

## From the President

The Association has passed a new milestone with the current membership growing to 200 members, the largest number since the Association formed 45 years ago. On page 3 of this newsletter you can see the names of the fourteen new members who have joined the Association in the last month or so. We warmly welcome them all.

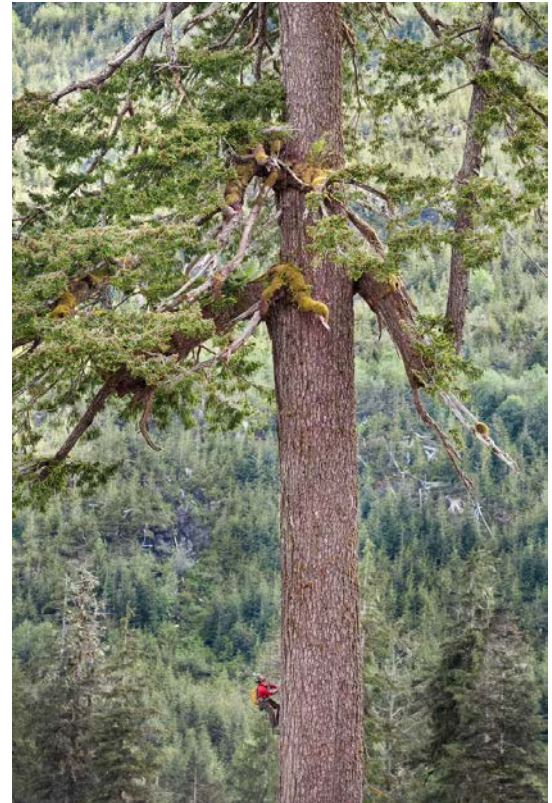
I think it is fair to say that our membership is more diverse than ever before. That is wonderful. It provides each of us with the opportunity of learning from each other, in one way or another. I encourage each member to participate in the activities of the Association and to suggest new and different ways that we can interact and assist members and contribute to the wider community. In the last newsletter I reported that the Committee was looking at the feasibility of holding a large exhibition of fine woodwork at a major location in Sydney, similar to the 1985 and 1987 exhibitions held at the Opera House. I can report that initial inquiries have not been encouraging. The daily cost of large venues in Sydney is eye-watering and the public's interest in attending such events seems to be have waned. There can also be large costs for exhibitors in transporting and insuring their work and attending the exhibition in the uncertain hope of a sale and securing future work. By contrast, fabulous collections of woodwork are being exhibited online and the most recent Australian Wood Review Maker of the Year competition, referred to on page 9 of this newsletter, is an excellent example of how amazing woodwork can be presented. So we are re-considering the large exhibition idea.

Also in the last newsletter I paid tribute to our outgoing secretary Mark Angelo. I am now delighted to inform you that Geoff McClelland has agreed to take over the role. Geoff has been an active member since joining the Association in 2018 and has recently helped with establishing our library in the workshop and some technical issues. Like Mark, Geoff is very approachable and keen to hear from members.

Finally, we have made some (small) progress in recovering the monies owed to the Association by the organisers of the Timber, Tools and Artisans Show. They have refunded \$100 and promised to pay the balance on 17 November. At the time of writing (26 November) the balance has not been received. We will persevere.

My very best wishes to you all and your families for the upcoming holiday season. May you all have a very safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

Phil Greenwood



*Douglas fir - Merry Christmas*

**News, News, News,****General Meeting**

Our final meeting of the year will continue with the traditional Members "Show & Tell" covering projects made for our '2023 Members Challenge'. Perhaps we will also have a lucky (or unlucky) door prize, a tool sale and definitely plenty of good cheer !

Venue is : Canada Bay Club (William Room)

8 William Street, Five Dock

7:00pm for 7:30pm start

There is plenty of free parking

Reminder : Meals and light snacks are available at the Club Bistro on the ground floor, now open from 5.30pm. Also, upstairs is the Baysia Restaurant, one of the Inner West's most popular. So feel free to arrive a bit earlier to enjoy a meal and socialise.

\*\* We encourage our Members to join the Canada Bay Club. Membership is just \$3.30 pa or \$11 for 5 years. Simply join at reception next time you visit the Club and start enjoying the benefits !

Members are welcome to invite family and friends. Visitors welcome.

**Members Challenge**

You have until the General Meeting to add your finishing touches! All will be revealed on Monday, 4th December.

**Sydney Royal Easter Show**

Entries for the 2024 Royal Easter Show woodwork competitions have opened. All members are encouraged to consider entering a piece of work. Entries close on January 17th, 2024; delivery of the items to be made to the Arts and Crafts Pavilion at the Sydney Show Ground, Sydney Olympic Park, NSW on 8 and 9 March 2024.

