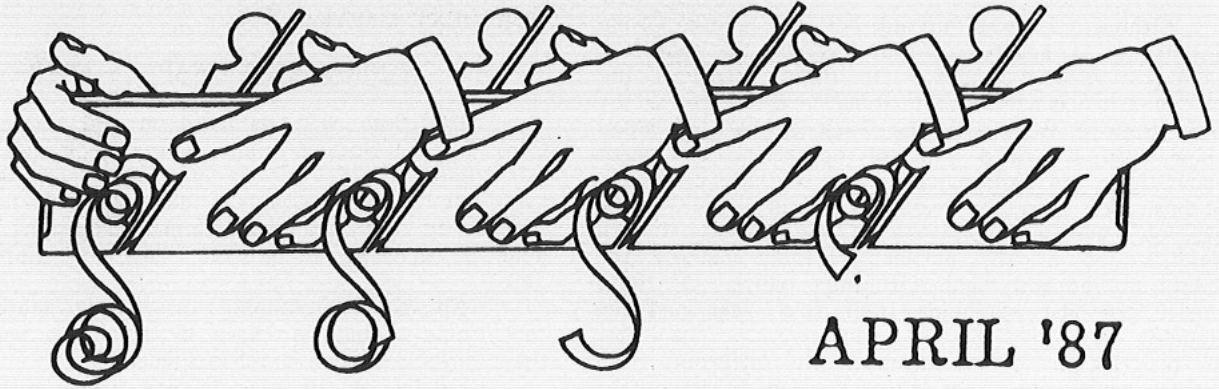


WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.



APRIL '87

WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.

Chairman:	David Lockwood	666.9122
	16/26 Tupia Street, Botany, 2019	
Secretary:	Laurie Oliver	922.2277
	2 Collette Place, East Killara, 2071	
Treasurer:	Mike Darlow	212.5782
	20A City Road, Chippendale, 2008	
Newsletter Editors:	Nick Hill	498.8441
	19 Pearson Avenue, Gordon, 2072	
	Phillip Bohringer	264.1633
	22 Allen Street, Leichhardt, 2040	
Wood Resources:	Gerard Gilet	94.3638
	34A Beatrice Street, Balgowlah, 2093	
Tools:	Henry Black	666.8959
	28 Lord Street, Botany, 2019	
General Assistance:	Mike Jefferys	250.7173
	66 Narrabeen Park Road Warriewood, 2102	

FROM THE CHAIR

Man proposes, God disposes. In the case of our last meeting, she decided that Julian Bickersteth's wife should have her baby a little earlier than expected, so we weren't able to hear about the restoration of the Hope chairs on that evening. The talk will be rescheduled.

We had a good turn-out, which confirms the notion that people will come to hear a matter of substance, and that on occasion, a week-day evening is more convenient for quite a few members, especially those with families.

We filled the gap by having a look at some of the Craft Council's resources file of slides. I found it a useful and interesting exercise, both as a goad to my work and to my photographing it properly. We hope to have a professional photographer give us some advice at a later meeting.

I had intended to write something on the earnings hierarchy as it applies to our field. I've torn it up, because I found it had turned into a diatribe, and that won't do. We must stand or fall in the pursuit of excellence and there's no use in raking over the things which most of us know only too well.

I must say though, that it is saddening to be tied-in to the prestigious top-floor offices of an upper bracket foreign merchant bank, as I was recently, to find that their boardroom furniture to which they wanted to add, was hardly the 'very well made' quality as it was described over the telephone. Heavily stained myrtle and Tas oak, veneered chipboard and the dowelled joints at the backs of the chairs already failing after a few years.

The bums which are supported by these chairs belong to some very highly paid people. One would have thought they'd want to sit on something a little better than a tizzied-up packing crate (and that they'd be able to discern the difference)!

Oh well, it's my own fault for wasting my time like that. I've had the experience before. For those of you who haven't, I pass on the warning that it's only very rarely that a commercial enterprise will want truly well-made work, and as Leon remarked to me some time ago, it can be very unsatisfying to deal with an organisation rather than with an individual. There are exceptions, of course. I know of several myself, but I would be interested to hear of others. So if any of you have examples, why not write a letter for our next issue?

