a workshop sharing code of practice was discussed and accepted in principle. Legal situations were questioned however, and it was recommended that the Surrey Hills Arts Law Centre or your solicitor be contacted over any arrangements.

David Lockwood and Allan Wale raised an important point of Group recognition being promoted through members' contact with the Press, in exhibitions and public venues. Other than a high level of woodwork execution being required for membership, members must display, say and write that they are members of the Woodworkers' Group of N.S.W.



The matter of adjudication of pieces presented for the coming Opera House Exhibition was briefly discussed. Draft ideas for a brief to be presented to judges will appear in the next WWG Newsletter.

The San Francisco Bay Area Woodworkers' Group experienced a tragedy in its ranks recently. A cooperative workshop was burnt to the ground after an illegal fireworks manufacturer stores, also in the building, caught fire. A number of members have offered donations. To speed things up, the Committee will draw U.S.\$100 from general funds to aid in restorations. We request you please send donations to Eric Rayner (with a note) to enable reimbursement of the Group's general funds. If donations exceed U.S.\$100 (about A\$170), the surplus will be sent as a second donation.

### FUTURE MEETING DATES:

#### Group Meetings

October 12  
December 14

#### Committee Meetings

October 9  
December 11

#### Newsletter Deadlines

November 14

### OUR NEXT MEETING:

The next GROUP MEETING will be held at Austral Engineering Supplies at Mary Street, Ermington, Sydney, on 12 October at midday. The new release of Invicta Delta machinery will be on display. Bring along your lunch and refreshments.

On display and, many in full-working operation, will be the model RC51 - 510mm thicknesser, RC63C - 630mm thicknesser, RE12, RE35, RT12, RT30 and RT40 saw benches, some with sliding table and scoring and the RJ350 and 400 surfacer and the RU50 overhead router.

Invicta Delta produce a wide range of machines, the main production being panel saws, surface planers, thicknessers, spindle moulders, routers, multi-head planers, morticers, tenoners, borers, dovetailers, and multi rip saws. For many years Invicta Delta has been recognised as one of the largest and oldest manufacturers of woodworking machinery in South America. Invicta have been manufacturing woodworking machinery since 1945 and since 1974 became well known as the Invicta Division of Rockwell. In 1984 Pentair Incorporated took over the shareholding control of Invicta and now the company trades under the name of Invicta Delta, which is a subsidiary of the Delta International Machinery Corporation. Delta vouches for keeping up the high technology and quality of its products and Invicta has developed itself into an internationally respected manufacturer of industrial woodworking machinery with its own captive grey iron foundry, being one of the largest facilities in the world with the capacity of producing approximately 25,000 machines per year.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS:

Dear Editor:

I had the pleasure of following a Tree Surgeon around the College grounds last week. A corner of my small workshop is piled with new sawn logs. I am now at the 'beginner's stage' of learning how to season them properly so that the open grain ends crack as little as possible during the drying out process.

Some kind experienced woodworkers have put me on to 'MOBIL CER M'. This is a paraffin-based jelly which is spread on both ends of the log allowing the wood to dry out slowly and shrink more evenly.

The Mobil Co. only sell it in 192 kilo Drums but for poor woodworkers like myself you can get it from 'Fosroc' in 18 kilo drums at \$31.10¢ incl. tax. Their address is:

'FOSROC'  
76-80 Helen Street  
Sefton NSW 2162  
Telephone: 644.7788

David Herd  
St Pauls College  
Sydney University, 2006..



Austral Engineering  
Supplies Pty Limited

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Exclusive Agents for

**INVICTA DELTA**

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For further information on Invicta  
and other machinery, contact our Sydney Office,  
Mary Street, Ermington.

Phone: Jack Thompson, 85.0211

Dear Editor:

Please find enclosed the Crafts Council of Australia's National Selected Slide Library brochure and entry form.

I would be grateful if you could inform your members in your Newsletter and at your meetings of the information contained in our brochure on the National Slide Selection.

Brochure and Entry Forms are available to all craftspeople interested in submitting slides for selection from the Crafts Council of Australia, 100 George Street, The Rocks, Sydney, 2000, Telephone: (02) 241.1701, or your State Crafts Council.

Yours sincerely,

Robyn Denmeade  
Crafts Council of Australia

Dear Editor:

### Dugco Australia (See Inca Loose Leaf)

I have been offered the opportunity to import some MUKWA hardwood from Zimbabwe - this is conditional upon there being some reasonable demand for the wood.