**The library at our Abbotsford workshop**

When next at the workshop, have a look at our library of numerous woodwork books and magazines all of which are available for members to borrow.

There is a wide range of woodwork books such as the "woodworkers bible", The Technique of Furniture Making by Ernest Joyce, books by Tage Frid, books on wood carving and woodturning and the list goes on.

For a complete list of the books in our library, click here [WWA Library](#)

**Workshop closed over Christmas**

Please note that the workshop will be closed on Sunday 24 December (Christmas Eve), and will re-open on Wednesday 3rd January 2024.

## WWA Objectives

The objectives of the Association are:

- to provide a forum for networking and to encourage camaraderie amongst all those who work in wood
- to promote public awareness and appreciation of fine woodwork
- to encourage creativity, design and development of skills and application by all woodworkers
- to represent professional and amateur woodworkers in New South Wales
- to promote the sustainability of fine woodwork as a career
- to promote awareness of environmental issues including encouraging the judicious use of our precious native timber resources and use of sustainably harvested, recycled and reclaimed timbers

## WWA Life Members

Richard Crosland  
Geoff Hannah  
Phi I Lake  
Kim Larymore  
Les Miller  
David Palmer  
Leon Sadubin  
Richard Vaughan  
Alan Wale

## New Members

A big welcome to recent new Members:

Andrew Colunga  
Laura McDougall  
Nicholas Miller  
Will Mumford  
Craig Nicholson  
Grant Parkes  
Katie Sharpe  
Martin Stanley  
Felipe Ulloa  
Mattice Verhoeven  
Merrilyn Wilde  
Alex Worley  
Sebastian Wyatt  
Peter Young

## WWA Committee

### Office Bearers:

**President: Phil Greenwood**

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**Treasurer: Gordon Joseph**

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**If you would like to join or assist the Committee or be more involved in the Association, please call any member of the Committee.**

# Douglas fir

## Editor

### *Traditions*

The tradition of Christmas trees began in the old German region of Thuringia. Celtic peoples of Europe venerated the Oak tree and it is claimed that in Thuringia in about 723 an English missionary, St. Boniface, encountered pagans preparing a sacrifice at an oak tree dedicated to the god Thor (Donar). Boniface took an axe to the tree, and, when not struck down by their god, he proclaimed to the awed pagans that a nearby fir tree was their "holy tree."

St. Boniface is reported to have said:

"This little tree, a young child of the forest, shall be your holy tree tonight. It is the wood of peace... It is the sign of an endless life, for its leaves are ever green. See how it points upward to heaven. Let this be called the tree of the Christ-child; gather about it, not in the wild wood, but in your own homes; there it will shelter no deeds of blood, but loving gifts and rites of kindness."

Christmas trees were introduced to England by Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III, and by Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert. German settlers introduced the tradition to America in the 1800's.

Australian pine plantations are usually Radiata (Monterey).

### *Douglas fir*

What does the Douglas fir (see the front cover) have to do with Christmas? Actually - nothing! But since it is Christmas tree season, this seemed to be a reasonable introduction!

It is native to western North America and is also known as Douglas-fir, Douglas spruce, Oregon pine, and Columbian pine. There are three varieties: coast Douglas-fir (*P. menziesii* var. *menziesii*), Rocky Mountain Douglas-fir (*P. menziesii* var. *glauca*) and Mexican Douglas-fir (*P. menziesii* var. *lindleyana*). - who hasn't come across Oregon timber in their lives?

Despite its common names, it is not a true fir (genus *Abies*), spruce (genus *Picea*), or pine (genus *Pinus*). It is also not a hemlock; the genus name *Pseudotsuga* means "false hemlock".

### *Applications*

The wood has historically been favoured as firewood, especially from the coastal variety. In addition early settlers used Douglas fir for all forms of building construction, including floors, beams, and fine carving. Even today much of the Northwest chain saw art is completed on Douglas fir logs. Some structures built from Douglas fir have lasted 150 years and more.

Douglas-fir is one of the world's best timber-producing species and yields more timber than any other species in North America, making the forestlands of western Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia the most productive on the continent. In 2011, Douglas-fir represented 34.2% of US lumber exports, to a total of 1.053 billion board-feet. Douglas fir timber is used for timber frame construction and timber trusses using traditional joinery, veneer, and flooring due to its strength, hardness and durability. As of 2012, the only wooden ships still in use by the U.S. Navy are Avenger-class minesweepers, made of Douglas-fir.

Douglas fir sees wide use in heavy timber structures, as its wood is strong, available in a number of specifications including kiln dried and grade stamped, and can be supplied in very long lengths to 60 feet. West coast mills are sophisticated in their processing of timbers, making lead times predictable and availability reliable. Paints adhere well to Douglas fir. Stains perform well on Douglas fir timbers with the mild caution that the natural colour of this species varies and care must be taken to ensure uniformity. Pitch pockets that may ooze resin can be present in timbers that have not been kiln dried.