DAVID LOCKWOOD

FUTURE MEETING DATES FOR '87

The year of the Exhibition

<u>Group Meetings</u>	<u>Committee Meetings</u>	<u>Newsletter Deadlines</u>
April 5	April 2	March 1
June 7	June 4	May 1
August 9	August 6	July 3
October 11	October 8	September 4
December 6	December 3	November 2

Any changes will be notified in this spot.

WOODSCULPTURES by Peter Carrigy at the OLD BAKERY GALLERY

Exhibiting interpretive forms in native wood inspired by the Australian landscape. Some pieces reflect bird forms, others combine a sculptural use of wood with fibre.

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3*

STURT SCHOOL FOR WOOD:
Progress Report

Although I have missed out on recent Group meetings, it is heartening that people still take the trouble to keep in touch. On these occasions the usual question is, 'How's it going?' So, here is my reply. Believe it or not the Sturt School for Wood is now into its third year of operation. As most of you know, we experienced some teething problems, but these are gradually becoming history. This year, 1987, we have a full intake of six students (which highlights one of the earlier problems, namely ten students proved too much for yours truly). Of these six half are just beginning their first year and the remainder are into Second year work. The first year programme is not dramatically different from previous years, with set projects and a structured course, although I am more agreeable to variations on my themes than was previously the case. As of this year though the second year are more involved in workshop production. This provides realistic on the job training experience on the machines and involvement with general workshop activities. The products sold generate income for the School and enable us to reduce the fees for the second year. So we feel that there is a double benefit for the second year trainees.

On the physical side things are also progressing with some very capable help from a past student. His major project has been to devise and install a dust extract system. This has not been a straightforward task but will by all portents prove satisfactory. I'll let you know later what happens when we switch it on! You may already have heard that we now boast three new pieces of brand new equipment. A 16" jointer (not as big as Leon's aircraft carrier), a 14" thicknesser and a rise and fall tilting arbor table saw. These are all Delta brand as supplied by Jack Thompson. Made in Brazil, they are heavy solid cast jobs, simply constructed with nuts, bolts and components that can, I am sure, be replaced if needs be from the local hardware store. Jack and I have noted one or two design faults, but by and large they will, I am sure, prove to be reliable work horses capable of withstanding student use for many years. The large Wadkin band-saw has not as yet performed as expected due to the difficulty of finding the correct blade for deep ripping. In desperation recently I re-cut the teeth, re-set and changed the profile on its 17 foot long blade. Not a perfect job, I must admit, but it sure cut better than the bought one!

You can't do woodwork without raw timber and I must say that we bought some good material from both Trend and Mathews recently, accompanied in both cases by traditional helpful, courteous service.

Some of my daydreams have yet to be realised but I am glad to say that we are well on the way. I think 1987 will be a good year. Drop in for a coffee when you are passing.

ALAN WALE

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John Ewart and Mike Reid

OUR NEXT MEETING

TOOL SALE & SWAP - 5 APRIL

The Sale will be held in the carpark of 28 Lord Street, Botany. The workshop is not available this year. I will try to organise cover in case of rain, but if the weather is doubtful I should be contacted at the workshop, Sunday morning. If last year is anything to go on I will be there from 6 am.

All people planning on selling more than a few items should be there by 9 am so we can get them organised with a table space.

Buyers at 10 am, if you arrive with nothing to sell before 10 we will be unable to give admission until 10 am.

An entry of \$1 will be charged (children free) to cover costs for rain cover and tables.

Sellers' tables will be \$10 negotiable on the number of items as per last year.

The sale will end at 12 noon for lunch and the meeting of the Woodgroup commencing at 1 pm in the workshop. BBQ facilities are not available but there are local shops nearby and a park across the road.

Please dig out your old and unwanted tools and ask your friends, neighbours and relatives for any. The more you bring the better it will be. There will be some machinery for sale and by all indications a lot of interesting hand tools.

Ray from Brisbane will have his books and catalogues for sale.

HENRY BLACK

!!! STOP PRESS !!!

FEAST WATSON & CO. PTY LIMITED, manufacturers of Watsonia brand of specialised high quality timber finishes, have just introduced two products to compliment their existing range of timber finishes and penetrating oils: **Fine Buffing Oil** and **Prime Shield**

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Both products are available in 4 litre, 1 litre and 500 ml cans.

Feast Watson market these products in all states through selected distributors.

For further information please contact the company in Sydney on either of the phone numbers below.

