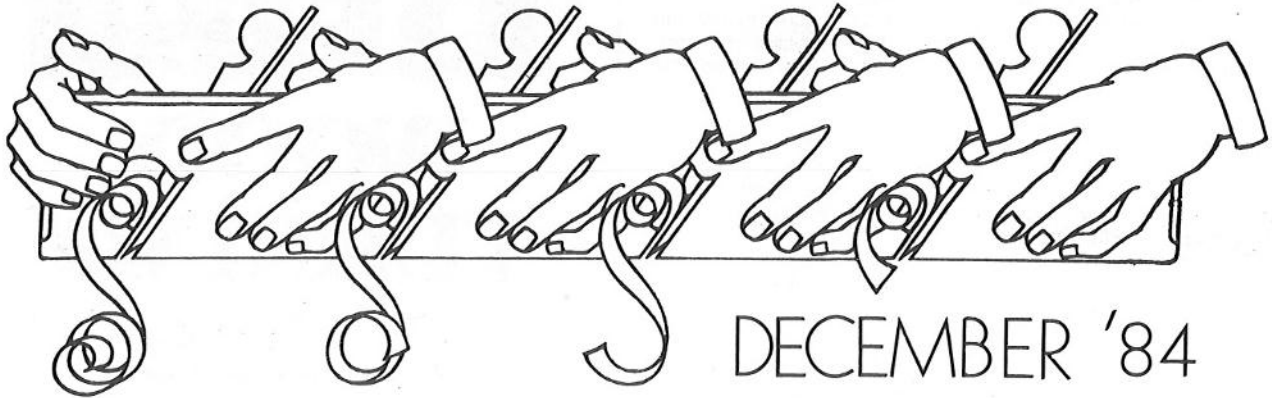


WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF N.S.W.



DECEMBER '84

WOODWORKERS' GROUP OF NSW

Chairman — Alan Wale, Sturt School for Wood, Range Rd, Mittagong 2575. (048) 71 2175

Secretary — Les Miller, 6 Balmoral Street, Waitara 2077, 48 2682

Editor — Michael Gill, 1 Bank Street, Pyrmont 2009, 660 7357

Group Fees: Member — \$40pa; Associate — \$30pa.

FROM THE CHAIR

A couple of people cornered me at the last meeting (what a great gathering we had!) asking me, amongst other things, to define the benefits of being a member of our Group. Well, I must confess that, for me, a major advantage is what I would describe as the fellowship. That opportunity to become involved with others sharing similar interests. Through the Group I have made many new friends, not just in the city but in country areas as well. For me, this has been great, particularly so when travelling around because there is an unofficial "motel-chain" at my disposal! Stuart Town, Elands, Lismore, Dundurrabin. Always a warm welcome, a roof over your head and good conversation thrown in. I've used them all!

Well, now there's another to add to the list and the boot is on the other foot. As most of you are now aware, Doreen and I have moved to Mittagong and are gradually converting a white-painted weatherboard cottage into our new home. I ask you — what could be more appropriate for a woodworker than a timber-framed cottage clad with weatherboards outside, 4 inch (sorry, 100mm) tongue and grooved horizontal boarding inside, ceilings as well, the whole thing topped off with corrugated iron sheets. Perhaps I should place an order with Rob and Maree for some shingles!

One immediate benefit from the move is that Doreen will now be free of that curse of the home woodworker — wood dust in the house. For me, the phrase "Just popping into the workshop . . ." now means walking up the road a bit and then across the paddock, about six minutes in all.

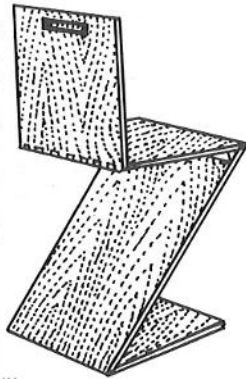
Just because we have moved to Mittagong does not, we hope, mean that we will lose touch with everybody. On the contrary, you can now add us to the "motel listing" and we shall do our best to return the hospitality. Remember, we are at the end of the new freeway, so it's a very fast, hassle-free trip. Please drop in — we'd love to see you. Alan

ALAN'S OCTOBER CHAIR

The chair illustrating Alan's October notes was sketched by Leon Sadubin, our Treasurer and well-known to us all as one of the Group's founders. He calls it his "YOKE ARM CHAIR" (Leon Sadubin Designs 1978).