The species has ornamental value in large parks and gardens. It has been commonly used as a Christmas tree since the 1920s, and the trees are typically grown on plantations.

Thanks to Wikipedia for information about the Douglas fir.



## Meet a Member

by Peter Dunn

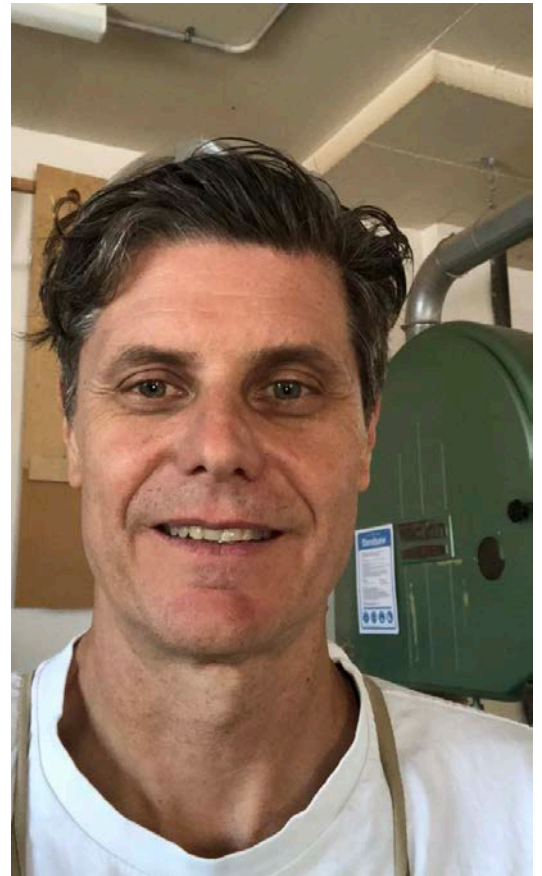
Hello members and visitors, this time I would like to introduce you to a very talented member of the association, John Gallagher. John commenced a new career when he was about thirty years of age, was married and had a young family. With the support of his wife, he moved to the south at Mittagong to get a solid grounding in his new career choice - a brave move that has paid off.

Hello John, is your age a secret?

*No, I'm 52 years old.*

Where were you brought up?

*I was brought up in the Sutherland Shire in Cronulla and went to De La Salle College at Caringbah for my secondary schooling. When I was 21 I packed up and went to live in London for about 4 years; I met my English wife in London. We came back here, got married and had children. I worked in hospitality for a lot of those years. I realised that I didn't want to be doing that work and I had a hankering for wood and to make things out of wood so I hunted out a place where I could go and really learn how to work with wood and learn the traditional skills - that's where Sturt came into it. I went down there with the family and met Tom Harrington, he was a lovely bloke, inspirational and a fabulous teacher. I have to thank him for where I am today*



You mentioned children?

*I have two 26-year-old children, boy and girl twins.*

How long have you been working with wood?

*I have been working with wood since 2003. I guess we would call that nearly 21 years.*

How did you get started with woodworking, was there any family connection?

*Yes there was, my dad was a cabinet maker, so I always had that exposure to that kind of world. I spent school holidays with him in his factory in Petersham. I guess he was more on the commercial cabinetry side of making. I didn't go into woodworking from when I left school as I have only been doing it for 21 years.*

*I discovered a bit later in life that it was something that I really wanted to do.*

When you decided to go down the woodworking path did you do any formal training other than the year at Sturt?

*No, just Sturt. It was in 2003 that I did the 1-year course at Sturt in Mittagong and that was a life changing year.*

After finishing your course did you go straight into your new career?

*I did, yes; I never really turned back from there. I went straight into a shared workshop for 3 years in Mittagong with some other graduates. They were from my year at Sturt and the year before me. We worked together in a communal workspace for three years. Then I moved back to Sydney with my family where I set up my own workshop.*

While you were working in the communal workshop in Mittagong did your group work as one entity or separate to each other?

*There were actually 5 of us and we all worked at our own businesses, shared the rent and some of the equipment. Occasionally we would help each other out if somebody had need of help.*

I noticed a large board room table in the gallery of your website. I imagine there would be times in the making of that a little help would be needed for lifting and shifting.

*I have made a couple of boardroom tables. They were both jobs that I got after I had moved back to Sydney, They were big jobs and I did need help with those. It is all right early on in the project while you have individual pieces of wood then as it progresses the sections and pieces become bigger and heavier and difficult to handle.*

*When I moved back to Sydney the first workshop space I rented was from 2007 to 2011 and it was in the corner of a big factory that someone else owned. He ran an entirely different business to mine. I knew him fairly well and he had guys that worked for him and didn't mind at all if someone helped me with a lift for a couple of minutes. I made one of those boardroom tables while I was there. The second boardroom table I made while I had an employee so it was a bit more manageable. I work solo these days.*



What equipment had you managed to gather by that stage?