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WOODCRAFT REVISITS THE OPERA 1987

Entry forms were sent out in early February so all members should have received them by now. However, due to postal problems some people may not have received their form. If anyone is short of a form please let me know on (922 2277 - Bus; 498 1172 - Home) for prompt reply. The \$25 discount can be obtained on the entry fee of \$175 if received by 1 April. A \$25 penalty will be incurred if received after 1 July.

Laurie Oliver

WOT'S A GOOD BIT OF WOOD!?

Obviously it's a bit that does the job you want. Marvellous but sometimes controversial things have been compiled to help specify and hopefully obtain a piece of timber fit for a particular purpose - these things are called Standards. The basis of all standards is minimum fitness for purpose, so if you want certain qualities in excess of those stipulated in a certain standard, you must say so.

To help with specification of timber from your merchant or sawmiller, I have listed below some of the more common current Australian Standards relating to solid wood products. These standards can be obtained from the Standards Association of Australia or a technical bookshop such as the Building Bookshop at the Sydney Building Information Centre.

In particular I would like to outline the specification of joinery or traditional cabinet timbers using grades widely referred to by merchants and millers in AS084 "Sawn Australian Rainforest Timber" and AS2796 "Seasoned Hardwood Milled Products".

The scope of AS084 covers sawn unseasoned timber indigenous to the rainforests of Australia. Section 2 of the standard covers timber intended for use as sawn boards, planks and squares for cabinet and joinery purposes and mouldings. Grades described in AS084 comprise:

1. Select Grade
2. Standard Grade
3. Merchantable Grade

Similar grades are referred to in AS2796 for seasoned joinery stock (section 4) except that an additional grade: Clear Grade is used and Merchantable Grade is replaced with Utility Grade. Note that only Select, Standard and Merch (or Utility) Grades are normally produced by mills. Specification of Clear Grade would be a "special order".

Various allowances for sawing and processing imperfections such as: spring, cupping, twist or sizing, and natural imperfections such as gum veins, knots and injury overgrowth are described in each grade for joinery stock.

Although AS084 covers unseasoned joinery stock and AS2796 covers seasoned joinery stock, AS084 includes sloping grain which has been overlooked in AS2796. As a result, if you are ordering seasoned joinery stock, a perusal of the provisions of both AS084 and AS2796 is needed to give you the minimum requirements for a certain grade of timber. It would be possible to request seasoned timber of either Select, Standard or Merch. grades based on AS084 grade descriptions. Provisions in the NSW Timber Marketing Act would ensure basic requirements such as seasoned timber having a moisture content of 10 to 15 percent over dry basis and Lyctus susceptible sapwood treated. (See last WWG NSW Newsletter.) With grade-branding coming into vogue in N.S.W. for hardwood promoted by the Australian Hardwood Quality Council, it would help to spur on the number of mills to commence branding to certain grades (and Australian Standards) if you ordered branded timber. Branding of timber further ensures obtaining a piece of wood graded to specified requirements for a particular purpose under an Australian Standard.

Phillip Bohringer

STANDARDS FOR SPECIFYING SOLID TIMBER PRODUCTS

Australian Standard Number (Year)	Title	Wood Type	Grades Specified	End-Use
AS2082 (1979)	Visually stress-graded hardwood for structural purposes	Hardwood	Structural Grade 1 to 4 Stud, Lintel and Appearance Grades	Structural Seasoned and Unseasoned
AS2796 (1985)	Seasoned hardwood milled products	Hardwood	Select Clear, Standard, Utility	Flooring Lining Moulding dressed boards and joinery stock cladding, fascia
AS2858 (1986)	Softwood - visually stress-graded for structural purposes	Softwood incl. Oregon Radiata Hoop Cypress	Structural Grades 1 to 5, Stud, Lintel and Appearance Grades	Structural Seasoned and Unseasoned
AS2858 (1981)	Sawn Douglas Fir (Oregon) and sawn Western Hemlock (Canada Pine)	Softwood	Dressing and Select Grades	Section 3 Dressing Grade - Joinery
AS2543 (1983)	Nomenclature of Australian Timbers	Hardwood and Softwood	N/A	Species - common and botanical names and states in which occur
AS1148 (1971)	Nomenclature of commercial timbers imported into Australia	Hard and Softwood	N/A	Species - common and botanical names and common sources of supply
AS1728 (1975)	Types of timber surfaces	N/A	Sawn, dressed and abraded by types	N/A
AS1738 (1975)	Timber for marine craft	Hardwood and Softwood	Grades for components	Components
AS084 (1987)	Sawn Australian Rainforest Timber	Hardwood and Softwood	Select Standard Merchantable	Lists species suitable for cabinet work, also other end-uses.

