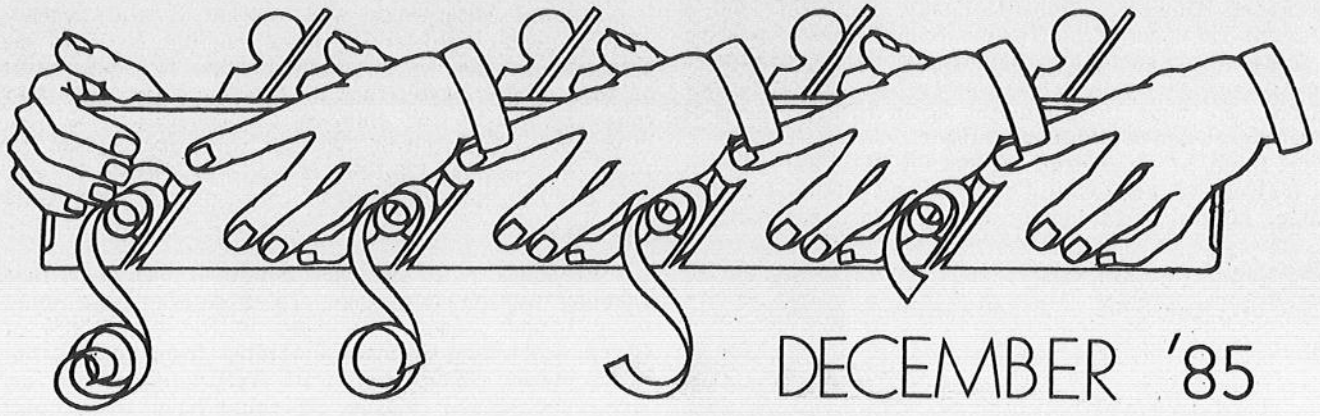


# WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.



DECEMBER '85

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

<b>Chairman:</b>	David Lockwood, 16/26 Tupia Street, Botany, 2019.
<b>Secretary:</b>	Robert Neville, 623 Bourke Street, Surry Hills, 2010.
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Eric Raynor, 229 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale, 2008.
<b>Newsletter Editors:</b>	Nick Hill, 19 Pearson Avenue, Gordon, 2072. Phillip Bohringer, 22 Waugoola Street, Gordon, 2072.
<b>Wood Resources:</b>	Gerard Gilet, 34A Beatrice Street, Balgowlah, 2093.
<b>Tools:</b>	Henry Black, West Bldg. 119, 22 Lord Street, Botany, 2019.
<b>General Assistance:</b>	Mike Jefferys, 66 Narrabeen Park Road, Warriewood, 2102.

- Major presented surfaces should be fair.
- Joints should be suitable and should fit well.
- Drawers should slide sweetly.
- Doors should open and shut nicely.
- Bits should not fall off.
- There should be no offensive make-do arrangements.
- Screws and other fixings should be snug, tight, and well placed.

General merchantable quality is not good enough. The work should be remarkably good, as I said before.

Decisions can be made only on the work presented. If it is rejected, it is that particular work which is rejected - another submission might well be accepted. In general, we should not accept a previously rejected piece which has been re-worked, but submission of better work should be made. Some members of the Committee have been on the receiving end of that!

In the nature of things, your submitted or exhibited work will be taken by most people as examples of your upper limit, not your lower. It makes sense to put your best foot forward.

David Lockwood

A passing note from the Auckland Guild of Woodworkers. The foundation meeting of the Association of Designers and Furniture Makers of New Zealand is to be held soon. It is interesting to note they are tackling some similar problems:-

- **Standards:** Of members' work - how should these be assessed and with what criteria.
- **Marketing:** What form - shows, advertising, Association seal?

I will keep you posted on the outcomes. No doubt they will come up with some unique solutions! Ed.

## OUR NEXT GROUP MEETING

The festive season is on top of us yet again - why can't it be biannual, and we would get something done in the year!

The next meeting of the Group will be held at Robert Neville's Workshop at 588 Bourke Street, Surrey Hills - enter by Parkham Street - on 15th December. Agenda:

1. Design Seminar, 2. Tree Tithe, 3. Subscriptions.

There is no other agenda - except to socialise over a sausage sizzle and talk wood or what have you. Please bring your own meat for a BBQ. Salads and drinks will be provided - you lucky devils!

## DAVID'S OCTOBER CHAIR

To jog your memories, the chair featured in each newsletter is aimed at stimulating an article about the designer. I don't believe you were all "caught out"; just in case you were, here is a short background on HANS WEGNER the designer of this chair - the Classic Chair in 1949.

The Classic Chair is typical of Wegner's chair designs with sculptural attention given to back-and-arm piece. This piece has the irreducible simplicity Wegner is constantly striving for and is considered to be his most innovative contribution to chair design.

## FROM THE CHAIR

Under the previous committee, the Group decided to begin the practise of judging work submitted for acceptance of new members as associates or full members, for transfer to full member, and for acceptance of work for exhibition. The purpose is to preserve the essential aim of the Group. That is, an association of people engaged in fine woodworking, giving mutual support and encouragement, and preserving and promoting the notion of fine woodworking.

The Committee will be faced at times with the task of rejecting work. It will not be done lightly. We are all too familiar with the daily struggle of swimming against the stream, but we must keep the aim!

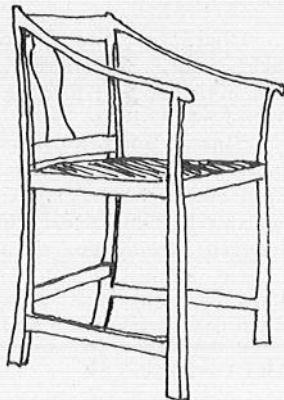
I have been asked to set down some rules. I don't like rules - they can become strait-jackets. My own thinking is as follows:

To keep the aim of the Group, a piece of work should be remarkably good in some aspect of design or workmanship, and it should not offend in either category to an extent likely to damage the Group.