Perhaps some of your members may be interested? The details are as follows:

MUKWA Planks  
±500mm thick  
1 to 2 meters long  
200-300mm wide  
@ around \$600 per cubic meter

Should there be any interest, I would like to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Willit Singleton  
Phone: Wagga Wagga 069.22.3470

Dear Nick:

You may like to bring to the attention of the members the sale of the equipment below via the Newsletter:

### For Sale:

Sperber 34" portable chainsaw mill with two Stihl 075 AVE chainsaws and equipment including:

12' slabbing rail                      3 rip chairs  
25" bar                                      1 cross-cut chain  
120 battery operated chain sharpener  
Operation and Maintenance Manual

Unit purchased in 1980, approx. 70 hrs very successful running time. Recurring back problem makes sale of equipment necessary.

Contact Graham Kirby (062) 47.8389 (H) early or late in the day for further information. Obligation free demonstration can be arranged. 246 Antill Street, Hackett, A.C.T. 2602. Price \$2,500 o.n.o.

Good luck with your Newsletter and group.

Regards.

Graham Kirby  
A.C.T. Woodcraft Guild

### **ABOUT THE CHAIR: (Oct. Chair)**

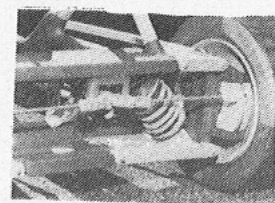
Called the "Jester Chair" it was designed to have a theatrically whimsical character featuring bold-coloured lacquer and personified shaping.

JAMES KUTASI

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## WELCOME TO A NEW MEMBER

At our last committee meeting we accepted a new member. Geoff Hague from Nabiac showed us some very fine pieces in a chair, blanket chest, spoons and superb all-wood clock. Geoff introduces himself in the following article and note !! has written us a fine article on the local activities around Nabiac. [Ed.]

### GEOFF HAGUE:

Grew up in England, with typical grammar school education and went on to London University studying Fine Arts (Sculpture). Migrated to Australia in 1970. Highly varied work experience from Mt Isa mines to a set-designer at Channel 7. Established a shop-fitting business in the Whitlam years but couldn't survive November 1975. Then worked for Ron Sharp on the construction and installation of the Sydney Opera House organ. The interest in sculpture has gradually evolved into an interest and fascination with wood and a return to a family tradition of furniture-making and wood-carving. A great-grandfather had worked on restoration work to the medieval wood-carving in Worcester Cathedral, so a sense of continuity has become quite important.

### Caveat Emptor - Wingham Log Auction:

On Saturday, 6th September, I attended the annual softwood auction conducted by Ian Lauder & Son Pty Ltd at the John Machin Saw Mill, Wingham. It was a linking, hot day, with strong winds and clouds of dust, littering visibility to zero on several occasions. They couldn't have picked a more difficult day when spending your money shrewdly was your prime concern.

My personal interest lay in noting the sale of all logs and assessing the bidders' reaction to what was on offer. About 100 logs of various species were in the yard, along with sundry limbs and stumps, finishing with a number of small lots of sawn timber.

The title page to the auction catalogue had a note to all buyers. "Length, girth and gross content are for your guidance only and no guarantee can be made of their accuracy, or the amount of recoverable timber. All logs are sold as is, where is, with no guarantee of quality or content." The critical part, from personal experience, is in that part of the sentence "or the amount of recoverable timber", as no-one can tell you what it's like inside that magnificent specimen that you've paid big dollars for, in spite of the enthusiasm of the auctioneer and his "assistants".

Just about all the logs had come from the Upper Manning and Comboyne area and the auction started with the Cedar. About 40 logs of varying quality; some were rubbish, others of good quality and size were on offer.

As a rule of thumb, I've found that anything under 400mm girth is not worth bidding for as the percentage of bark, sapwood and crook heartwood is far too high to justify the amount of recoverable timber you would finish with, even if the price had been quite low. As an example, log No. 5, measured at 367 super ft., sold for \$580, plus the milling cost of \$91, making a price of \$1.80/super ft. As most logs were long and slim rather than thick and short, the percentage of waste would be considerable, 60% being a realistic guide. So your sawn pieces now become \$4.00/super ft. Then you're up for the expense of transporting it home and time

spent stacking and that recoverable sawn timber easily becomes \$5/super ft. These figures are meant to be an abstraction rather than an accurate description of log No. 5 but I hope it gives an idea of what happens with that apparent bargain.

Quite a few logs had been lying on the ground for some time rendering them highly dubious, yet they still sold, albeit at low prices. It wasn't until the larger logs were auctioned that prices reflected the better quality. Log No. 25 at 580 super ft. sold for \$1,280, with milling cost of \$183; No. 26 at 946 super ft. went for \$2,150, plus \$234 milling cost. No. 27 at 798 super ft. sold for \$1,700, plus \$197 milling cost; and No. 32, the best-looking log there, at 1,269 super ft. sold for \$2,050 plus \$313 milling costs.