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CRAFT ARTS MAGAZINE

Thanks to those who sent in slides for the Craft Arts article on the group in the coming June issue. Thanks also to Mike Darlow for writing up the copy. Slide owners should be aware that their slides will be out of circulation for a while as they go to Japan for printing, so please be patient.

Laurie Oliver

ON JOINTS

In the newsletter of June 1986 Nick Hill posed some interesting questions concerning dowelled joints. For those of you who don't remember or didn't read his comments, Nick was particularly critical of the joint when used in situations where considerable stresses and/or strains occur, typically in chair joints. I gathered his objections to the joint were less when used in, say, light cabinet doors, wall cabinets, and so on. I would like to pose another point-of-view, and would be interested in readers' comments.

The dowel joint is, of course, widely used in the furniture industry, and like many industrial techniques, has acquired a bad name. My feeling is that the 'limited non-ricketty life span' of much mass-produced furniture (made using dowelled joints) is less to do with anything inherently wrong with the joint than it is to do with slipshod assembly and poor quality control. More often than not member parts in both expensive and cheap furniture are poorly dimensioned and jointed. Most important of all, though, is the care, or lack of, exercised when glueing-up. It is essential, whether using a mortise and tenon or dowel joint, that all mating surfaces have an adequate and even coating of glue. A little squirt here and there from the glue bottle is simply not good enough, yet I believe this summary practice is more the rule than the exception.

The glueing aspect can't be over emphasised. My own practice is to use epoxy, in any highly stressed joint, and I would venture to say that any properly dowelled chair, glued with epoxy, is equal to one put together with mortise and tenon joints. I would also add that any chair joint, particularly the back leg to rail joint, can only be improved with a properly fitted, glued and screwed corner bracket, if not a mechanical fastening. This holds true whatever joint is used.

I'm very dubious about Nick's mechanical analysis of the dowel joint, but having no engineering background I will refrain from comment. I am prepared to comment, however, on the assertion that 'a piece of furniture should, in most cases, be viable without glue.' Why? Why did the best 18th century cabinetmakers come to rely entirely on glued joints once the strength and reliability of hide glue was realised? You don't find pegged or wedged joints in Chippendale chairs. I know that David Lockwood feels no glue can be trusted indefinitely, yet in the right conditions hide glued joints have lasted two centuries and more. I know we can't count on the 'right conditions' either of use or environment, but I'm confident that epoxy will prove to have a very, very long life indeed.

I admit to being humbled indeed by the still nearly viable joinery of what remained of the Ena's original deckhouses, all unglued, pegged or wedged mortise and tenons, but I'm not ashamed to admit that all the new and renewed work was glued. I might also add that this was fairly heavy joinery, not the relatively delicate stuff we expect in furniture, and I don't think that the joint movement, however slight, inevitable in unglued joinery, is acceptable in furniture construction.

In my experience of furniture restoration I have seen many loose and some totally failed mortise and tenon chair joints. The joints are usually not perfect, large lumps of glue indicating the need for gap filling, and where failure has occurred, it is usually through short grain or grain runout in the tenons, particularly on joints angled at other than a right angle. The latter problem would not be encountered with a dowel joint, and as to the former, I find it much easier to get a perfect tight fitting dowel joint than a mortise and tenon.

A correctly made dowel joint, fitted dry, will be nearly impossible to pull apart, hence the need for undersize dowels when testing a joint for fit. A really well made dowel joint will only require clamps to pull the joint together, not to hold it while the glue sets. A well made joint requires several things. First of course is accurate boring of dowel holes, best done on a horizontal borer. Second, the dowelling bit must be perfectly matched to the dowel. Dowels should stop 1 mm from the ends of the dowel holes to allow for excess glue, and as well the dowel holes should be lightly countersunk for the same reason. Dowels should be grooved to allow excess air and glue to escape. I like multi fluted dowels when using epoxy as the epoxy fills the grooves creating a stronger mechanical bond. Dowels need to enter each member at least 25 mm where possible, and preferably 32 mm. Dowel diameter should be about half the rail thickness, and an adequate number used per joint, say two in 50 mm wide stuff, three in 75, four in 100, and so on. Dowels can be staggered in joints such as that where two chair rails meet a leg, thus ensuring adequate dowel length. By using a dowel joint in this instance, weakness in the leg that would occur were mortises cut through to meet for mitred tenons, is avoided.