*I had kind of everything that I needed, really what I have now. I had a full-sized panel saw, a band saw, a jointer and a thicknesser, a morticing machine and all the usual power tools and hand tools. I have upgraded a lot of that equipment since then, but I had decent enough examples back then.*

Do you use your hand tools very often?

*Definitely not as much as I would if I was making something for the pleasure of it. But because I teach classes and for new students the first six months is all about hand tools, I keep up my hand tool skills.*

*There are also times when a machine will take you only so far without building a complicated jig. Some processes are quite difficult on a machine, so it is just easier and quicker to mark something out and use your chisels or finish something off with a hand plane.*

I suppose that teaching class would involve re-sharpening chisels and planes.

*Yes, I certainly know how to sharpen that's for sure, and that's part of the teaching. I teach really in the same way I learned at Sturt, in a shortened version, while ensuring they learn the skills but not as much time can be devoted as at Sturt.*

*In their very first class, my students are handed a sharp plane but when they come back the next week they have to sharpen their plane. I teach them from class 2 how to sharpen a plane and the same applies to chisels, that's the way it goes and they just have to learn it. I am a big believer in having to learn all the basic skills. It is not as though the whole class learns at the same time so I can devote the time needed for the beginner student. Even if an existing student hasn't had the need to sharpen for some time I will have him or her sharpen, just to keep up their skills.*

Do you have some preference for the planes and chisels you would recommend your students should get?

*I use my father's tools as they have a sentimental attachment and for me my personal favourite is my old Stanley No.6. I use that for everything even small bits of wood as it is comfortable in my hands, that's my go-to plane. With that and my Veritas block plane I use those 2 planes almost entirely. We have some Wood River Planes for the students which are a lot like a Lee Neilson without the brass bits. They are heavy and do a good job, some Stanley sixes and five and a half. I go for Japanese chisels for the workshop.*

What timbers do you like working with?

*I've worked with oak a lot and I have been lucky enough to work with a fair amount of Huon pine. Huon, blackwood and jarrah are my favourite Australian timbers and from other countries American oak followed by New Guinea rosewood.*



Are you working on anything special at the moment?

*I'm just about to start on a commission for what you might call a wall unit, a low cabinet with drawers and doors and open shelving over the top. Funnily enough I received another commission of much the same thing to be done next year and I just finished a big bookcase a few weeks ago. Sometimes things seem to come in runs. Furniture timbers are very expensive now and I think in one way that could be good thing because furniture timber is a finite material, and a high price adds genuine value to properly made furniture - things that may be cherished and retained.*



Any plans to make something for yourself?

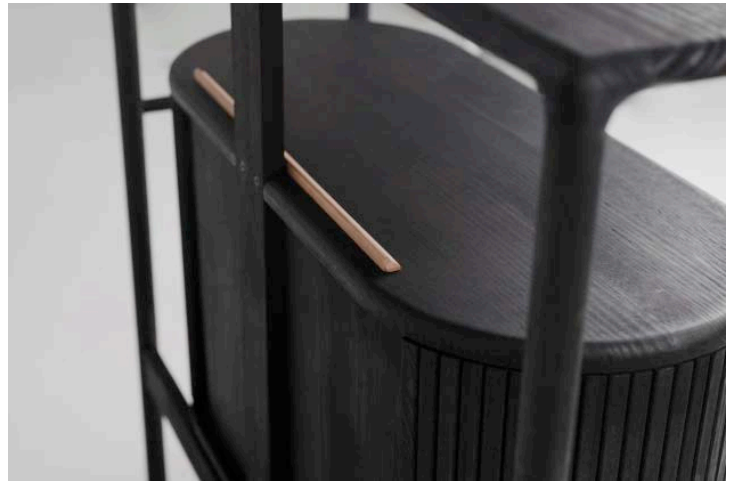
*I want to make myself a wooden kayak. I have the plans. It is to be of wooden strips which I have prepared and I have started to make the formwork. It will be a birthday present to myself. The groundwork is all there to get started and it is just a matter of finding the time. I am planning to give a little time to it at the end of December and January - at least a week perhaps two - just get it going so I see something to motivate me to do a little bit more each time I get a little gap in work. I would quite like to make a new bed for home, something special, which is on the to-do-list for next year.*

Well John, I think you have enough to keep you occupied for the near future. Thanks for giving up some of your time to tell us a little of your story. Readers you can see more of John's work or contact him through his website, [www.piecefurniture.com.au](http://www.piecefurniture.com.au)



## Australian Wood Review Maker of the Year 2023

AWR Maker of the Year 2023 has been judged; the winner is Wei Wu with “The



MingNoir cabinet”

Two of our talented and highly skilled members came in the top 15 of the categories they entered in the recent.