The modern interpretation of the squatter's chair was designed and made for the first Woodworkers' Group of NSW Exhibition "Woodcraft 78" in Red Cedar and slung bridle leather. The armchair is a very labour-intensive item of furniture. The arms/back portion or "yoke" is stack-laminated and hand-shaped. Much research into correct lumbar support and seating geometry was done during construction of the prototype. To date, 21 of these armchairs have been made. Current price \$1200.

None of you recognised this chair. Or, if any of you did, you kept awfully quiet about it. Remember, your editor would like some response to these illustrations from his adoring public. This is your opportunity to hold forth in fine scholarly style, to criticise, to comment, to make a wild guess. Let's have some stirring discussion! Some exchange on these pieces, whether they be ancient museum pieces or bright, new gems sitting on contemporary showroom floors will foster a greater interest and a better understanding in our craft.



OUR LAST MEETING

Speaking of Leon, I should like to convey to him the Group's thanks for making our final general meeting for 1984 such a success — it was a bottler. The weather, the lunch, the crowd, the beautifully brief despatch of general business and the small but exciting array of tools and jigs combined with the salubrious atmosphere of Leon's showroom, workshop and courtyard made for good fun and good fellowship. A scraper-plane in one hand, a roasted snag in the other and drop of red wine soothing the spirit . . . There's nothing like a spot of social intercourse!

This was also an opportunity for us all to see Leon's new front showroom door, made by Craig Watson to Leon's design. It takes the shape of his own logo — the wooden bow-saw, complete with saw-teeth chopped into the bottom rail. Leon's new blackwood-and-leather two-seater and armchairs dominated the showroom — they are commodious, comfortable, beautifully conceived and constructed and absolutely Alsatian-proof. A litter of lounging woodies decorated them tastefully in the leisurely lead-up to lunch. A boldly lyrical quirkiness in arm detailing is a new departure for Leon and an indicator of growing concern for decoration and movement.

Thanks again, Leon, for a very enjoyable and stimulating meeting.

1985 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Yes, it's time to plunge the paw into the pocket and pull out your Group subscription fee and send it to: Paul Freeland, 4/29A SHIRLEY RD, WOLLSTONECRAFT 2065. Please do it soon — the February newsletter will go to paid-up subscribers only. \$30 for Associates and \$40 for Members.

OPERA HOUSE '85 — June 10th-30th 1985

Swamped as we were **not** by anxious volunteers, desperate to mass together as an exhibition committee (notable exceptions including Michael Retter and Mike Darlow), your executive gang-of-eight Junta has cast itself in this mould and invited Mr Martin Williams, general manager of "Promotional Campaigns" of William St, Sydney to organise a professional publicity programme to make the most of your Opera House show.

Mr Williams, a student of Richard Crosland's and a deeply committed woodworker, presented an outline covering objectives, strategy, publicity media, traffic-building promotions, personal interviews, press releases, woodwork in action, sponsorship and budgeting.

THE BALL IS ROLLING

Promotional material is required right **now**. The deadline for notification of your intention to exhibit is: **January 18th 1985**. We must know by that date just how many participants we will have. Not only must we have names, we will need photographs, personal details, experience, etc, etc. Those of you who respond will be those who stand a chance of receiving the best advance publicity. Please, **no** furry instamatic snaps — the Group and the Opera House deserve a better effort. A campaign is only as strong as its weakest print! Do it today.

EXHIBITION FEE

We shall enjoy 18 full days of exhibition time in the Exhibition Hall — the fact that this has been most generously offered at no cost to the Group means that the exhibition fee can be kept to less than half what it may have been otherwise. The fee, after heated debate (in which the highest proposal was \$1000 and the lowest \$100) was settled at **\$150 plus 20% of sales**. This means it will cost you \$8.33 per day to exhibit with your Group at the Sydney Opera House.

