



Issue 282

August 2011

Shed Notes

Newsletter of the Woodcraft Guild ACT Inc

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY 24 AUGUST 2011, 1930 - 2130

Venue: **The SHED**, Lions Youth Haven, Kambah Pool Road, KAMBAH ACT 2902

Conserving Wooden Objects

Meg Absolon, our speaker for August, is an Objects Conservator at the National Gallery of Australia, where she works to stabilise works of art and prepare them for exhibition. She graduated from the Conservation of Cultural Materials course at the University of Canberra in 2000, and has since worked on a broad selection of cultural materials, including maritime archaeological objects from the *HMS Pandora* wreck at the Museum of Tropical Queensland in Townsville; railway objects at the Ipswich Rail Workshops; anthropological collections at the Queensland Museum; and objects at Mawson's Hut in Antarctica.

Meg will be discussing the role of Conservation within cultural institutions, with particular emphasis on wooden objects. She will also explain the philosophical difference between conservation and restoration, and how this affects the approach to treating objects within collections.



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Please note that the opinions expressed in articles in this Newsletter are those of the authors alone, and do not necessarily reflect the views, or positions, of the Woodcraft Guild of the ACT as an organization.

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PRESIDENTIAL PALAVER

Our peripatetic (but never pedestrian) President Dan has rushed back from his latest attempt to single-handedly save the American economy from ruin to bring you this slightly familiar-looking, but nevertheless (he assures me) up-to-date, report on the State of the ~~Union~~ Guild:

2011 WWW Show and Exhibition – 2-4 September 2011

Vivien Laycock, our Exhibition Coordinator, and her Exhibition Committee are now finalising our arrangements for the Guild Exhibition. Points of interest to note are as follows:

RAFFLE: TICKETS are now available, and there is \$5000 worth of woodcraft prizes, so get your tickets NOW: at \$2 each, or 3 for \$5, or even 10 for \$16 – all a very good opportunity to support your Guild and win some wonderful prizes. First prize is an Exquisite jewellery box made by Justin McCarthy.

RAFFLE PRIZE DONATIONS: these are now due from members who offered to donate a prize. Please bring them to the Shed on one of the open days next week, or to the Guild meeting on 24 August.

Exhibition Entries: Hurry and get your copy of the Exhibition conditions, then submit your entry. Download Rules and Entry Forms from <http://www.woodcraftguild.org.au/exhibition.htm>.

TWWW Show tickets: Guild Members can pre-purchase tickets to the Show at a discounted price, but you MUST order them not later than 24 August to be sure to have them in time for the Show. Each ticket is \$7.50 (regular price is \$15). Guild Members who are Volunteers at the Exhibition will still get ONE FREE ticket for the day they are working at the Guild's stand, but why not buy a ticket for family or friends to join you for a wonderful Show visit?

Exhibition Space: The Guild will have a reduced amount of floor space at the 2011 WWW Show, because of the pressure of so many commercial exhibitors this year. The Exhibition Committee is planning the Exhibition area carefully to make it attractive to both visitors and exhibitors. There will continue to be space for sales, demonstrations and the all important Raffle sales area.

General Guild Business

Community Projects – Clare Holland House Benches: The Guild agreed several months ago to restore some 9 exterior wooden benches for the Clare Holland House hospice. SEVEN benches and a table have been completed, and the Hospice staff are extremely impressed with the quality of our work. Thanks to Terry O'Loughlin, John Winter, Mike Nash, Don Orr and several others for their volunteer efforts. Currently there is one more bench at the Guild undergoing restoration.

Australian Woodturning Symposium – September 14-16 2012, Eagle Hawk Resort: Canberra will be hosting this bi-annual Symposium in September 2012. Presenters will include local and international wood turners: Mark Baker(UK), Kelly Dunn (USA), Douglas Fisher (CAN), Molly Winton (USA), Kelly Dunn (USA) and from OZ; Richard Raffan, Bruce Bell, Terry Baker, Laurens Otto, Tim Skilton and others. There will be over forty 90-minute demonstrations, and the opportunity to get hands-on with a skilled craftsman hanging over your shoulder. Registration is open now via www.tymba.com.au, and the discounted 3-day ticket price is \$395.00 until 31 Jan 2012. Daily registration is available at \$150.00.

Annual General Meeting - 28 September: The Guild's AGM will be held on Wednesday, 28 September, at the Shed, and the Committee is calling for Members to nominate for a position as a Guild Executive Officer, or Committee Member. Please consider joining the Guild Committee and sharing in the adventures that 2011 / 2012 will bring to all woodworkers.