Alex Springall's *Tambour-topped chest* made of Huon pine, silver ash and southern silky oak with marquetry on the tambour, was adjudged in the top 15 in the Chests, Cabinets and Boxes category. In the Tables, Chairs and Desks category, Henry Black was adjudged in the top 15 with his *Chair 3*, a three-legged chair made from NSW rosewood and silver ash.

Congratulations Alex and Henry

Results are published at:



# Workshop Courses & Events

We ran 21 courses this year. Seven of these were run a second time because they had proved to be so popular. The short course program that we offer is only possible because of the contribution of the members who attend, the members who create and lead the actual events and the members who work behind the scenes to make it all possible.

This year 68 (or 34%) of our members chose to complete one or more courses. Of the 118 places available 110 or 93% were taken up. Most participants attended just one course, (63%) though a significant number attended two (22%) or three (10%). One person attended 7 courses. An estimate of the gender breakdown of our current membership has 14% women and 86% men. Women were 19% of the members who completed a course this year and made 25% of the bookings.

This year 14 people agreed to lead the courses, most working on more than one event. It is their willingness to share their expertise that creates the opportunities for learning that the short courses offer. Several committee members are also deeply involved in the organisation and running of the courses. In particular, the treasurer, Gordon Joseph handles all the payments and Mark Angelo who has assisted me with communication with members and in managing the Courses section of the website.

## Planning for next year

Our focus for 2024 will be to meet the challenge of the changing local short course environment.

Some popular courses from this year will be repeated. New course content has also been sought based on the feedback from comments from the membership and surveys. Overall, the intent is to continue the current balance of content designed to meet the differential learning needs of our members.

The current course length-based fees be continued into 2024. (one day - \$120, two day \$200 and four day \$360) The exception to this rule will be that a few courses that have significant material or other costs will have a higher fee that reflect these additional expenses.

## Advertising the courses

The 2024 program will be advertised in three phases. Firstly, a draft program will be presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> of December meeting so that feedback and suggestions can be considered. Secondly, the finalised program will be sent to all members as an email in the first week of January 2024. On that date the new course descriptions will be posted to the Association website and reservations will be opened. The current processes for booking and then securing a place will be continued.

Cheers,

Phil Nanlohy

## Dovetail making course

28 - 29 September

Anthony Gleeson

To contemplate the magic of the dovetail joint is to be entranced by its beauty and utter simplicity, evoking the nominal tail of the dove. The paloma, the bird of peace.

And so it was for two wonderful days, peace reigned in the Abbotsford workshop as five of us played with cutting and fitting dovetail joints under the calm, patient, expert eye of Peter Young. And notwithstanding the surprisingly unobtrusive and benign interloper who machined a few bits of stock, the peace and quiet focus of those two days remained uninterrupted and for me still hang in the air.

But a piece we did not make – although some fairly did. As Peter contrived it, the days were spent meditatively, conceptualising the form and functionality of the dovetail joint and focussing on the accuracy – perfecting the square and vertical cut and the match of pin to tail.

We explored saws, their teeth, their set, Western and Japanese, their dedicated design and use. As first task, we spent some time smoothing our elbows and “ungripping” our saws to master the gentle command of blade needed to cut accurately across the grain and down the vertical rip. We looked at jigs and marking out with compasses.

Mathematics were subtracted. Well, almost. Instead, we learnt Peter-proofing. Tails always first, according to him. And after his calm, steady-handed demonstration of a joint that came together from the saw, we attempted our own versions of competence under his encouragingly watchful and helpful eye. Unflustered by our peccadillos, Peter examined each one and brought it nearer to the illusory perfect fit, noting where skill was needed to match intent.

On the second day we took a detour into sharpening, reinforcing the unfailing necessity of a well-honed edge for the delicacy of the work. Then an adventure into the freehand joint. No markings, just honing the imagination, the eye and the hand to the figuration of the joint. Peter showed the ease with which it was done and our following results were surprisingly pleasing, again unerringly and helpfully examined by Peter. And then we kept playing, following the path determined by our respective deficits of skill, guided by Peter. So quickly and enjoyably two days passed.

For me, a few little takeaways. The barest elongation of the tail and pin seemed to me to make for better seating of the joint. And blue tape across the end grain made the task of transfer from tail to pin so much less fussy, clearer and more accurate.

Thank you Peter Young. And thanks to Saskia, Mark, Rod and Peter for the conjoint experience.

## Kumiko course

On Saturday 18 November six members attended our Abbotsford workshop for our very first Kumiko course. The tutor was Jason Bennett, who teaches Kumiko at various venues around Sydney ([Jason Wigwood Kumiko](#)).