Just over 20 logs of Rosewood were on offer. With the exception of one, they were generally small or cracked and split. The largest log at 4,567 super ft. sold for \$3,650 with \$1,125 milling cost. The percentage of waste would have been reasonably low, about 35%-40%, making a realistic price of \$2.50/super ft. The best-looking log, No. 46, at 868 super ft. sold for \$900, with \$214 milling costs.

The next logs were perhaps the most interesting of the sale. There were 2 Black Myrtle, 10 White Beech, 8 Coachwood, 1 Red Corkwood, 3 Sassafras, 3 Red Bean (?), 3 Yellow Bean, 4 Brown Beech, and 2 Sally Wattle, the best log in the sale being a Coachwood measuring some 12.8m in length, 68dm girth, 4.649m<sup>3</sup> or 1548 super ft., which sold for \$3,150, plus milling costs of \$381, the general opinion amongst those in the trade being that there wasn't a finer coachwood log anywhere else in N.S.W.

No-one paid silly prices for any of the logs but I'm sure there will be one or two individuals surprised and disappointed at the return of usable timber from some of the smaller cedar and rosewood logs. So - is the exercise worth all the trouble you put yourself to?

Overall, nobody paid more than \$800/m<sup>3</sup> compared with Rainforest timber prices in Sydney not less than \$1,200/m<sup>3</sup> and in some cases a good deal more. You can still be disappointed at the amount of quality timber after it has seasoned in your stack. The great advantage is that you can choose the sizes of timber you wish to have cut, knowing that you're planning limited production of chairs requiring a large quantity of 38mm x 32mm, then that is what you can decide upon as you watch the Canadian Saw make that first decisive cut.

In the next Newsletter, I hope to give an idea of what eventuated when the Rosewood and Red Bean (?) logs bought by Bob Scott, a member of the Group, are milled at the end of the month. (The question mark on the Red Bean is deliberate. Some doubts remain which should be clarified in the milling process.)

GEOFF HAGUE

### WORKSHOP ON FINISHING (Finishing School):

A proposed workshop with Robert Neville with an introduction to Shellac, varnishes, stains and tints. The day will include care of brushes and job preparation. There will be a limit of 10 people at \$30 a head, including morning and afternoon tea and lunch. The day will be 6 hours on a weekend, the date to be decided (Oct.-Nov.).

I can recommend Robert as an excellent tutor having been privy to a staining job on one of my chairs, which opened my eyes to the detailed work, necessary for a fine finish.-Ed.

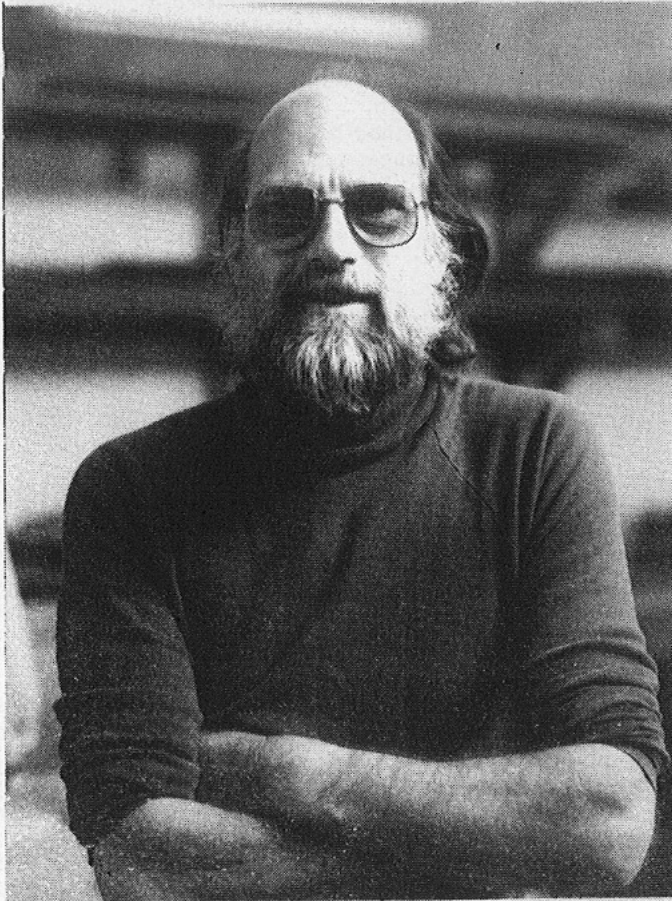
Please contact Henry after hours on 597.4640 to book yourself a place in this workshop. A rerun may be available if numbers exceed the limit.

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AND PFEIL CARVING EQUIPMENT. RING 660 7357





worthwhile. Thence I became a part-time teacher at that noble institution for three years, teaching Stages I, II and III apprentices work which I had never done myself ... a very effective way to learn quickly!