So, think again about dowel joints; they're good, they're strong, they last, and they're nothing to be ashamed of. Closet dowellers, come out!

JIM LITTLEFIELD

INTERNATIONAL VISITOR

Lucinda Leach, a columnist in the "English Woodworker" magazine who has extensive knowledge of woodwork in Britain, America and Brazil, is lecturing to us on Wednesday, 22 April. Come to Richard Crosland's, 20A City Road, Chippendale, at 7 pm.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Sir or Ms,

I'm a toymaker from the US looking for another woodworker in Australia. I'd like to correspond and share ideas and frustrations of this crazy way of earning a living.

I'm 35 years old and woodworking has been my living for 15 years. With two young children it is more interesting every year. Though I have education in Forest Science my skills were largely learned in the 'school of hard knocks'. I sell my toys at art fairs, and through my mail order catalog. I make unlimited editions of about 12 designs (my own). They evolve slowly with about one completely new toy each year.

Look forward to hearing from you,
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TURNING TALKS

Our newsletter is read in high places. My diatribe on the lack of editorial responsibility prompted good humoured responses from both Michael Bogel of Craft Australia and Arthur Burrows of the Australian Woodworker. My article was triggered by Neil Scobie's review in Craft Australia, but the problem is common to a great many magazines. Craft Australia does have a spartan reviewer's advisory sheet, and Arthur considers that the ideal is something that editors strive for rather than achieve in the real world.

My subject for this issue is related. Intellectualism is not common in craft magazines. American Craft and Pottery in Australia make an effort; Craft Australia has tried, but the intellectual stoney ground of the arts/crafts debate has understandably not enthused the torpid brains of its readership. Pottery in Australia has had some interesting correspondence on obfuscating writing, which is also often confused with intellectual writing. Such writing appears sometimes in Craft Australia and is beloved by art critics in at least two of our newspapers: admittedly though it must be hard to write comprehensibly about some contemporary 'art'.

MIKE DARLOW

WOODTURNING AND SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

The name Simone de Beauvoir does not normally spring to mind when woodturning is mentioned. Indeed, I am not aware that she ever saw, let alone used, a woodturning lathe, but her relevance will become apparent after I have described the roles of the professional woodturner. These rare beings may perform at various levels of competency one or more of the following:

1. **The Productive Role.** The majority of professional turners anonymously battles away at non-glamorous commercial turning. Their counterparts in the craft world are usually better known but sometimes less expert; their work usually signed woodware rather than furniture or architectural components.

2. **The Retailing Role.** Sensibly for all concerned, professionals are becoming involved in the running of turners' stores or mail order companies.

3. **The Promotional Role.** Allied to retailing, product promotion is a lucrative even if occasionally compromising possibility. A more altruistic role is the promotion of woodturning itself: officers of woodturning societies are a prominent example.

4. **The Teaching Role.** Look in the classified advertisements of any woodworking magazine; it is obvious that an increasing number of professionals is turning to teaching as a supplement to or even for the whole of their income. In Britain there is even a school now to teach woodturning teachers. Woodturning tuition is also expanding in schools, in colleges, even in universities.

5. **The Educative Role.** Although overlapping with teaching, the educative role is larger. It includes lecturing, writing articles and books, appearing in videos, even jetsetting from seminar to seminar.

Think, readers, have I omitted a role? I have, and will call upon Simone de Beauvoir to define this role, one she fulfilled with great distinction. She described its essentials thus: "First and foremost, intellectuals must try to seek out the truth and declare it. They must try to demystify. They must preserve their freedom of spirit and encourage other people to keep theirs. They must retain a critical attitude, judge what is happening without ever allowing themselves to be blinkered... They must aim at clarity."

We see that there are two factors in her definition: an unceasing search for the truth and a forthright and fearless promulgation of the truths

thus found. I suggest that intellectualism in woodturning is rare indeed. Let us pursue the intellectual path and seek to determine why.