The Kumiko technique of woodwork was developed in Japan around 600 to 700 AD. It involves the intersecting together of small thin pieces of timber into Kumiko panels. The small pieces remain in place through pressure alone which means that each piece must be accurate and fit snugly with its neighbour.

Kumiko was initially used as panels in shogi screens and sliding doors in the Japanese homes of the privileged but, in time, found its way into more average homes. There are numerous Kumiko geometric patterns.

In Japan the panels are made using a cedar or cypress. In Australia, timbers used to make Kumiko include the easier to work timbers such as jelutong, Huon pine, hoop pine and other like fine-grained timbers. Typically, no finish is added to Kumiko panels.



*Showing their completed Kumiko panels are L to R - John Evans, Saskia Friedrich, Kumiko teacher Jason Bennett, Andy Cavanagh-Downs, Troy Sellers, Geoff McClelland and Grant Parkes*

At the Kumiko course, attendees learnt to make the Asa-no-ha pattern, which is also referred to as the hemp leaf pattern, using supplied 12mm x 3mm strips of hoop pine. All work was carried out using hand tools (planes, chisels and Japanese saws) and various jigs.





*A completed Asa-no-ha Kumiko panel and some of the tools and jigs used*

Within each square in the Asa-no-ha pattern completed on the course there are 7 small pieces of 12mm wide timber between 22mm and 62mm in length. As with any woodwork project, the accurate marking up and cutting of each piece is paramount.

# Essay on wood

By James Richardson

At dawn when rowboats drum on the dock  
and every door in the breathing house bumps softly  
as if someone were leaving quickly, I wonder  
if something in us is made of wood.  
maybe not quite the heart, knocking softly,  
or maybe not made of it, but made for its call.

Of all the elements, it is happiest in our houses.  
It will sit with us, eat with us, lie down  
and hold our books (themselves a rustling woods),  
bearing our floors and roofs without weariness,  
for unlike us it does not resent its faithfulness  
or question *why, for what, how long?*

Its branches have slowed the invisible feelings of light  
onto vortices smooth for our hands,  
so that every fin-grained handle and page and beam  
is a wood-word, a standing wave:  
years that never pass, vastness never empty,  
speed so great it cannot be told from peace.

*Poem by James Richardson was published in the June 2014 edition of The New Yorker.  
James Richardson is the author of several books of poetry, including "During".*

# Trip to Japan

Dominic

Earlier this year, my partner and I travelled to Japan. We weaved through dozens of beautiful temples and shrines day-by-day, admiring elaborate wooden joinery and beautiful structures that have lasted for centuries. Japan's traditional shrine and temple carpenters or 'miyadaiku' believe that nature, religion and society are deeply intertwined, which is evident in their wood-working pieces. The Hōryū-ji temple in Nara built in 7<sup>th</sup> Century is recognized as the world's oldest wooden building.

This lead us to our most important day of our trip: a visit to the Takenaka Woodworking Museum in Kobe. It did not disappoint, It was my little piece of heaven, I advised my wife to eat before we go because we are going to be a while.

One of the most interesting things we learnt about was "Sashimono" a technique for assembling furniture and other wooden items without nails, using both simple and highly complex wood joints. In the museum, we were able to look at these structures and watch interactive videos of how they were constructed with the clever tools used.

The museum has a hands-on experience of taking apart different joints such as:

- Kawai Tsugite -Three-way Japanese Joint
- Mechigai Koshiire Kama Tsugi - Stepped gooseneck scarf with stub tenons,
- Impossible Joint (Osaka Castle-Otemon Gate's Pillar Splice) and
- Shiribasami Tsugi - Blind, stubbed, dadoed, and rabbeted scarf joint.

The museum also had 1000 tools displayed a development of tools used by Japanese carpenters from ancient stone axe to contemporary Kanna (planes)/ Nomi (chisels) / Geno (hammers)/ Nokogiri (Pullsaw) to ancient woodworking tools.







There are generally four types of master Japanese carpenters/woodworkers:

- The first, Miyadaiku, are experts in the construction of temples, shrines, or other large projects
- The second is the Sukiya-daiku, who are known for teahouse construction and for similar projects that involve delicacy and historic detail.
- The third type is the Sashimono-shi, who work primarily on building furniture.
- Lastly, there are the Tateguya, who do interior finishing work.

It was interesting to see the amount of focus and dedication these Japanese craftsmen put into their woodworking and tool making.





Having a lifelong fascination with Samurai 'Bushi' /Ninja 'Shinobi' traditions our next stop on our holiday was the castle town of Kamaoka, Kyoto to make our own miniature katana 'kogatana' (sword) During the workshop we were guided by a master swordsmith, who displayed the blade forging process of repeatedly heated, hammered and folded the metal, we then commenced this folding process 16 times. Full size Katanas take up to a year to be forged and are folded up to 1000 times.