The question of design is the more contentious, and we intend to foster debate. For the purpose of judging, the limited aim should be to reject on grounds of design, only work which in the opinion of the Committee would tend to damage the Group. Joking or experimental work is in order - if it is done with some style and excellence.

It seems to me that there is less real argument on the subject of workmanship, although there are many detailed cavils. The first requirement I see is of some evidence of consistency and of a general concern that the piece of work should be truly good, and likely to remain so:

- It should be structurally sound, with due allowance for the annual humidity cycle and for the long term shrinkage which has split many a top or carcass side after ten years or so.





## OUR LAST MEETING

Thanks and thanks again for the hospitality given to us by Trend Timbers. Richard, Family and Staff did a magnificent job under the difficult circumstances of pouring rain. Thanks also go to Ken Bamber for fighting the noise of the rain and giving us a most interesting talk on Timber and Time. We hope to invite Ken again to hear more of his great knowledge of Trees and Timber.

For those of us visiting Trend for the first time it was a real eye-opener to see the range and extent of timber available. I'll have to fill my hip pocket for my next visit.



## FEBRUARY GROUP MEETING & TOOL SALE

Henry Black and cohorts at Metropolis Design Workshops - 28 Lord Street, Botany - have offered to host this meeting on 23rd February. In conjunction with this first meeting in 1986 Henry Black and Ray Ingold will be holding a tool sale and swap. Tables to sell user and/or collector tools will be available for a small fee to help cover costs. Ray who sells books on tools is preparing a catalogue available for \$2 from him. This will contain details of tools at the sale and some available for mail order. This is for people from Melbourne and Adelaide who are unlikely to make it on the day. For more information please contact Henry on 02-6668627, Frank Ham on 03-8171768, Marc Lewis on 048-422013 or Ray Ingold 07-3950550. Address: P.O. Box 224 Moorooka, 4105, Qld.

To keep Mike Darlow happy, the agenda will be:

Tool sale and swap	10a.m.
Lunch	12p.m.
Group Meeting	1p.m.

Guest speaker is Mr Watson of Feast Watson and Co. to talk about finishes.

## NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

December 18th will be the committee meeting date at Nick Hill's place at 19 Pearson Avenue, Gordon. Any pieces for assessment will be welcome as usual.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Good News** - Subscriptions are to remain at the same rates for 1986. **Bad News** - they are due NOW. Deadline for you to remain financial is 1st meeting 1986. To make subscription renewal as simple as possible and save the Treasurer some headaches, subscriptions will fall due each January. Anybody joining part way through the year will pay subscriptions on a pro-rata basis.

## PIRAMID!

Hooray a new outlet specialising in fine furniture! John Harding of the very successful Old Bakery Gallery has opened PIRAMID at Shop 1, "Institute Arcade", 332 Darling Street, Balmain. PIRAMID is to operate as a shop format rather than as a Gallery type outlet. For further information phone on: O.B.G. 428.4565 or 818.5597.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Nick,

U-Build Enterprises who market a wide variety of do-it-yourself woodworking plans (similar to dress making patterns) are looking for a woodworker to make prototypes of their plans maybe four or five per year. The projects range from toys for children to grandfather clocks, etc. If you are interested in this part time work please contact Hugh Galloway on 326.1450 or write to U-Build Enterprises, P.O. Box 132, Rose Bay, 2029.

Hugh Galloway

## EDITORIAL

Feedback - at the last minute - has been fantastic enabling this bumper issue. To those who have sent copy many thanks indeed. To those in the other 96% of the Group, we'd like to read something from you in the next issues please. (Don't forget it's YOUR newsletter for your views and ideas.) Maybe we could have some Poetry or Prose on the likes of Woodcraft and Wood related themes in the next issues. (Will we hear from you "Banjo Woodbutchers"?)

## EXHIBITION: YOU CAN'T START TOO SOON

A tentative booking for an exhibition - Opera Style - in March/April 1987 has been established.

Robert Neville has written to the Opera House confirming the booking with a deposit for the hall.

## PETER DORMAN'S EXHIBITION

Peter's Exhibition held at the Balmain Galleries featured sculpted furniture and some unusual bowl shapes. Exceptional pieces of wood were par for the course featuring Red Cedar slabbed and Jarra burls.

Peter's sculpted "beefy" style was shown in chairs, a writing desk and stools and is an exploratory approach as are his bowls. The bowls were turned and then sculpted in another dimension to give a more open impression.

## BOOK REVIEW

Characteristics, Properties and Uses of Timbers South East Asia, Northern Australia and the Pacific by W.G. Keating and Elinore Bolza. Published by Inkata Press. Price forty dollars, 1982.

This is quite an interesting book covering the principal timbers and some minor species from this area. The book is set out with one page devoted to each timber. Information contained about each species include size of tree, density, strength, shrinkage, durability and suggested uses. There is also a description of the timber, its colour and its characteristics, etc. A very useful addition to the literature as we are seeing more and more timber from this area.

## ART CARPENTER

Art Carpenter, a well known American furniture designer, will be visiting New Zealand for 4 weeks in February. Art is doing the rounds of the N.Z. Wood Groups doing lectures and is being funded by a Fulbright Scholarship.

Henry Black has kindly taken up the cudgels and will contact Art Carpenter about planning a stopover in Australia. Such an event unfortunately has a low potential for success due to things being too late, however, we will see how it develops.

## HENRY BLACK IN PROFILE - Tools Resource Person

Henry grew up in Lane Cove and attended Chatswood High School. Col Levi was his metal work teacher.

His trade training as a Patternmaker was undertaken at HMA Naval Dockyard, Garden Island as a civilian apprentice. Patterns in sugar pine and ships crests in teak were the main work. He spent time in the Foundry and Drawing Office also.

Upon completing his 5 years, Henry moved to Warman Equipment at Artarmon and worked on Jelatong, plastic and metal patterns for their production iron foundry. Being a petrol head at the time, racing a Mini Cooper S he next took a position as Experimental Technician at Leyland Australia.