These monies are needed immediately for promotion — the deadline is: **February 28th 1985**. My cheque is already in the mail.

SELECTION

A maximum of ten items will be accepted from each member from which a selection will be made — quality will be the first criterion, bulk a subsequent consideration, if necessary. All submissions will be

received by a specially invited selection panel, plus two advisors from your executive committee (details at a later date). Only the best work will be accepted. Members who submit poor or repetitious pieces run the risk of being refused access to the exhibition.

Exhibitors will be expected to make a firm commitment to man the exhibition for at least one day per week — knowledgeable commentators need to be on hand at all times to deal with enquiries from clients and news media.

DELIVERIES

Prospective exhibits must be delivered to the Exhibition Hall between 9.30am and 4.30pm on **Monday, June 10th 1985**. The selection will take place that same evening and the display prepared the following day. It is hoped to open the doors to the public on Wednesday morning (12th) and to hold the official opening that evening!

On delivery Monday, there will be organisers on hand to meet taxitrucks, couriers, etc and to help with lifting, heaving and straining.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Having just polka-dotted your calendars with big red circles on the above-quoted dates, bung these down too, beforehojing your textas: **General Meetings: February 3rd, April 7th, June 2nd.**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS: February 8th, April 12th and June 7th.

The April 12th committee meeting will be your last chance to apply for Membership before the exhibition. If any Associate wishes to gain membership and the right to exhibit, please do something about it now — last minute overtures at a time of frantic activity will be met with undisguised hostility! Ring soon and tee it up.

WOODIES WELCOME 2 NEW MEMBERS

The other night, in front of seven committee members, **John Comacchio** showed off his chest. It was hollow and red and dovetailed at the corners. Made of red cedar and jarrah, John had left it for scrutiny, with membership of our Group as the prize. It was pulled mercilessly to pieces (aesthetically, that is) by that officious band of tyrants (in a benevolent, constructive sort of manner) and given the thumbs-up.

John trades under the name of "Kookaburra Furniture" from a workshop in Annangrove (near Dural) ph. 679 1044. In his own words: "It all started when I was about three years old. My grandfather went out onto the back verandah and found his shoes nailed to the wooden floor with 3-inch nails! Recognising my talent, he gave me an old wooden plane and other bits and pieces and off I went. My experience includes working for my father in the building industry, an attempt at architecture (UNSW) and then to many varied jobs, all centred around woodwork. I am now set up making one-off furniture and am beginning to sell more and more of my own designs through various outlets. I am looking forward to exhibiting and learning from the rest of the wood-working group."

Neil Scobie was also accepted as a member that same night on the strength of some fine turnery he had sent down to us from Coffs Harbour (phone (066) 52 4718). Neil began his association with woodturning with studies in Industrial Arts at Newcastle. He is now a woodwork teacher at Coffs Harbour High School and also operates a small, custom-made furniture business. His outlets are mainly displays and exhibitions on the North Coast. At the recent National AFDI "Woodcraft '84" Exhibition, he won 1st Prize in the functional section with a rosewood roll-top desk. Neil's turning won him first and second prizes in the miniature exhibits section.

We are proud to be joined by two woodworkers of such calibre. Welcome to the Group, John and Neil.

MARQUETARIAN OF THE YEAR

Michael Retter was welcomed into our Group as a Member only weeks ago. At that time his best work was being exhibited in New York at the Annual Exhibition of the Marquetry Society of America. The results could not have been better — not only was Mike awarded first place in his section, but the judges unanimously awarded him the "Best in Show" award for his marquetry picture of Christ. The general standard of the competition was reportedly very high and not only has Mike put a rather brilliantly-coloured feather in his own cap, he has also plumed the head-gear of his newly-adopted Woodworkers' Group of NSW. He has also succeeded in giving his own medium a much needed boost and a revival of interest by bringing home such a valued prize.

Michael was named "Marquetarian of the Year" and I should like to congratulate him whole-heartedly on behalf of us all. It seems the America's Cup is not the only one making the journey south!