It was around this time that I became aware, through the first Woodcraft Exhibition at Margaret Street, of the existence of the Woodworkers' Group of N.S.W., and I fell into its ambience like I was coming in from the dark! There were actually some other woodworkers out there who were making a precarious living from their craft, and making imaginative and innovative pieces to boot! They scared me stiff with the high quality of work they produced and expected fellow members to produce and exhibit, but it gave me a badly needed standard to work towards. I made it my business to become involved, getting out of the association with other woodcraftsmen as much as I could in return for putting in whatever I could offer. I learned heaps.

In 1978 I set up my own woodworking school, which more or less runs itself now. For me it is a great source of challenge, new friends, humour, many memorable pieces of woodwork and, of course, income. It allows me to spend some time making custom-built work and exhibition pieces and to experiment with new techniques, occasionally making a bit of jam as well as the bread and butter. I am pleased also that one or two of my students have been able to become full members of the W.W.G. of N.S.W.



Finally, to answer some questions put to me by the editors of this illustrious journal (may I be permitted to offer my congratulations to them for the great job they are doing) when I was approached to write this self-centred litany:

**Pitfalls!?:** The first built-in wardrobe I did when I dropped the fascia board (twice) on the beautifully polished antique foot of the bed.

**Successes?:** Every time I get paid for doing something I enjoy so much - er - in woodworking, that is.

**Courses available to woodworkers?:** I think it is abysmal that a city the size of Sydney and as sophisticated as it is becoming, cannot provide a first-class course in creative design in wood. I have been involved for years on a committee with the Sydney College of the Arts to produce just such a course and spent huge amounts of time on it but as far as I know it is still bogged down in a bureaucratic morass and a lack of finance.

#### WOODWORKER PROFILE

Born in 1935 into what became a reasonably affluent background in East Anglia, I was educated as a boarder at one of those English "public" (private) schools for 9 years. Soon after leaving school, I was drafted for the two year compulsory National Service period into the Army during which time I was awarded a commission, making life very much more tolerable. I took advantage of this to learn to ride a motor cycle, getting through six of them in eight months, smashed, bashed or crashed - Army-owned ones, of course.

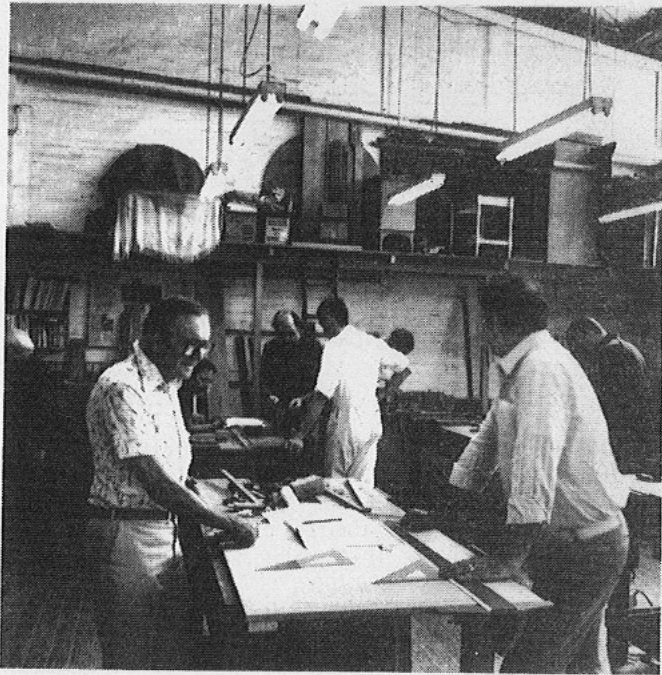
On demob I entered the family laundry and dry cleaning business doing a two-year management and technical course in London, most of which time passed in a pleasant alcoholic haze.

Becoming increasingly dissatisfied with my managerial responsibilities (at age 23 I was in charge of some 200 employees) and not knowing what to do as an alternative, a good friend of mine and I (he being in much the same mind) decided that life held more promise than years spent climbing a corporate ladder, the family business having been taken over by a large public company. We gathered a group of four other like-minded layabouts around us and set off on 7th September, 1961, from a pub off Belgrave Square to drive overland to Australia in a second-hand converted VW van.

We made it to Madras (India) three months later and ran out of money, so we shipped the vehicle across to Penang where we sold it. We split up the loot, then split up ourselves, some coming direct to Australia, others (including me) staying a while in Malaya (as it then was) before flying direct via Darwin to Sydney, landing on 1st January, 1962.