During his two year stay he worked on patterns for mechanical parts and models for design and styling. This was an interesting place to work with a highly skilled



workforce of various trades producing one-off cars virtually by hand.

Ballina Slipway was next, for about 18 months, making patterns for ships valves and fittings and local municipal requirements. Motor cycle racing had replaced cars by this stage.

The move back to Sydney resulted in a 5 year job as Lab Craftsman at the Industrial Arts teacher training workshop at Uni of NSW. Besides maintaining and running the main skills workshops, Henry assisted in teaching of hand and machine skills. Industrial Design, Craft (Ceramics) and Ethnotechnology! were the major areas for study and these opened a door out of the engineering factory.

Helga Larsen and Ivan McMeekin had taught crafts at the Uni and visits from Leon Sadubin, Michael Cooper and John Makepeace all stimulated Henry's desire to do more with his skills and imagination rather than make fine pieces in wood, only to have them painted grey, buried in sand and clay and left finally to rot on a shelf in the back of some foundry. A takeover (and eventual disbandment) of the department by the faculty of Architecture curtailed the motor cycle building activities and prompted a move to Sydney Teachers College.

Henry was by now a member of the WW Group although in name only, besides some dabbling on the lathe and the odd piece of bedroom furniture, he found little time to participate further. The new job was little different from the old and when Stanley tools NSW offered him the job as education officer he grabbed it. Unfortunately being a PR apologist for an American multinational was not his cup of tea, so he quit after one year to try being self employed.

Henry then somehow renovated a house, co-ordinated the WW Group along with Gerard Gilet and Peter Kolasinski, and in his spare time produced a piece for "Woodcraft Afloat Exhibition".

The "Anchor and Chair" was sold and a large key commissioned and made. Cabinet making was done for Peter Adams, Sheetmetal fabrication undertaken and model making for Nielsen Design Assoc. as well.

Thinking of undertaking a design based course of study, Henry travelled to Hobart and there met Hugh Scriven who later held a design workshop at Sturt for local woodies. He then went to Canberra where two years away from the distractions of Sydney allowed him to concentrate on wood. Don Lee's expertise and magnificent lathe enabled Henry to bring to reality the ideas he had developed.

Henry travelled to Canada and the States where he met many woodworkers, those who impressed him most were Sam Malouf and Gerry Bennett.

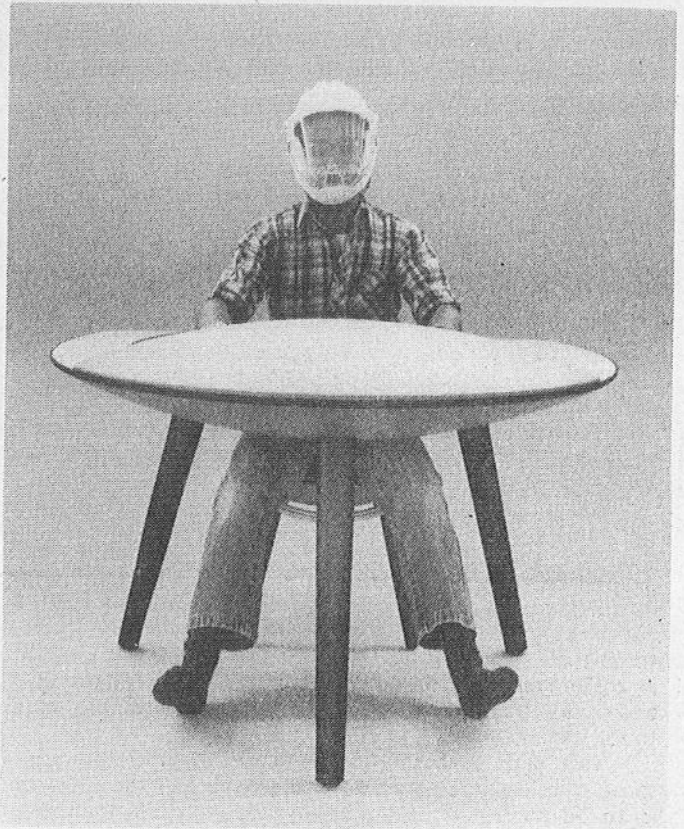
1985 has been a busy year to date, Henry received a grant from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council to re-establish his workshop at Botany.

He worked 2 days a week for Richard Clarke at Trend Timber earlier in the year but found the travelling too disruptive. Amongst work done this year has been models for the SRA vandal proof seats, models and prototypes of chairs for Parliament house, dining table in painted customwood and glass to a design by Di Fogwell, dining and easy chairs to his own designs, the padlock and key, patterns for the "ENA" restoration and architectural furniture for a new street plaza.

Henry is attending the Crafts Council professional development seminars and feels they cover possibly the most important aspects of earning one's living from one's craft. Sydney College of the Arts should include this type of information in any course they are considering. He also feels a part-time evening course on Design related subjects for already skilled craftspeople is needed. He feels this should be taught by a suitably experienced person able to communicate ideas to a variety of people.

Henry is still "feeling his feet" as far as the business is concerned. Patternmaking work is supporting things at the moment. Henry's move into full-time woodworking has not been approached on a "make or break" basis - he is finding his niche in the furniture market. Exhibitions in 1985 have included the Opera House with the Group and with Marc Lewis at the Crafts Council building. Good publicity has resulted from these exhibitions but Henry is finding sales slowly developing. Participation in at least

2 exhibitions in 1986 is planned, with new furniture being designed for each. The immediate aim is to consolidate the workshop and survive another 12 months.



HENRY'S FLYING SAUCER DESK.