OUR NEXT MEETING

Our February 3rd meeting will be rather a special one. We shall meet at the kiosk in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, where we will throw down a picnic lunch (bring a salad roll and a thermos) and then walk around to the Opera House where we can have a good look around the Exhibition Hall to familiarise ourselves with its size and layout. Our meeting can then proceed in private in one of the rooms that Mike Jefferys has so kindly arranged for us to use. Don't miss this meeting — it will be a very important one for all. See you at the kiosk around 12.30pm.



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HARRY ARNALL, WIZARD IN WOOD

Les Miller reviews "Harry Arnall, Wizard in Wood", an exhibition at the ANZ Exhibition Centre, Martin Place, Sydney, Nov 19th-30th 1984.

One of the foundation members of our Woodworkers Group is Harry Arnall. His wood-turning has an individuality which stems from his natural ability in design and his quest for continuous development of his own skills.

Harry and his son, David, joined forces to produce over 100 pieces for this showing and, from its grand opening by Senator Susan Ryan the exhibition maintained an atmosphere of expectancy for its visitors. I found the work cumulatively inspiring for many reasons. There was a broad range of designs, from a massive work from which decorative screens had been manufactured, through bowls and platters to holl' forms.

The bark-encrusted and waney-edged forms which Harry has exploited so successfully were conspicuous by their virtual absence, having been replaced by strict form and a brilliant, flawless, high-gloss external finish.

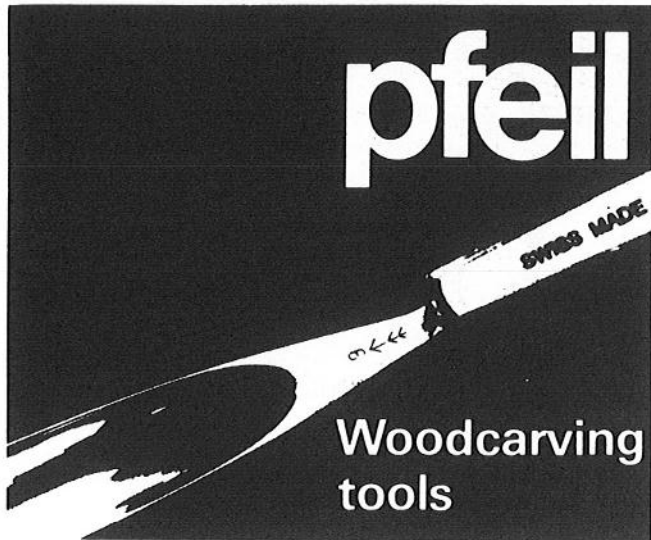
David's creative experimentation and development has produced a "Japanese Lacquer"-type finish unique, here, to the Harry Arnall trademark. This surface varied from stark opaque monochrome through blended two and three-colour work to a crystal polish which exposed all the complexities of grain configuration, complementing the shape or the fine detail of the piece.

A huge bowl, turned by Harry in Radiata Pine was decorated with a Greek key design carved around the rim by David, who has been studying carving for some years as an extra expression of design. Another special feature was a bottle-turning process which left the vessel walls so fine that light shows through, so flexible that they may be depressed with the fingers to spring back again into shape.

Harry and David may be applauded especially for having the courage and determination to mount such an ambitious exhibition, for taking on all the attendant hard labour and financial risk and, most importantly, for succeeding. Professional promotion helped, too. Prices ranged from \$45 for Bottle Forms in Norfolk Island Pine through \$300 for a Large Globe in Jacaranda to \$1450 for a Dividing Screen in Silver Quandong. — L.M.

CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS

Christmas Collections, Crafts Council Gallery, Nov 16th-Dec 24th was (and is) a fascinating hoard of craft-works, a promiscuous tumble of ceramic, wood, fibre, plastic, metal, leather and paper. Representing our Group were Hans Westermann with his elegant spoons and knives,



The woodcarving tools "Pfeil" are products of top quality, achieved and improved by a highly developed manufacturing technique. The assortment available is determined and enlarged, in association with the famous Woodcarving School of Brienz, Switzerland, which uses exclusively the "Pfeil" Woodcarving tools. A Swiss quality product, made of first quality steel alloy, resistant and heat treated. The tools are finely ground and polished on the inside and can therefore be easily re-sharpened. All tools are ready for use and are supplied with lacquered wood handle (octagonal Ashwood).