Each Katana is built with a unique Hamon (edge pattern) which each swordsmith throughout history has their own individualised pattern to identify their sword. They can range from the layered, helix, wavy ones that could look like tidal waves, to the straight, thin ones, this is created through a clay burning process called "TSUCHI-OKI and YAKI-IRE.



*Make our own miniature katana*



*TSUCHI-OKI*

While in the ancient Samurai city of Kyoto we visited a Ninja dojo which provided a unique perspective of their weapons and use of wood in their deadly occupation. While many people associate ninjas primarily with stealth and martial arts skills, their tools were just as crucial to their success. Wood, being a readily available and versatile material, was often used in the construction of various ninja weapons. One such weapon I found of particular interest was a concealed shuriken (ninja star) which translated means "sword that's hidden in hand." The shuriken holster was made from Japanese Oak and was worn inside the ninjas belt line for covert use.

An important theme throughout the Japanese Culture and evident in their carpenters and swordsmiths was Ichigo Ichie (one moment) Which was best explained to us that you only have that one moment in this present time that can never be repeated again. To embrace and treasure each moment especially when doing something you love or spending time with loved ones.

With those who know my current high paced occupation this theme really resonated with me to slow down, and enjoy doing what I love, wood-working.





## On the hunt for Tasmanian timbers

Tim Major

Having recently returned from a road trip to the beautifully scenic state of Tasmania, I thought I'd share a couple of discoveries made along the way into the procurement of Tasmanian craft timbers. This information will hopefully benefit members who are intending to, at some point travel to this island of magic wood.

After an overnight trip on Spirit of Tasmania II I drove 25 minutes south east to Elizabeth Town where, on the recommendation of wood carver Carol Russell and at the end of a dirt road meandering through bushland I met Nelson who, with his father Rob owns and runs Tasmanian Native Timbers - 0406910148. Rob was away but Nelson was very happy to show me around their yard and generally talk milling and timber. An enjoyable visit.

Next stop St Helens where I visited Ivan and Tony Walker who own and run East Coast Specialised Timbers. Ivan and Tony were also very accommodating and happy to walk me through shed after shed .... after shed packed high with more beautiful timber than most of us could dream of. These were not small sheds, definitely worth a visit.



Down the east coast via Swansea and across to Hobart for a week during which I travelled south into the Huon valley to Geeveston where I met Chris Emmett who manages the Geeveston branch of Island Specialty Timbers. Island Specialty Timbers specialises in supplying craft timbers and is an arm of Sustainable Timber Tasmania run by Forestry Tasmania. The craft timber show and sales room is about the size of our Abbotsford workshop and is full of dressed, well priced quality timbers in standing racks that makes it easy to see what's available in different species.

After Hobart, I headed north to the centre of the island to visit The Wall - of course, and then on to Strahan where I met with Lee Clark – 0418599205. Lee manages the Strahan storage facility of Sustainable Timber Tasmania, a substantial yard containing salvaged Huon Pine logs and stumps that make your eyes pop out. Lee was also very accommodating, using his chain saw to cut for me a few chosen log pieces - no board timber available here.