## SECOND NATIONAL WOOD CONFERENCE REPORT

Maybe because many of us are bearded, wear scruffy clothes and have sawdust in our pockets, people get the impression that woodworkers are a bunch of daydreamers who couldn't organise themselves out of a pile of wood shavings. This, of course, is something that both you and I know is utterly false! But it takes an event like the Second National Wood Conference to prove it. From the moment when I first arrived at the venue I was impressed by the efficiency with which I was handed a neat loose leaf folder containing all the information relevant to the Conference, and given the details of my accommodation and any monies due. This same attention to forward planning and organisation was apparent throughout the duration of the event and helped to keep the programme alive.

And what a programme. Topics ranging from Crafts funding to Youth Training, Business Management, Timber supplies, (and many more).

These formal sessions however do not, in my opinion afford the major contribution to such gatherings. For me the major benefit comes from meeting other people and hearing about their concerns and interests. From my experience some of the most worthwhile exchanges take place away from the formal conference situation, probably over a cup of coffee or a meal.

Bearing this in mind I think that in future it would be beneficial for us all if the Speakers could be encouraged to be controversial and leave more time for the topics to be discussed in the open forum. Such an approach may not result in any conclusions, but at least we would all have a wider appreciation of the topic.

Concurrent with the formal programme other activities were available to the delegates. Adjacent to the entrance hall was a trade display area where half a dozen woodworkers could generally be seen studying or comparing the products. Harry and David Arnall were in the forefront flinging shavings - and other things - from their new lathe. Japanese tools had an airing but drew some sceptical comments.

The product that caught my eye was the disc sanding sheet with a 'Velcro' type backing.



Around town several galleries were promoting the efforts from individual woodworkers whilst the Australian Design Centre presented the work of entrants in the "National Wood Design Exhibition". All told eighty six pieces were submitted representing forty five entrants. I found it disappointing that the standard of workmanship was not consistently high and that the winning entry, a dining setting, relied too heavily on the use of granite and leather. I really question if this should have won a woodworking award. Fellow NSW members hold your heads high, the Opera House exhibition was better!

One session that I think we all enjoyed was the address by Professor Yoshio Akioka from Japan.

The Japanese have a long established craft heritage and respect the skills of the makers. Hence certain sections of the community have a good understanding of what is involved in the production of a piece of craft and are prepared to pay a commensurate price to possess them.

This has led to a situation where some craftsmen in wood are now earning a better income than would have been possible had they remained in their original occupations of say a taxi-driver or a factory hand. But, the quality must be there.

After the previous Conference in Melbourne moves were made to establish State Groups. From this has come the fact that there are now 21 individual Wood Groups in Australia. At the conclusion of this Conference a motion was passed to aim to establish a National Body (name as yet undecided) whose task it would be to address themselves to matters affecting woodworkers nationwide. The intention is to include New Zealand and Papua New Guinea on this body. At this stage Carin Wilson from N.Z. has offered to take the helm.

This and much more took place in Adelaide, and for those who are interested a printed Report of the Conference is to be published. Keep an eye open for further details, cost, availability, etc.

In conclusion, I think that such gatherings are valuable in giving us a chance to meet one another. I found it good to be able to put a face to that name at the bottom of a letter or the voice at the other end of a phone call. Here was an opportunity to compare experiences and keep in touch with what is going on in the big wide world outside our workshop.

I think the organisers are to be heartily commended for all the work that went into the planning and preparation. Now they too can go back to their workshops and attempt to catch up on all the other jobs that should have been done.

P.S. The Third National Wood Conference will be held in 1988 in our national capital and will be hosted by the Canberra Wood Group. Allan Wale

## DESIGN ACCORDING TO JOYNES

The terms 'Design' and 'Designer' are very often used in all manner of contexts but it is very rare that anyone attempts to explain what is meant by 'Design' or what a 'Designer' is and what he/she does. In the next few words I will try to give such an explanation of design according to Joynes. It may well be that others will see it differently or feel that I am not on the right track but I think that if the principles I expound here are followed, if only as a basis, then design will be improved.

At the outset I want to separate two words which are very often used together and which I feel should not be together. The words are, 'Design', and 'Decoration'. It is quite common for these two words to be used even in place of each other. In the context that I am writing at the moment the word decoration has no place. Decoration is incidental to, and does nothing for, design.

The word 'Design' is explained in the dictionary as "To form an idea, to plan, to mean, to intend". I think the last definition, "to intend", is the best because nothing can be said to be designed unless the designer takes every part of his project piece by piece and intends what he finally offers to his client. The designer must have a reason for and in consequence an answer when the client or the public says "why is this?" or "Why is that in a particular position"? It may be the placing of a handle on a drawer, the size

of a starter button on a machine or the angle at which a steering wheel is set. When design is used nothing is left to chance. Everything is intended.

The next definition in order of importance is "to plan". Planning plays a large part in any design project. The form, the layout and method of manufacture must all be planned by the designer. Form must be planned so that it will be good to look at, the layout for ease of use and the method of manufacture to keep costs of both production and maintenance to a minimum.

If any object, be it a piece of furniture, a house, a motor car or a washing machine is said to be designed, then it must be assumed that every part of that object is intentional on the part of the designer. Nothing has been left to chance. It has been planned.

Good design must be utilitarian. If it is to be used it must be easy to use. Working parts must be easily accessible but safely guarded. Handles, knobs and levers must be convenient to the hands of the users. How often do we see handles which will break long finger nails or hook into pockets. Chairs must not fall over when sat on. Tables must be sturdy enough not to dance across a room when one is attempting to cut a steak.

If as I mentioned before, a design has been planned to the last detail, thought out piece by piece, and each piece proportionately correct in itself and within the concept as a whole, the object will then be pleasing to look at and therefore beautiful though at no time has applied decoration been used.

I have used the word proportion and in my opinion, this is the most important when design is under discussion. The proportion of one component to another or the extent of an area of rough texture in relation to an area of smooth. One part must not overwhelm another nor force itself on the attention of the viewer. When a designed item is mathematically and geometrically perfect then it can be held up to the untrained as a good example of design against which they can judge others. The untrained eye can be a great deceiver when weighing up good and bad design. One person will see an object differently to how another will see it and because of this different view we must use proportion based on mathematics and geometry as a yardstick to judge design. It is only by a designer sticking rigidly to the basic rules such as I have put forward that the untrained can be taught to appreciate the good design around them and begin to make a stand against the bad.