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Stefan Bruggisser showing his beautifully shaped rosewood and eucalyptus boxes and Richard Crosland displaying his flawless brief cases and jewel-boxes.

From Victoria, Lynn Savery's turned and inlaid boxes were a tribute to the techniques of Tunbridgeware and John Woollard had some fine turned bowls in Forest Red Gum and Mountain Grey Ash — The Toymakers of Sugar Creek were represented (now, why aren't they in the Group yet?) as were Robin Hill with wood-and-leather boxes (NSW) and Chris Woolcock of Tasmania with rocking horses. Some of the ceramics were out of this world! Hope you've not missed it.

GREEN TIMBER IN THE ROUND

Rick Bartholomew has an "in" on the trees that are doomed to be felled when they become obstacles in the path of the Wairoa Free-way. He would like to hear from woodturners and others who have an interest in salvaging some of this forced harvest which will be available from approx. April 1985. But ring him soon on 44 5819.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOODWORKER

Arthur Burrows will be publishing the first issue of his new magazine, "The Australian Woodworker" in March 1985. Initially to be published bi-monthly, it will be distributed by Gordon and Gotch. He will be looking for articles which are strongly project-oriented — showing the conception, design and construction of a piece, particularly (for the March issue) of timber light-fittings.

The magazine will contain one or two pages devoted to Club and Group news, Australia-wide. Arthur is offering us all the use of this free medium to publicise our activities, meetings, exhibitions, workshops and special functions in the hope that such communication will promote closer liaison and enlarge memberships. This offer is very much appreciated and gratefully accepted and I would like to wish Mr Burrows all success in this exciting enterprise. Ring him before dipping thumb-nail in tar on 818 2258 or 818 3998. A.W. — P.O. BOX 421, ROZELLE, NSW 2039.

THE CANBERRA SCENE by Alan Wale

There's something satisfying, stimulating and yet humbling in looking at other people's woodwork. I realised this when I viewed three displays of woodwork in Canberra recently, and thought you might be interested in my reactions.

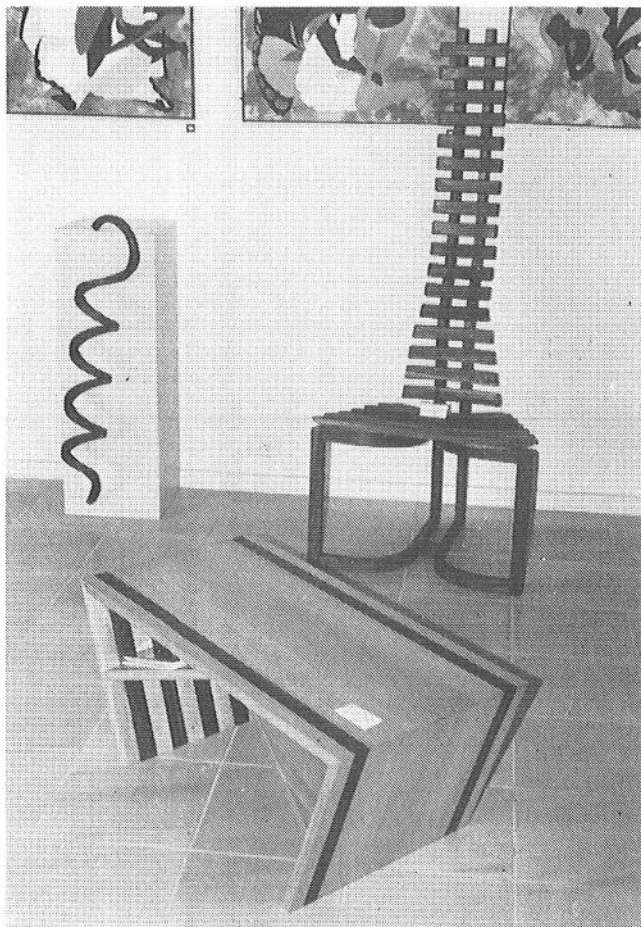
• In the first place, it was exciting and encouraging to see woodwork being actively promoted. One display was at the new **BEAVER GALLERIES**, where Betty and Ron had devoted a large space to showing the work of students from Canberra School of Art. This was a range of course-work showing a variety of approaches to the same design brief and all executed with obvious technical competence. I particularly liked the whimsy of a collar and tie in leather appliqué on the