Eight years and many jobs later, the longest in a dead-end office job in the city, I started renovating Paddington terraces for a living, finding out in the process that the finer cabinetmaking work (kitchens, built-ins, etc.) appealed more than mixing mud. After a period of seven years of teaching myself by trial and error (mostly error), I enrolled at Sydney Tech. in the two-year part-time Advanced Cabinetmaking Course which I found well





## SALES TAX AND THE WOODWORKER:

The problem with becoming a successful woodworker is that the government wants to share in your success. One of the ways the government does this is through sales tax.

Sales tax is a tax on the sale of goods though slowly it is being expanded to include services. Sales tax is paid only once in the history of any product, no matter how many times the product or its constituents have been sold. Sales tax is collected when the goods are sold to a retailer.

Suppliers — Manufacturer — Wholesaler — Retailer —  
—End-user Taxing Point

Identification of this taxing point is very important. In many situations the above chain may not exist or may be called by different names.

The government has devised a system based on the "sales tax number" to ensure that the taxing point is identified. When taxable goods are sold, sales tax must be charged to the purchaser unless he quotes his sales tax number or an exemption. Retailers or end-users can't get a sales tax number and thus must always pay sales tax.

All manufacturers and wholesalers must register for sales tax purposes and must complete monthly returns and send these to the Taxation Office with a cheque for the sales tax charged to customers. The return must reach the Taxation Office by the 21st day of the following month. The tax must be paid whether or not you have received payment yourself. The only exemption is if you are a manufacturer with sales of less than \$12,000 per year. However, you must apply for this exemption. If you obtain this exemption, you will not receive a sales tax number and thus must pay sales tax on any goods you purchase.

One of the advantages of registration as a manufacturer is that you will be able to purchase your equipment without paying sales tax as the tools are an aid to manufacturer. Please note that you can't quote your number for office equipment, stationery or other items that are not directly related to the manufacture of your product.

There are various categories of goods taxed at varying rates and many exemptions. In the woodworking area, furniture used for household purposes is taxed at 10% while office furniture is taxed at 20%. However, if the article permanently forms part of a building, then it is exempt, e.g. a built-in cupboard. Works of art are also exempt but the Taxation Office will be unlikely to accept as a work of art a piece that you can sit on comfortably. Toys are taxed at 20%.

Some customers are exempt from paying sales tax, these include government departments and schools, but they give you an exemption certificate to prove it. It is important that if a customer claims he is exempt or quotes his sales tax number, he does this in writing on a purchase order.

The danger in this whole system is that if you make a mistake and, say, charge the wrong rate or do not charge the customer, it is you that has to make up the error plus the ever-present penalty. Your customer is unlikely to help you out. The Taxation Office maintains a team of auditors whose aim is to visit each manufacturer or wholesaler every 3 years. The importance of accurate and detailed paperwork must be stressed as the penalties and the agony of disputes are unpleasant.

As you can see, sales tax cannot be picked up in one easy lesson, so if you need help, then ring me on 46.3324.

PETER G. VICKERS  
Chartered Accountant

**Exhibitions?:** Woodcraft for years and Craft Expo three times. Others at various galleries.

**Main design inspirations?:** Can come from the most unlikely sources but no particular person or style.

**Favourite construction techniques?:** What seems appropriate at the time but I think that lamination of timber and veneers offers a great scope.

**Do I dare to comment on good or bad design?:** Yes, when I am asked in relation to a particular piece but I cannot make any general observations.

**Do I think the future of professional woodworking lies in "applied art" and gaining recognition in industry or in "craft" and gaining direct recognition in the market-place?** I think that there is always a market for good quality (well-designed and built) furniture whether it finds its way onto the market via industry or through craft outlets. I think much of the game is marketing which most of us craftspeople are not good at, but that is one of the reasons I take part in exhibitions - its exposure.

**What are my aims?** To become known as a first class designer/cabinetmaker and woodwork teacher - what else?

RICHARD CROSLAND

**W.W.G.N.S.W.**  
WANTED  
INTERESTING, INFORMATIVE  
TECHNICAL, ANECDOTAL  
ARTICLES.  
**TO FILL THIS NEWSLETTER!**  
Send them to:  
The Editors  
19 Pearson Avenue  
Gordon N.S.W. 2072



## A CARVING WEEKEND

Michael and Christine gave a very interesting and enjoyable carving workshop to 9 keen first-time carvers. This workshop was to explore relief carving using some fresh designs mostly taken from a stained glass design book.

The venue was the glorious No. 1 Bank Street Red Cedar Workshop on the Costa del Pymont on the steely grey Black Wattle Bay. The Saturday 9.00 a.m. start was fairly difficult but Phillip and I were only 15 min. late as I was driving. We were introduced to the tools one by one and they were all very interesting in the particular jobs they performed.