There will always be the person who is so insensitive as to say "I know what I like and no one is going to change me". This is a narrow-minded outlook and one which designers have been having to contend with down through the ages. We can only hope that the numbers of this type will get fewer as time passes.

Designers generally have no wish to become dictators but until such times as good design is the commonplace rather than the exception they must attempt to show authority in their profession which may border on the dictatorial. Surely this cannot be wrong if a designer trained to know what is right lays down the law and the untrained accept the judgment.

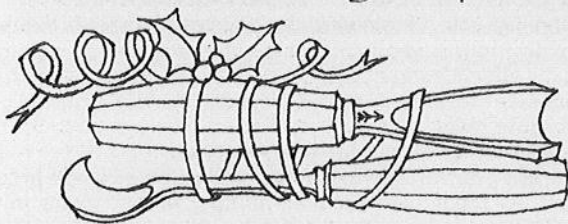
A manufacturer with the good sense to call in a professional designer is conceding, at no detriment to himself, that the professional is the best for the job. One thing a manufacturer must guard against while employing a designer is that he must not try to exert influence by perhaps arbitrarily overruling a design decision just so that an ego can receive a boost. Insufficient knowledge of a problem or lack of ability to overcome it may involve a company in tremendous expense and also result in an unsatisfactory product. Therefore once a designer has been appointed, leave him alone and let him do his job.

In writing these few paragraphs I may have moved away from the area of design by the artist/craftsperson, as most of the members of this group are, into the realms of the practising designer but I think that both groups have their role to play in designing a more beautiful world and the basics of good design as outlined above holds good in all situations.

Ken Joynes



If there's anything Bonzier for  
Christmas than a Hegner fret-saw,



It's a Pfeil carving gouge (or two)  
Ring Michael Gill on (02) 6607357

#### RANDOM THOUGHTS ON DESIGN

Woodcraft 85 seems to have generated some discussion on the matter of design (or lack of it) and as I was somewhat involved and copped some criticism, thoughts have been generated which may bear exposure. I must express appreciation to those group colleagues from whom I have learned through constructive criticism.

It occurs to me that the first inclination when starting to work in wood, whether at an early or later stage in life, is quite basic, i.e. to make "something" in wood, then as a second stage to make something well executed. The later introduction of one's own design may never occur for many, the craft itself being sufficient. For those who progress further, design becomes a very important factor. If an article is not well designed, is it worth making at all? How do we know if our design is good until displayed to others for comment. The piece in question may not be the ultimate but will hopefully be a step forward in the design ability of the maker. Surely this step deserves encouragement rather than rejection! For those who progress even further, design may supercede the craft of making and take over in its own right. The craft being second in that one may be content for another to do the making. How would the group feel about exhibiting a piece designed by one and made by another? If design is paramount can there be any objection by the Group? The viewing public may have different ideas.

I think it would help if we all understood where we are at on this scale (making, making well, design and make, design only), and to be conscious of this as a group when setting up guidelines for the next exhibition. I for one would be happy to be involved in such a process. I suggest it seems that when the term "craft" is used, that the idea of a good design is automatically involved, if not, why do we use the title Woodcraft instead of Wood-design?

Another point. When we go on display expecting to sell our work to the public, are we doing our own thing or pandering to a market? I suggest the questions - Who designed it? Who made it? are not analysed by our public. They like it and buy it. Content in the knowledge that they possess a pleasing hand made article. The sale is dictated by these unsophisticated considerations.

I guess it all adds up to getting our message across to the public, expecting it to think for itself, but knowing that it won't. Perhaps we would stand a chance as a group by advertising our existence and wares in the design oriented journals. This is the day of the glossy brochure. Why not join in?  
L.O.

#### WHATCRAFT AT THE WHERE?

Did our last great exhibition, "Woodcraft Goes to the Opera" actually take place or was it just a woody's dream? Did we or did we not decide, in our own sweet, unbiased way, that it was indeed one of the most stunningly magnificent exhibitions ever spawned? Yes, a thousand times, yes!!

Were it not for the eventual appearance of the

long-awaited October/December volume of Craft Arts magazine, I might have been forgiven for accusing us all of talking up the grandeur of that show, of over-dressing it as a mere pigment of our wishfully-thinking imaginations.

Thank you Ken Lockwood and Anne Flanagan for three full-colour glossy pages of re-assurance. Turn to pages 105, 106 and 107 and find that one publication was capable of producing a review that gave some recognition of the scale, scope and standard of that great show. In fact, this issue has a lot to offer the woody - three pages on Brian Eves, the South Australian carver, five throbbing pages from the Arnall mega-shaving Marketing Machine and a portfolio on some character calling himself Grant Vaughan and his bloody old bowls.

But where was our own Craft Council when we needed them? As far as the (latest) Spring issue of "Craft Australia" is concerned, Woodcraft never ever went to the Opera. It just never happened! Many of us were heartbroken to find that our stoutest efforts went unrecorded and that such a major group exhibition at such a venue never even warranted a half-page in black-and-white in Australia's official Craft journal. There is a good sprinkling of sawdust throughout the issue, and I'm happy to say that is the norm, but, WHAT HAPPENED?

I am known as a staunch subscriber, advertiser and contributor to The Australian Woodworker magazine but I must here record my disappointment in the Woodcraft Goes to the Opera review on pages 3 and 4 of the Sept./Oct. issue. This is where I should have expected to find the finest and most exhaustive analysis of all, both textually and photographically. Richard Crosland, whose superb go-cart is printed beautifully in full colour on the cover would, I'm sure, be the first to agree that its repetition inside in black-and-white was rather redundant. The review gives me the impression that Woodcraft Went to a Shoebox or Public Toilets in Hyde Park and that it was a fair sort of place to shelter in case of rain.