John Daunt's dry-structure, NG Rosewood table with Marc Lewis' Huon pine and myrtle ladders. Beaver Gallery, ACT.

drawer fronts inside Antoon Meerman's bureau. Another fascinating outcome was the variety of design solutions to making a low table from square-section stock.

Elsewhere in the galleries were pieces by other makers not associated with the college. Clive Warner's red cedar benches (good to see him back at the bench) a Grant Vaughan cabinet and a striking standing cabinet using black-heart sassafras by Tasmanian Mark Phillips. Do make a point of calling in to the Beaver Galleries. When you are in Canberra — they are sure to have some wood on display. Whilst the self-taught woodworker can achieve much, there is, to me, something crisp and assured about the work of those receiving a formal training (what else would you expect me to say?) and it showed in this display.



Coffee table by Marc Lewis — hand-cut veneers on custom wood. NG Rosewood chair by John Daunt. Laminated walking stick by Antoon Meerman.

• By contrast the work by members of the Woodcraft Group at the **CRAFTS COUNCIL GALLERY** lacked, how shall I say? — confidence I am referring mainly here to the amateur body of the group. One encouraging sign was that the exhibition was not swamped with turned pieces. The well-balanced and finished chopsticks, presented in

boxes, and the "do nothing machine" adult toy particularly took my fancy. (I hope I get the toy I ordered!) The Group work on display was, by and large, honest and unpretentious.



Betty Beaver and members of the ACT Wood Group at a critique of the annual exhibition at the Crafts Council Gallery, Watson, ACT.

• The same cannot, I feel, be said of the final year student work on show at the **CANBERRA SCHOOL OF ART**. My reaction was that they were trying just a little too hard to prove a point. Certainly, we need these very individualistic pieces in the marketplace to stretch the normal confines of our craft and make us all aware of the vast possibilities with wood. In this respect, the GAUDI-like carved chair and circular leather-covered desk created a dramatic impact, but somehow I just didn't feel at ease in their presence.

So, to me, the Canberra scene present an interesting geological cross-section. The substantial amateur subsoil holds promise but is in need of cultivation. Surmounting this and slightly inter-mixed is a fertile and productive topsoil broken dramatically in places by some exciting outcrops. Overall, a fertile and promising landscape that will, I feel sure, produce some outstanding results.

I started by saying that the visit was satisfying. Why? Because it is a good to see wood being used sensitively and creatively. Stimulating because no matter how many pieces you see or whatever level of craftsmanship they attain, there is always something that is new and fresh. Humbling because I always see something that makes me realise I still have a lot to learn.

— A.W.

W.E.F. SUMMER SCHOOL, MITTAGONG

The World Education Fellowship is a non-profit-making, international organisation without political or religious affiliations. Their annual summer schools at the Frensham School in Mittagong are a riot of creativity and frantic relaxation! It is a residential, 10-day party, the choice of activities ranging from painting, sculpture and photography to music, movement and woodcraft. Many of our members have been involved as both students and tutors, the latter including Alan Wale, Richard Crosland, Leon Sadubin and Laurens Otto.

Says Richard: "It is like taking time out from the real world — everyone is there to relax but also to get as much out of his other course as possible. Instructors are only expected to work during the mornings and have the afternoons free to indulge in other activities. In my class of approx. 12 people, I had a complete cross-section of society — from academic to manual worker, from veterinary surgeon to retired spinster schoolteacher. They made pieces varying from clothes-hooks to presentation boxes, carved snakes to turned items. With equipment that was not in prime condition and a varied selection of hand-tools, it amazed me just what a determined amateur can produce!"