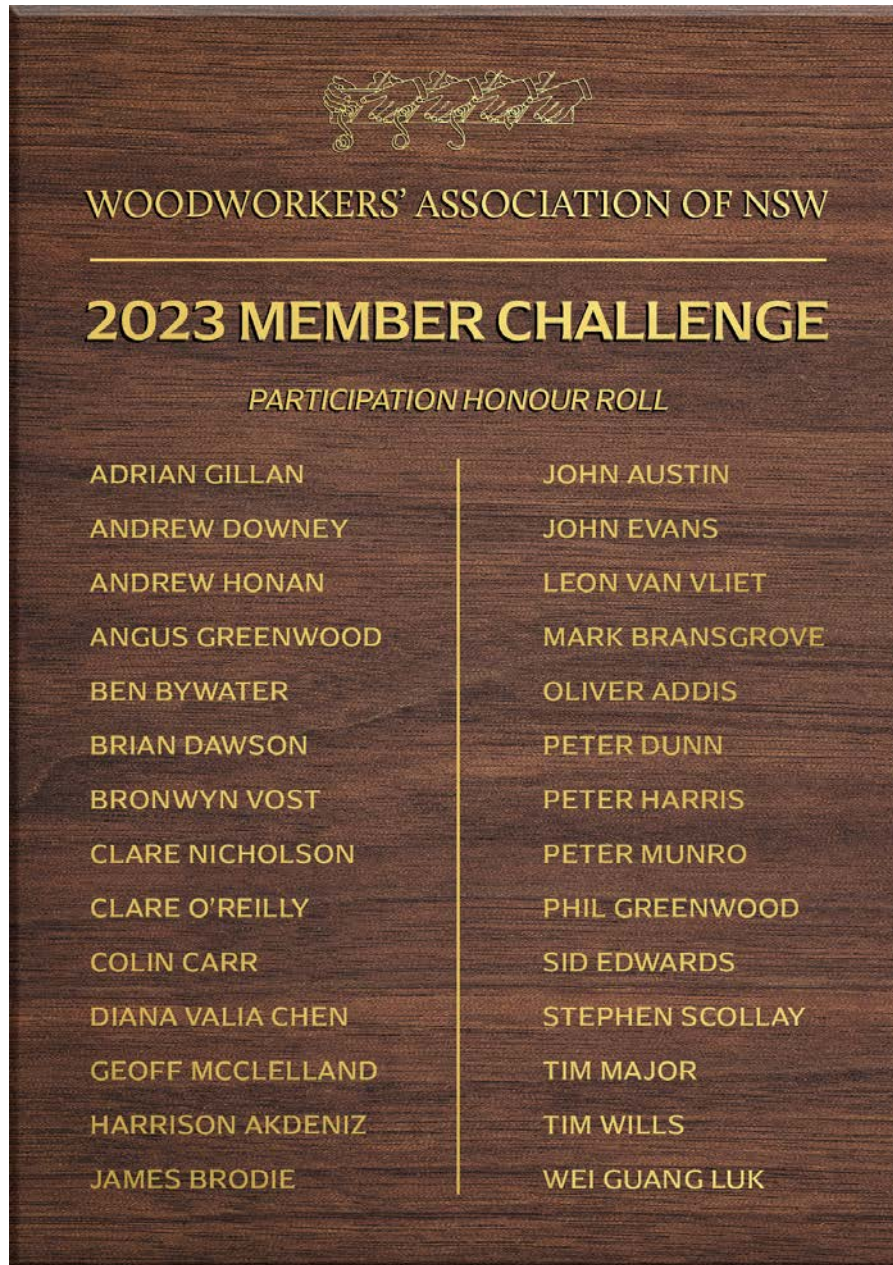
Morrison's Huon Pine saw mill in Strahan is also well worth a visit.

No one is giving Tasmanian timber away for nothing but, having visited more outlets than noted above I can say that each of the recommended timber purveyors were very fairly priced and pretty well on par with each other.



## Member challenge

Time for the big reveal! The fruits of four months procrastination will be played bare in the December 4th meeting - don't miss it!



Thanks to:

- Ben Bywater for suggesting this member challenge
- Tim Major for his work in preparing the timber packs
- Diana Valia Chen for compiling the 2023 Members Challenge Participation Honour Roll

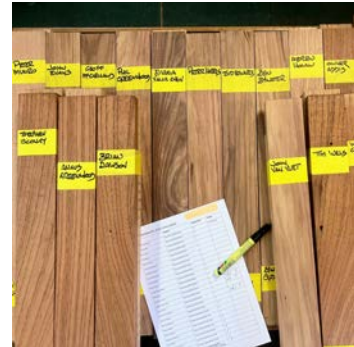


## Don't forget....

### Final General Meeting for 2023, 4th December- the big reveal!

The last meeting for 2023 will be on 4th December.

Expect a grand display of works interpreting the Challenge first presented in July to make an item from two lengths of dressed timber:



### Sydney Royal Easter Show - 22 March - 2 April, 2024

The Association sponsors two woodwork competitions at each Royal Easter Show, namely (i) Small Furniture Item predominately in wood and (ii) Wooden Box Work.

Members were advised details of the 2024 competitions by our Secretary in his 21 November email.

We are all encouraged to seriously consider entering one or more pieces in these two Association sponsored competitions

### Among the Trees invites you to take part in its latest OFFCUT CHALLENGE!

Create a product or project using offcut and scrap timbers - now includes flooring and decking under 1 meter so perfect for boxes, chairs/stools, wall art, marquetry and more!

Project deadline: Friday April 5th 2024

Exhibition of works: April 6th-May 4th, 2024

<http://www.amongthetrees.com.au/offcutchallenge>

### Do you have a future event that may be interesting to Members?

Email to: [newsletter@woodworkersnsw.org.au](mailto:newsletter@woodworkersnsw.org.au)

## For sale

This chisel is unused and has been hanging my workshop for some years. Excellent hand forged Japanese 24mm chisel. Sells for \$AUS 106 in USA. I want \$70. Can post for \$10 or pickup at Killara



Two Titan chisels made in Australia. 1/2 inch (13mm) and 3/8 inch (9mm) in good condition. \$20 the pair \$15 post or pickup from Killara



Brian has many chisels and planes for sale.

All enquiries, contact Brian Dawson - 0418 212 496

brian@valuesystems.com.au



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