I won't be unfair - the text is enthusiastic and supportive but its size and lay-out fair to the woodworkers of NSW and to the woodworkers of Australia who couldn't get there? I'm sure they would have dearly loved to visit Woodcraft at the Opera by proxy via their trusted national eyes-and-ears, The Australian Woodworker in a comprehensively illustrated and discussed review. From our own national magazine, we all expected more.

It's easy to whinge about not getting what one expects or thinks one deserves, but maybe there is another side to this business. Editors all require lots of constructive criticism and sympathetic assistance. Perhaps this was sought and refused. Heaps of superlative work is a good start, but good co-operation and liaison is essential if that work is to receive the recognition it deserves.

Speak up and air your grievances and disappointments and, if done sincerely, they will be received gratefully as the honest feed-back and criticism for which editors are desperate.  
M.G.

#### TURNING TALKS

I have been requested (out of desperation?) by the editors to continue my column. My intention is to be a David McNicholl rather than a Hedda Hopper.

Those members into reproducing antique Australian furniture will need (besides a J. Sly stamp), a copy of the new magnum opus Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture by Fahy and the Simpsons. Published by David Ell at \$159. Not cheap but worth it.

While down in the Southern Highlands, I popped into John and Mary Hill's. The trouble with John's new workshop is that he will spend too much time gazing down into the idyllic valley below. Far better City Road where we can't even tell whether it's day or night! Also called into the Sturt Shop, which now has much more zing.

Austwood was probably the largest woodworking machinery show seen in Australia, and was visited by many members. I also bumped into friends from Canberra and Alan Williams from Alstonville. However the show lacked many well-known brand names, and others were represented by perhaps only one machine from their range. Bandsaws,



dust extraction equipment, and drilling machines were, for instance, almost entirely absent. Few lathes on show, but Harry and David Arnall were attracting good crowds to their most professionally arranged stand.

Twisting the knife, our Enery shows that exhibition judges are not the universal arbiters of good taste. The dreaded desk and chair, rejected from Woodcraft, reappear in a double page spread in the November Vogue Living.

Craig and Joy Lewis challenge Leon Sadubin. Whose work will have the most famous owners? Are Bob and Hazel more prestigious than Charles and Di? Vote at the next meeting.

However, readers, the bulk of my verbiage this issue is not to be the usual tittle tattle, but serious ruminations on the meetings of our Group. It is my view that our Group meetings leave much to be desired and always have. There are three reasons:

1. The unruliness of the members. The reluctance to come to order and to thereafter allow meetings to be conducted in an orderly fashion is oafish and rude.
2. The lack of a formal meeting structure. There is no regular and strictly adhered to starting time; no agenda (which could be published beforehand in the newsletter); and little chairmanship, again not helped by the bad manners of some members. Meetings have degenerated into social chit-chat, and the educative content is minimal. At the last meeting a member suggested finishing as a topic. Yes, we all have our own methods, but why not a meeting with finishing as the subject with us all demonstrating our methods. Perhaps David Arnall and Robert Neville with their specialised knowledge could be the main speakers.
3. The lack of committee direction. I, for one, am fed-up with circular discussions about exhibitions dominating our meetings. Our committees have always been composed of members with integrity, intelligence and vigour. They should dictate to us, not waste most of our meetings by trying to achieve wishy-washy consensus.

The WWGNSW is probably the senior woodworkers group in Australia and has achieved much. Its exhibitions have always been outstanding, but if one looks at the achievements of other groups, our results in money-raising, seminar-holding, and visitor-sponsoring have been minimal. This could be because we have probably a larger proportion of professional woodworkers in our membership, and because we are not closely associated with a tech or college. It follows therefore that we do not have a regular and lavishly equipped meeting venue, that our membership stresses exhibiting rather than education, and that our committee members have minimal free time. I am not suggesting a change in emphasis, merely tossing red herrings into the breeze.

Mike Darlow

### TREE TITHE AND REAFFORESTATION

A recent ABC TV programme "Heartlands" featured Bill Mollison and his ideas on a "tree tithe" or a tax on forest products for funding reforestation. Such an idea is valiant indeed but does it work? The following article shows some applications and a proposal from we editors for the Group to respond to at our next meeting.

Bill Mollison writes regarding a tree tithe on paper and other wood products:

"For the past year, our publications Permaculture One and Permaculture Two have carried a 50¢ tree tithe on the wholesale price of each book sold, paid by the publisher (Tagari Publications) into a tree planting fund of the Permaculture Institute, from where it will be distributed to any group who is planting permanent forest, for whatever reason (windbreak, wildlife, land stabilization, re-vegetation). The Permaculture Institute has planted over 5,000 trees in the last two years.

The quarterly Journal of the International Permaculture Association (37 Goldsmith Street, Maryborough, Victoria, 3465, Australia) carries a 25¢ tax on its wholesale price, paid by the editor into a replanting fund. (He has, in addition, obtained a grant of \$300,000 for reforestation of salted catchment lands in Victoria.)

The Rainforest Information Centre (P.O. Box 368, Lismore, NSW 2480, Australia) publishes the World Rainforest Report, and pays into a fund which plants a rainforest tree for every 200 sheets of paper it uses. (World Rainforest Report focuses on a worldwide network of individuals and groups involved in rainforest preservation action.)

One of our members in Sydney, George Weisz, is approaching newspapers in Sydney (he is a major advertiser) to "tax" advertisements for a tree fund. He is also working to convince furniture manufacturers to tax their products on the same level.

I am writing to you for two reasons:

- (1) To ask you to tax your own publication or wood products, and to report on the tree-planting projects you initiate; and
- (2) To work with newspapers, furniture makers, wood-millers, and others to tithe a proportion of the wholesale price of their products to a tree planting fund.

Through the mail, we receive (with gratitude) many of your publications, but I would be much more grateful if I knew there was a tree planted for every one I receive. If you are able to set up a tree fund within your own organisation to gift funds for tree planting, so much the better; if not, there are many organisations worldwide (including the three mentioned above) which would welcome the proceeds from your tree tithe in order to plant trees.