Noel Coward's advice to parents, 'Don't put your daughter on the stage, Mrs Worthington' has been wisely and widely followed. Similarly caring parents have rarely envisaged being knee-deep in shavings and covered in dust as attributes of the ideal career even for their male offspring. For this reason professional woodturning has not attracted the supreme intellects, but this does not mean that its ranks do not include many of intelligence, education, and talent. But there is, I suggest, a long-standing anti-intellectual climate.

The intellectual process starts with a search for truth. This is alien to many professional woodturners. Few read articles or books; logic, analysis and mathematics are an anathema. They are practical people, and after ten, twenty, or thirty years they know what is right; their minds are closed.

It can be a problem deciding between alternatives. Turners tend to advocate techniques in which they are well-practiced. These techniques may be inferior to others, but the 'it works for me' syndrome is a common if illogical defence. In some situations in woodturning there are so many variables that it is perhaps impossible to conclusively prove that method B is superior to method A. On average method B may be 10% better than A, but I suggest that a difference of this magnitude is far too small to be discernible other than in experiments conducted under laboratory conditions, and that therefore the tendency is to be subjective rather than objective. It is a pity that woodturning has been the subject of virtually no academic research, even in tertiary institutions which profess to teach it.

But the real stumbling block with intellectualism is its second part, the promulgation of the truth. In many cases a new truth proves that an old truth was untrue. Reputations are at stake. If turner B disproves a theory associated with turner A, the latter is unlikely to be grateful (which he should be), but is likely to be offended. Typically turner A takes such a disproof personally and is unable to separate criticism of his ideas from criticism of himself. Turner A assumes that it is a heinous act to disprove his theories and that the disproof renders valueless his contribution to woodturning over many years. Obviously both assumptions are wrong, but the misguided sensitivity discussed above tends to hold back intellectual progress to ensure an uneasy harmony when professional woodturners meet.

Promulgation of the truth also has economic repercussions. New truths may render obsolete products associated with particular turners or companies. There is a natural tendency to attempt to defend investments and future profits which is inevitable against the long-term interests of woodturning.

But undoubtedly the major reason for the absence of intellectualism in woodturning is the apathy of those associated with woodturning. If you find inferior quality work in a retail outlet do you draw this to the proprietor's attention? If you buy an item of woodturning hardware which is not satisfactory do you take it back and demand a refund? If you are a retailer do you stock what gives you the highest profits or what is best for your customers? If you are a manufacturer do you act on complaints or suggestions, do you have a programme of research and development? If a woodturning lecturer gives unsound advice do you interject? If you disagree with or are unsure about something you read do you write in? Almost without exception the answers to these questions has two letters. Had the answers three letters, woodturning would be healthier, wouldn't it?

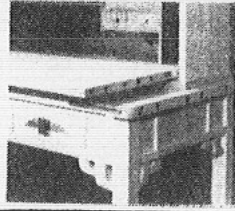
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The text should have read - '(at £7000 per year fee)' - which is far more than the \$7000 stated. (Poor old Dollar). N.H.

MOISTURE METERS. My spies tell me that moisture meters made in the USA (or calibrated in the USA) use a quite different scale and standard from that used in this country. Further that they measure across the grain and the Australian Standard specifies the sensing pins go along the grain or vice versa. This source of information (Ron Barlow - 818 5155) markets a brand of meter and apparently has had some difficulty matching the Australian Standard calibration. Can anyone enlighten?

NO VOLT STARTING - UPDATE. Should there be anyone who has used the circuit and components for motor starting from a previous article and has been experiencing trouble in getting the relay to latch in, the trouble is almost certainly dust getting into the switch. The solution is to seal switch with silicone caulk.

MIKE JEFFREY

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TURNING TIPS

SCREW CUP CHUCK - ONE USER'S OPINION.

I have found this variation on the standard cup chuck very useful indeed for applications where you want to have very little waste. I find it perfect for turning small items such as buttons or any small discs that are turned face grain. The procedure is to turn a spigot with a slight taper from 28 mm to 29 mm. The spigot need only be 4 or 5 mm deep; it will screw into the cup chuck and I haven't yet had one come out. The stock will snap off along the grain it seems rather than pull out of the chuck. Access is perfect, there are no nasty jaws to dodge and as a further bonus, there being very little weight to the chuck, it can be hand braked quickly. When used conventionally with an end-grain spigot it hangs on just as well. The only small criticism is how to get the waste plug out if you part off right up to the body of the chuck - something I tend to do if it's valuable stock. The threaded nature of the cup chuck means you can't use a knock out bar.

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