Morning tea was welcomed at 10.30 which was a spread of tea, peppermint, and two herbal types to choose from as well as coffee and the Anzac biscuits marched off in quick time. Next we chose timber and traced designs, but in no time a delicious lunch was set before us which set our mouths watering, threatening to leave saliva stains on freshly cut timber.

Lunch was a wonderful spread which consisted of a fine china plate which was quickly covered by a home-made slice of pizza with a smorgasbord of sliced ham and capers, sliced Danish salami and dill pickles which were complemented with a grated carrot salad and a green salad. Along with these culinary delights were black olives, 2 fresh breads, nuts and dried fruit with the choice of Red and White wines and apple juice to quaff with these copious victuals. Cheeses were a perfect finish to this lunch.

The afternoon work was punctuated with a timely bit of carving to be rested by an afternoon tea equal to the morning tea with a fresh baked cake to nourish we workers in our toils!? The day ended at 6 p.m. and we returned home weary from the intensive day activities.

Day 2 started also at 9.00 a.m. with a return to carving tuition but before we knew it, morning tea was upon us. By now we were well accustomed to this repast with light rock cakes filled with peanuts and dried fruits to nibble with our tea and time to chat to the other workers.

After a short while of Michael verbalising about sharpening things and stones, we were welcomed to another delicious lunch spread again.

This Sunday lunch was equal to, if not better than, the day before and equal to the finest traditions of the Sunday meal.

A hot chicken and tomato dish baked on a bed of noodles with a crisp topping, was the centre piece with a deliciously different pecan loaf to go with it. Again two salads, one green salad of lettuce, capsicum, sprouts, papita and a herb vinaigrette dressing and a sliced tomato salad with interleaved slices of boiled egg. As on the first day, fresh bread, nuts and fruit, cheeses and the selection of beverages was excellent.

The day concluded with another fine afternoon tea, this time with an excellent iced chocolate cake which disappeared at an alarming rate, as did the time and 6 p.m. was upon us, so a group of reluctant workshoppees had to pack up and go home tired but extremely well catered for.

The weekend was well worth the expense of time and continuous prattle from Michael about calves and things. What made it a weekend to remember for a long time was the excellent catering by Chris and her quiet devoted service to the cause. I must thank you, Chris, for your fine work and I suppose Michael also for his encouragement for me to enlarge my woodworking skills and subsequently tool collection. Thank you!

NICK HILL

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### MESSAGE FROM THE LITTLE RED HEN COMMITTEE:

Several members have now (late September) responded to the urgent request in the August Newsletter for material for the portfolio. Thanks.

One more time for the rest of you:

We need major sponsorship commitments by the end of this year to finance the exhibition.

To entice sponsorship, we need an impressive portfolio of members' work.

Send 3 or 4 or more excellent prints (**NOT SLIDES**) of your work, identifying the timber used. Also a list of exhibitions, major commissions, awards or whatever and an outline of the kind of work you do.

It doesn't matter, if you don't expect to be in this exhibition. The portfolio will be seen by potential clients before, during and after the exhibition so you will benefit, as will the appreciation of woodworking generally.

The portfolio has to be assembled and then it has to be offered to the various potential sponsors. There is not much time left for this vital fundamental stage. So please shake your tail feathers.

"The Little Red Hen" is a children's story. The poor chook couldn't get any help to plant the wheat or bake the bread. But no-one was too busy when it was time to eat the bread.

Mail your prints and C.V. to:

Richard Vaughan  
5 Cambridge Street  
Rozelle NSW 2039

### THE WOODTURNING CENTRE

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

As from the 28th April, 1986  
Our Showroom and Workshop  
will be located at

Unit 1, 6 Roger Street  
Brookvale NSW 2100  
(Opposite Bus Depot)

PHONE: 938.6699

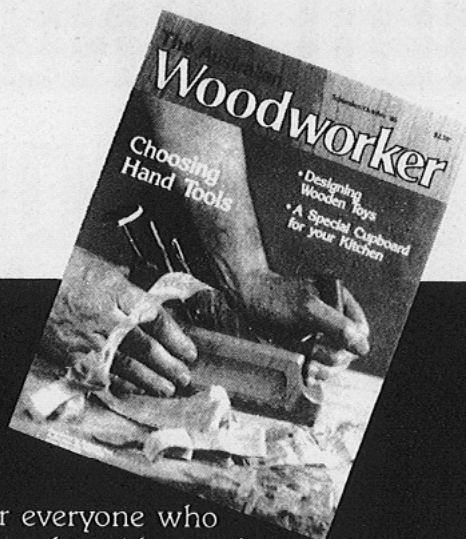
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## The Australian Woodworker

### INSIDE THE AUSTRALIAN WOODWORKER:

Running a magazine is a bit like adjusting a cranky old wooden plane. When the plane iron's straight, it's too far out and when it's just the right depth, it isn't straight - and no sooner have you got it all working together than you find you have to change it anyway.