We hope you will establish your tree tithe, and announce your intentions in your publication so that many other people will be encouraged to do the same." **BILL MOLLISON**

Our Group has stated that we support actions directed towards more concentrated reforestation of Australia's (or at least NSW's) unique "cabinet timbers". We editors propose that now is the Group's chance to actively undertake or promote this statement by funding reforestation projects through self-levying sales of woodwork from group members. The actual mechanics of this "tree tithe" system will be discussed at the next meeting - to take advantage of your Christmas cheer!

### FORESTRY APPROACH

Currently the Forestry Commission of NSW considers reforestation of cabinet timber species to be a low priority due to a perceived low demand. Prime cabinet timbers are currently only logged in NSW from limited private property and occasionally from existing logging operations in Crown forests.

Supply of these timbers is rapidly dwindling and prices have consequently risen dramatically. Royalties for timber of the Red Cedar Group obtained from state forest is currently in the order of \$500 per m<sup>3</sup> gross log at the stump. With such high returns private growers are considering planting and the Forestry Commission of NSW is actively promoting Agroforestry or growing tree lots on farms.

Cabinet timber from an agroforestry private source in the future is considered to be only a small resource due to the very specialised nature of management. The Forestry Commission should reconsider the wide demand for cabinet timbers and ensure a reliable supply both from existing state forest resources on a sustained yield basis and from reforestation.

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## "DOWN SOUTH" or "IT'S A LONG WAY FROM CHIPPENDALE TO COLDSTREAM!"

Oh well, another chapter in the saga of your intrepid wood resource officer's quest for the perfect piece of timber.

It's 4.00 a.m. on Monday morning. I discover there really is life before breakfast. I load up the trusty Toyota and head off to collect fellow woody and chief negivator, Peter Kolasinsky who is in nearly as disoriented state as yours truly at this hour.

We point the truck at Bathurst, throw it in overdrive and go for it! I decided to go to Melbourne via the Olympic Way for a change. After about eight hours we arrived at Rutherglen and booked into the Victoria Hotel, a rather beautiful Victorian hotel in the middle of town. The hotel is notable in that its grounds contain the original Rutherglen mortuary. We went for dinner at the cafe across the road.

Tuesday, we visited Baileys' Winery at Glenrowan and sampled their wares and they have quite a good collection of coopers tools. Late afternoon we arrived in Melbourne.

Wednesday, we did the rounds of the timber yards in Melbourne. At Mathew's timber in Vermont we discovered some Malaysian Rosewood, a heavy, bright red timber (possibly *Dalbergia bariensis*) which looks great for guitar backs and sides. I also purchased some very old and fine grained King Billy Pine.

Mathew's have a very large operation with a great variety of timbers, but when the laminex truck loaded with Customwood arrived the operation almost ground to a halt. The manager and sales staff rushed to inspect its fine texture, wonderful colour and fine grain. Apparently Customwood is in great demand and short supply.

Wednesday afternoon, we visited Cobweb Antiques, stockists of antique woodworking tools. There were some very fine old tools but I really could not see them getting much use. I enquired of the manager if he had any older Stanley Tools. He seemed rather amazed at my question and further perplexed when I confessed I actually want to use them.

Thursday we visited Australian Furniture Timbers which appears to be a very well organized yard, everything neat and tidy, but I found the office staff a little unfriendly. We examined their stocks of Brazilian Rosewood which turned out as usual not to be the coveted *Dalbergia nigra* but just another hardwood from Brazil.

Thursday evening we were welcomed by Peter and Jenny Adams at their home in Coldstream which is also the headquarters for Adam's Timber.

Friday, we visited a local sawmill which processes mainly eucalypt timbers which was a very neat and efficient operation. They showed us some really magnificent Mountain Ash and some huge logs of red gum five foot plus in diameter.

The afternoon was spent inspecting Peter's set up and he is very well equipped with a Robinson thirty six inch band resaw which will cut sixteen inches in depth. An intertherm dehumidifying kiln takes care of the drying which will handle seven thousand five hundred super feet of timber in one inch thick material and in the case of Blackwood it will take it from dead green to twelve per cent in three weeks.

Timber is handled by a massive fork lift and a full time helper (an extremely neat timber stacker).

I spoke to Peter Adams about his plans for the future which he said would include a large break down saw and a small kiln for his specialist timbers.

His basic approach is to supply woodworkers with whatever timbers they require, using volume lines like Blackwood to support the stocking of specialist lines. Peter feels his background in cabinet making is a great asset to his timber business. Adams' timber is represented in Sydney by our good friend Trend Timbers at Mulgrave.

Saturday, we headed back to Sydney. I detoured via a couple of wineries on the way up. Oh well, if I exorcise the devils the angels might leave too. Gerard Gilet

## LIQUID NIGHTMARE

Don't let the name of this brew scare you off, it is an old technique used to Ebonise oaks normally, or timber with the right tannic acid content.

To prepare the mixture you will need a wide mouth

frog-no-clean jar, some rusty nails or metal (as long as it fits in the jar - anything rusty), vinegar and a piece of stocking to strain the final mix. Now place the rusty metal into your jar about half way up then top it up with the vinegar leaving a space of about 20mm from the top of the jar, give it a good old shake and leave it for several days. It is now ready to strain into another container (not metal), place a piece of stocking over the new jar and secure with an elastic band and pour the mix through it.

Put the metal out into the weather again to rust up. I have used this mix mainly on Tas Oak and Vic Ash, the more figured oaks it works even better on. Prepare your stock in the normal manner taking it down to a 240 sand, then brush on a wash of the mix. Make sure there are no other pieces of work around to splash (hence the name Liquid Nightmare). Coat the piece thoroughly. You will notice the timber go a Purple/Grey immediately then a few minutes later Black.