Alan has tutored there a million times —

"It's a holiday. It's a learning experience. It's a buzz. It's what you want to make it. Rise early to a clear sky and clean air. Maybe start the day with a bushwalk or a swim and then back to base to line up for breakfast in the communal dining hall. After swapping stories of last night's party, it's off to class — creative writing, calligraphy, stained glass, textiles, WOOD.

"After lunch and also the evening meal, the keen ones will return to their weaving or pottery whilst their classmates are playing cards, reading poetry, making music or enjoying a party. (There's always a party somewhere!) Or poking around the other workshops. The end result? A stained-glass panel, a sculpted head or some hilarious puppets, the memory of a dance routine. Inevitably, the well-worn cliché returns: "the more you give, the more you gain. It's great!"

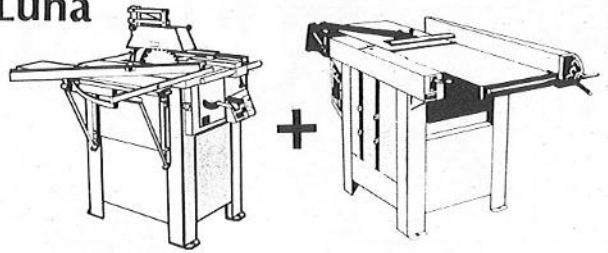
Michael Gill, your editor, will be tutor this year, coaxing some carving and wood sculpture from his carousing crew. It just might be the stuff of which future anecdotal articles are made.

ARTS LAW CENTRE

The Arts Law Centre, 1st Floor, 11 Randle St, Surry Hills 2010 (02) 211 4795, is now in its second year of providing legal advice and education to the arts community. They will advise on many issues such as

contracts, copyright, tax, insurance, studios/landlords and local government. They are supported by the Australia Council — don't forget them before and after you get into strife. Toll free no. (008) 22 1457.

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- **Wanted: 10" or 12" thicknesser.** Single or 3-phase power. No toys, please. 699 6220.

MATCH-MAKERS' GROUP OF NSW

Do you remember that classified ad in the last newsletter? Robert wanting work as an apprentice, 17, very keen, etc? Well, here's something to make you feel all warm inside — Robert started work full-time at the lathe soon after and Mike Darlow has a new helper. Here's hoping they have a long and fruitful association. Good luck, Rob, hope you are exhibiting with us soon.

THE THIRD ROOM A special report from our woodworking correspondent in Stockholm, SVEN NILSTHROM

At the recent launch of his new book, the eminent woodworker expressed the following: "Woodworkers around the world were not yet mature enough in the late 1970s to come to grips with the implications of my Third Room."

Our man in Stockholm was fortunate enough to be invited to a preview of this forthcoming fifth book to be called: "The Pragmatic Woodmachinist". What is the content of this remarkable room, jealously protected to this date? To enumerate its contents would be an epic task. In brief, the Third Room is nothing short of the miraculous — working technology at its Absolute Best.

Have you considered, for instance, owning a Scarlearetti S.P.A.-3800? Surely the most flexible system for the setting out, machining, fitting and assembling of the elusive Flamingo Joint.

Another machine, so advanced that it works beyond Euclid's mathematical laws and breaks free of the traditional restraints of Cartesian geometry, is "la Morbidelli". Your humble correspondent was awed by the array of yet more complex and highly specialised devices in this hidden basement room. Indeed, woodworking has finally entered the era of extreme profitability.

Perhaps the most remarkable technological concept of all is the Yakametzu Strada F.J. 2000, the veritable nerve-centre of the Third Room. Developed in consultation, over a period of 3 years, by a leading multi-national electronics firm, this phenomenon is intimately linked with every machine, concept and process in the Room. Aply called "The Wildcard", the Yakametzu is capable of introducing **RANDOM ERROR** in qualitative or quantitative term. This, surely, is the hallmark of true craftsmanship.

I can only implore the reader not to pre-judge this seminal tome. This publication will lead us with firm resolve into the 21st Century — its arrival is awaited with anticipation.

— Sven Nilsthrom.

(Translated from the Swedish by Craig Watson and Leon Sadubin) "The Pragmatic Woodmachinist" Lib. of Cong. No. 2003201. Published by Golden Books (High Tech. Div.) 1985.