The only thing that really helps in this kind of situation is knowing what you are trying to achieve - so you can make the continual changes necessary to eventually get where you want to go.

Now it happens from time to time that people looking over your shoulder wonder what the hell you're up to. And whilst it really doesn't matter a damn whether you tell them or not - they are still going to judge you by results, no matter what you say - the mere telling refreshes your own understanding of your objective and may even help to stiffen your resolve.

And that, hopefully, should explain why I'm sitting here, responding to Nick Hill's suggestion that I tell you something about the development of The Australian Woodworker.

Firstly, The Australian Woodworker is unashamedly Australian. Our editorial material is sourced in Australia and although we'd be happy to hear from New Zealand writers, we are not interested in material that has already been published overseas. Our production is also totally Australian. (Occasionally someone suggests that we have our printing done overseas "to reduce costs". Bluntly, we think it is un-Australian to put the "Australian so-and-so" on the front of a magazine, then export the jobs that produce it.)

Secondly, The Australian Woodworker is a popular magazine aimed at the average woodworker. It isn't a fine woodworking journal, nor is it a d.i.y. magazine.

Since a large proportion of the costs of producing special interest magazines in Australia is inevitably borne by advertisers, we must provide these advertisers with a market that will buy their goods and services.

Satisfying readers who may be interested in only one area of the total subject of woodworking as well as advertisers who may want to sell just one type of product, is difficult.

But, clearly, it is not impossible. Sales of The Australian Woodworker are steadily increasing, the rate of subscription renewals is more than satisfactory and a growing group of advertisers are finding the magazine "works" for their products or services, all of which simply means that after eighteen months and nine issues, we have a base on which to develop further. We see The Australian Woodworker growing in size but we don't envisage any major change in format. It will continue to have a feature article (always on a "mainstream" woodworking subject) which acts as a core for a wide range of other stories, some news and a little gossip.

To keep the same trend for growth we will, however, need more and more articles of interest to average woodworkers. Naturally we look to the advanced amateur and the professional to provide these.

Like most specialist groups in Australia, woodworkers have grown up on a diet of magazines from far-off places. Unlike the woodworkers of the lands in which these magazines originate, there has been little opportunity, let alone temptation for Australians to become involved in writing articles about their hobby or profession.

The mere existence of The Australian Woodworker has already begun to overcome some of this natural inertia. But we'd like to see the process accelerate.

Writing for The Australian Woodworker isn't an act of charity; authors receive payment. Professionals are reminded that they also receive exposure to a potential market for their services. (People who are interested in items made of wood often buy those that are made by others.)

Of course, writing has its downside. Your ideas and what you have to say about them are out there in full view for everyone to examine and criticise. But if that worries you for even a moment, I recommend an expression I learned from Les Miller:

"Here's mine, where's yours?"

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## TURNING TALKS:

It looks as if even the most ardent woodworking bibliophile will be hard-pressed to keep up with the torrent of books in the pipeline. Richard Raffan is well into a book on bowl turning. Other American books by David Ellsworth and Mark Lindquist should be hot on its heels. At least two woodturning books seem to be in preparation in Britain, one by Mick O'Donnell, who writes for Practical Wood Working, and one to be published by Bell & Hyman.

To my own library I have recently added The Art of Turned-Wood Bowls by Edward Jacobson and Master Woodturners by Dale Nish. Both have profiles of major American craft turners with the Nish Book also including Richard Raffan from deepest Mittagong and Ray Key from U.K. The Nish book is slightly more technical, but both books show that apart from David Ellsworth and Mark Lindquist, no-one really seems to be pushing things.

I have just visited the nation's capital after a break of ten years. The objective of both the High Court (where has the Otto's coat of arms gone to?) and the National Gallery seems to be to incorporate the maximum length of pram ramp. The Gallery's collection lacks any structure, but I was pleased to see two pieces of mine on show (alas, only turned frames for plaques).

While so far from home I thought I'd visit the local woodies. Mike St Clair operates from a small tourist village, giving lessons and selling through the outlet there. David Upfill-Browne has a very well equipped workshop at Tharwa, about half an hour south of Canberra. He also runs an agency for Peter Adams' timber.

The wood course at the Canberra School of Art was most impressive. It was probably the only place in the A.C.T. which was still working on a Saturday afternoon. The facilities were very good and it was my impression that there is now greater freedom of expression. The work in progress was clean, clever, possibly too clever, but all too soon the School's graduates will be forced to earth. It is therefore fitting that they have the opportunity to really push design while on the course.

A touring German craft exhibition has been at the Hyde Park Barracks. Most media were represented, with a small showcase housing the wood. It consisted of small cabinets and turning a la Ray Key - all exquisite but hardly mind-boggling. The catalogue revealed a little about turning in Germany and I am sure that we become very isolated, assuming that top turning is restricted to English-speaking countries.