Leave it over night then lightly steelwool the surface to remove oxidation, and test it with metho for colour, if you want jet black keep applying. Personally, I go for Brown/Black with a little of the natural colour coming through. When you are happy with the colour, finish off with a light 240 sand and it is ready for finishing. I get a nice result with 2 thin coats of de-waxed shellac, a light cut and wax - it also warms to an oil finish nicely. This finish gives a believable Ebonisation as it is not a stain but chemical reaction.

Lastly, you can choose to fill the grain before finishing with a white grain filler (plaster, polyfiller) which then gives a limed effect. Experiment first, I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised.

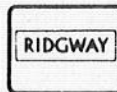
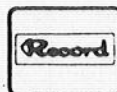
Robert Neville

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## LIGHTING AND THE WORKSHOP

It is a fact of life that many woodworkers will have to boost the light levels in their workshops by artificial means. You are for practical purposes faced with three choices for the type of artificial light source - incandescent, fluorescent or discharge.

Before discussing the merits or otherwise of the various choices it is worth considering the end use of the work you do and under what type of lights it is likely to be used.



This will probably narrow it down to predominantly incandescent and occasionally fluorescent unless you are into office suites in which case it will likely be the reverse.

Incandescent light sources are those with a closed circuit filament which is resistant to current flow and glows when a voltage is applied. They are typically warm both in the colour sense, in that they are biased to the red end of the spectrum and warm in the sense that they waste more energy in radiated heat. This fact can be a drawback in the shop in mid-summer and may be a drying influence on wood.

Fluorescent light sources, such as the common tube type, do not have a closed circuit filament, generate much less heat and tend to move to the blue-green end of the spectrum. They are far more efficient watt for watt but also have a couple of drawbacks for woodwork shops. The nature of the light is not flattering to wood. It is a harsh light and one of its attributes that if reducing shadows to a minimum, is in fact a drawback when reading figure in wood. You can prove this to yourself by getting a piece of wood with a fiddleback figure which gives the appearance of great depth. Look at it under a diffused fluoro light and then under a more directional incandescent beam. The incandescent lamp being both warmer and more a point source will do wonders to the figure and the colour of the wood. The fluorescent source is more diffuse and colder in colour and tends to do the opposite.

Discharge sources such as mercury vapour are semi industrial and would be the exception in the small workshop. They usually claim to be at or near daylight colour temperature but as stated most woodwork will be viewed indoors anyway under typical domestic incandescent light or in diffused natural light so the quest to have artificial "daylight" in your shop will be expensive and of questionable worth in any small to medium workshop.

A further problem with fluorescent tubes is that they are receptive to the mains frequency and flicker. This strobing effect (which is largely invisible to the eye) can be unpleasant and tiring when using rotating machinery.

My preference is for incandescent sources principally because they are flattering to the appearance of wood and are less tiring to work under. The best commonly available types are the PAR38 and Reflector bulbs known in the trade as mirror backs. PAR38 lamps (short for pressed aluminised reflector) are the type with an edison screw cap used in garden floods or so called "waterproof" outdoor fittings. They are usually either 100W or 150W. Reflector bulbs are smaller commonly up to 100W and are either bayonet cap or screw. These types both have an integral reflector which gives a focus to the beam and means you can use one in for example an angle poise lamp on your lathe and focus it right on the work. This cuts down on extraneous light entering the corners of your vision and is therefore less tiring.

I also use such a bulb in a plastic holder flat on my bench dead level with the surface I am scraping or dressing. If you have no other light source this will aid you in finding dings and scratches which are far harder to see with a conventional overhead light source.

I still use my fluoros at times and most people will settle on them for a general light because they are so efficient, however I would recommend some incandescents especially on arms on stationary machinery. A mix of the two will give you the best of both these commonly available types.

Mike Jefferys

#### **SAME AS IT EVER WAS**

The relationship between craftsman and client is a very delicate matter. It can sometimes take years of nurturing for the craftsman to get a free hand in design and PRICE to build a special piece, not always ending in smiles and pats on the back. A classic tale follows with Charles Green, a famous designer, discussing a finished commission from Mrs Prentiss in 1926 of a house complete with furniture!

Mrs Prentiss wrote:

"I need not say, perhaps, that I am rather astonished at the size of the bill for the two jars. It really had never occurred to me that they would reach

such a sum, and though, of course, I did not ask you for an estimate, or you perhaps said you could not give one, I should have requested it before carrying on with the work. However, that is completed and they must stand. I think they are very attractive, but I must say that if I have you do any future work for me, I must request an estimate of the cost because everything that has been done recently has been a good bit beyond my expectations."

Charles replies:

"Thank you for your check for \$1,916.75 in full for urns at front entrance 1188 Hillcrest Av.

I am both sorry and pained to know that you are dissatisfied with the cost of this year's work. Speaking of estimates, it seems to me that you do not know or have forgotten that your house and all in it were completed without an estimate and exceeded all expectation.

But your fine discriminating sense singled it out from many others. Won't you believe that this was the reason? It seems plain to me.

There is nothing reckless or extravagant about the work. No artist can figure original work for only one set of objects, even the factory can't, but the factory multiplies sets so that the original cost is only a fraction of the cost of each set sold.

If you had come to me to build a house, but had limited me to an estimate, 1188 Hillcrest Av. could never have existed. Business, I admit must run on business lines, but this is not business, this is an art of helping to make living pleasurable and beautiful beyond the merely useful."

And they all lived happily ever after. Same as it ever was.

Fred Bear

#### **THE MAN FROM WOODENBONG**

(Noise from a Wollongong)

There was movement in the Panels and  
Oh my God!! The word had got around,  
Through Surries Hills and Chippen Dale as far as Thorn-  
on Leigh and (Mit)\* a Gong.  
The word was said it would take 1000 lbs (454.55 kg force)  
to untwist this cabinet so warped.  
But alas this wrought was not to be  
As a Woodman's way is soft and subtle and a gentle push  
And a judicious shove has solved this feeling of despair,  
As now the pieces are a Chair.

Poetic licence revoked WUI (writing under the influence).

\* German.

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