Dan Steiner, President 0415 133 606 president@woodcraftguild.org.au

COMING EVENTS

Internal

Next Monthly Guild Meeting: - Wednesday 28 September 2011 at 1930, at the Shed.

Presentation: David Dunnett

External

Next Triton Club Meeting

Wednesday, 07 September 2011, at 1900 – . (For further information, contact Burn Alting on 6281 0432, or visit the club's website <http://www.tocact.org.au>)

TW³S / Annual Guild Exhibition

02 ~ 04 September 2011 at EPIC – Our other major, and premier, event for the year. You should be putting the finishing touches on your entries! Exhibition Committee Coordinator is **Vivien Laycock (0438 877 711 viv_bungendoreart@bigpond.com)**.

Marymead Fete

Saturday, 12 November 2011 from 0900 to 1400, at Marymead, 255 Goyder Street, Narrabundah – the Guild will be represented by a modest stall, with all Guild proceeds donated to the Marymead charity.

ANNUAL EXHIBITION UPDATE

We are getting closer to the Timber & Working with Wood Show and everything seems to be on track. In fact, it is going so well, that the only real thing I can update is the information about our judges (see pages 11-12 below for their CVs).

Just make sure your **entries are in and paid for by 24 August** (next monthly meeting). Sales lists are downloadable from the Guild website at <http://www.woodcraftguild.org.au/forms.htm>. Any further Exhibition updates that may be necessary will hopefully be sent by email, displayed on the website, or posted on the noticeboard at the Shed, but if anyone has any problems of any kind, or wants extra information, contact me (details below) and I'll do what I can.

This is primarily a Members' Exhibition, and as Exhibition Coordinator this year, I am eager to get any feedback or suggestions from any members who might want to have a say. There will be a short online survey right after the show, but your thoughts or ideas are welcome at any time.

Good luck to all who are entering, thanks to all the volunteers, pity we missed you to all that aren't going, and hope see you there to all that are!

Vivien Laycock, Exhibition Coordinator 0438 877 711 viv_bungendoreart@bigpond.com

EDITORIAL EFFLUVIA

I have foregone the pleasure this month to make room for Vivien's Exhibition Update, but I can't resist highlighting, albeit belatedly, an email I received a while ago from our Shed Boss, Terry O'Loughlin, suggesting that **'we need a sign outside our drying rack which reads: "NO PLANKING !"'**. Indeed.

Editor

FEATURE ARTICLES

Sparkie's Safety Spot

This is the seventh in a series of articles on electrical safety by one of our resident Shed Sparkies, John Armstrong. Apart from taking responsibility for the mandatory testing and tagging of all our Shed electrical leads and appliances (and providing the same service to members), John is well known in concentric circles for his woodcarving; collecting for Lifeline book fair; and being a fund of esoteric knowledge ranging from the Golden Mean to Cumbrian Sheep-counting Systems. He has also been known to climb rocks.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY – ELECTRIC SHOCK & LIGHTNING STRIKES

It is something of a paradox that you can be killed by voltage which is less than the 240 volt mains supply, but you are quite likely to survive a lightning strike where the voltages are very much higher!

Electric shock can range from a gentle tickle to severe burns and/or major interference with the body's systems. It is a complex subject, and this can lead to myths and misunderstandings that can lead to stupid, or worse, careless behaviour. For instance, there is a common notion that water is a good conductor of electricity, so if you are wet, the risk of being shocked is increased. In fact, water is not a particularly good conductor, but generally it is a better one than your body, so the path that the electricity takes may preferentially follow your water-sodden clothing, rather than your body.

Many variables determine what injuries may occur, if any. These variables include the type of current (AC or DC), the amount of current (determined by the voltage of the source and the resistance of the tissues involved), and the pathway the electricity takes through the body. Low-voltage electricity (less than 500 volts) does not normally cause significant injury to humans, but exposure to high-voltage electricity (greater than 500 volts) has the potential to result in serious damage. If you are going to try and help someone who has sustained a high-voltage shock, **YOU NEED TO BE VERY CAREFUL THAT YOU DO NOT BECOME THE SECOND VICTIM OF THE SAME ELECTRIC SHOCK. Do not touch the victim** unless you are absolutely sure it is safe to do so, either by ensuring that the electrical source has been turned off, or by using insulated means (eg a wooden pole) to disconnect the person from the source.