Down in the City Road area of the banana republic, the recession has so far hardly been felt. I have bought our ninth lathe and taken on another apprentice. We are also investigating new chucking and drilling procedures. The Arnalls (mentioned in the latest Woodworking Crafts from Britain), Bruce Leadbeater, Vin Smith and others are also not letting the grass grow under their feet. It is my belief that although our market does not yet encourage aesthetic experimentation, our technical progress is well ahead of other nations.

Spring is upon us, the sap is rising, oh to be young again! Perhaps we should accept Michael Gill's suggestion and affiliate our Group to the H.R. Nicholls Society.


MIKE DARLOW

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**SCOOP, SCRAPE AND SLICE OR SHARP GOUGES -  
"It's all from the hips!"**

Michael Gill's weekend workshop (September 13 and 14) on relief carving amidst rows of the world's finest carving timbers and buffed Swiss gouges, was an eye-opener to this wood butcher. Yes, you can produce mountains of chips with finesse and not be a Philistine after all!

Michael's enjoyable teaching methods. i.e. seduced by Chris's luscious smorgasbord lunches, never lost the attention of the 9 students, being evidenced by the lack of bloody fingers. The carving workshop concentrated on the following broad areas:

1. Timbers suitable for carving - why, where and how.
2. Carving gouges, chisels and knives - types and care.
3. Carving techniques - scoop, slice and scrape.
4. Carving design.
5. Food.

A list of timbers was presented all ranked at various levels of suitability for carving. Properties considered when selecting a timber for carving include, amongst others, tightness of grain, hardness, silica content, grain straightness, figure (wild or featureless), "greasiness", etc. White beech was chosen by the wimps with sewood, Yellow Siris and Mahogany used by the more adventurous and Tallowwood and Grey Iron Bark dreamt about. The numerous species of timbers extracted and lopped as street trees, including Jacaranda and Camphor Laurel, are an excellent source of prime carving timbers for the person with access to a chainsaw and bandsaw.

If we learnt only one thing over the weekend, how to sharpen tools was invaluable. Firstly gouges - using a dry, clean medium Arkansas stone, raise the bevel of the gouge till the edge just touches the stone, not too far or you will blunten the tool. Lock this angle by holding your elbow to your side, and with a combined sway from the hips and rotating of the wrist, lightly draw the gouge across the stone. The advantage of a dry stone is that you can hear where the gouge is being sharpened. If only the front 2-3mm of gouge bevel is being sharpened, only a high pitched whisper should be heard. If too much of the bevel is being honed, a low pitched sound will be heard. Once a fine burr is raised on the back of the gouge, a light wipe with a hard Arkansas slip and stropping using leather, hones the edge, removing the burr and "strengthens" the edge. For the edge connoisseur, the gouge can be buffed using a material buffing wheel on a grinder or drill with Jeweller's Rouge.

**NOTE:** Always buff with the wheel turning away from you - otherwise the edge will catch and you will wear the gouge!

P. BOHRINGER

**WEEKEND WOODCARVING WORKSHOP WITH MICHAEL GILL:**

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MICHAEL GILL

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**WOODWORKER DIRECTORY:**

A few times in the past, I have had enquiries about getting a particular article made in wood or where to get a special machine to work wood. It has taken four or five phone calls to get a result. Other members have had the same problem, so this has led to the need for a Group Directory.

David Lockwood has discussed this with the Committee and I have been asked to get it going. It is a good feeling to finally do something practical and get involved with the Group.

The main content will consist of the names of Members and Associates concerned in the commercial side of woodworking, along with details of their particular wood skill or skills and the special type of timbers they like to work in, should this apply. The more diverse, the better. This will include Schools and private tuition to those also acting as agents for tools and special timbers.

It has also been suggested that copies be sent to certain major companies who might employ woodworkers for special Commissions.

To make sure the information in the Directory is accurate, would you write to me with your details:

- (A) Full address, home and work telephone numbers.
- (B) Your particular wood skill, with description that would interest customers.
- (C) Suggest some commercial companies who might be interested in commissioning woodworkers to whom we could send a copy.
- (D) Any other items the Directory should contain.

When all the replies are in, I will assemble a First Draft and send it to the Committee for consideration and they will take it from there. Please be prompt in writing in as the sooner the Directory is out, the sooner members will benefit.

Information should be sent to me at:

St Pauls College  
Sydney University NSW 2006

DAVID HERD



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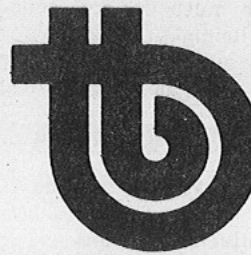
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