A person who has suffered an electric shock may have very little external evidence of injury, but may be in cardiac arrest. Alternatively, they may have obvious severe burns, usually at the points of contact with the electrical source and the ground – the hands, heels, and head are common points of contact. In addition to burns, internal injuries such as spinal damage, or broken bones, are possible if the person has been thrown clear of the electrical source by forceful muscular contraction induced by the shock.

In general terms, the severity of a shock is expressed in terms of the current flowing – a value of current greater than 30 milliamps is considered to be serious. But why is there this emphasis on current? After all, it is voltage that is the primary force in the system. The point is that every electricity supply has a built-in (or added) internal resistance, which will limit the current that will arise. In many systems where a high voltage is supplied, it may be that the current is small by design. A good example is the supply to a car's spark plug – this will have a supply voltage of 10 - 20,000 volts, and touching the lead will give you an interesting experience, but it cannot provide enough current to be seriously damaging. Another example is the high-voltage insulation meter I use to check insulation between conductors (see Article 3) – the device uses 9V DC to generate 500 and 1000 Volts. It has an internal resistance of 1 Ω (Ohm), so even with a direct short-circuit, the current will only be 0.5 or 1 milliamps. As you are

measuring insulation resistances in the range 1 to 1000 Ω , the internal resistance does not seriously affect the readings.

Lightning is caused by the separation of positive and negative charged particles in clouds. This can lead to a recombination or discharge within the same cloud, or between adjacent clouds, or to the Earth. In nature, something like 90% of all lightning strikes occur within the clouds, and generally you cannot see them.

So there you are on top of the Matterhorn with your metal ice-axe, your alloy carabiners, and your 'tackety' (hobnail) boots, and a thunderstorm is approaching. The metal cross of the axe-head is quietly hissing, and there seems to be an odd taste to the air. What do you do? First and foremost, drop the metalware and get off the peak! Common wisdom says that lightning strikes at the highest point, implying that this is the shortest path between the cloud and the earth. This is nearly correct – from the visual appearance, it seems that the bright streak of light starts at the cloud and streaks down to the earth. It does not, however, travel in a perfectly straight line, as it does not necessarily take the shortest path. It actually follows a path that has already been established by a flow of positive charges from the earth UP to the cloud, and/or a similar tracer of negative particles from the cloud. Where there is a single tracer path, a single strike follows, but you can also have 'forked' lightning, following two or more paths.

The upward flow of charged particles will only start with you if you are the highest local object. So, if caught in the open, you should, as a minimum, lie down. Standing under a tree is not recommended, because (apart from the danger of falling branches) if the tree is struck the ground will be charged in concentric circles (like the magnetic field round a conductor), and if your feet are say 30cms apart, **and directed radially**, there could be a potential difference of hundreds of volts between your feet. It became clear long ago that this is a specific effect of lightning, when it was found that cows standing radially to a strike were killed, but others standing on a circle concentric to the strike were spared.

According to various authorities, the amount of energy (power) released in a lightning strike can vary from a few hundred watts to millions of watts. Perhaps the most important feature is that the energy is dissipated in a fraction of a second. For tall buildings, such as church towers or steeples, a strike could cause local heating and fire in a wooden structure, or fracturing of a stone one. A lightning conductor extended up from the apex and down to earth can provide an alternative path, but it must be of sufficient strength and thermal inertia to handle the current. It also, however, initially provides a good take-off point for those positive upward charges, thereby making the building on which it is mounted more likely to be the receiver. Also, you will still get those concentric rings of declining charge emanating from the grounding point, so a danger from this source still exists.

If you look at the electric pylons which carry high-voltage lines, you will see 4 main wires, or conductors (for the 3 Active and the 1 Neutral), suspended on arms from the main structure. Above them, at the peak of the structure, there is a further conductor. If you look carefully, you will not see any strings of the insulators which are present with the other 4 conductors. This top conductor is the lightning protector for the supply – a strike will likely hit this first, and travel down the closest pylons to ground. In the case of the urban distribution network by means of the ubiquitous 'power poles', however, there is usually no overhead earthed conductor, and it is quite possible that during a storm a lightning strike can discharge through the network, elevating voltages for a brief period. Unless it is very close to your system, it is unlikely to pose a threat to you, but the sudden changes in electric fields may affect sensitive electronic gear, such as computers. The best thing you can do – other than using a sacrificial "surge protector" – is to switch them off at the wall socket, BUT leave them plugged in, so that the earth line from the metal case is still effective. For the same reason, you should not use the copper wire phone system during a thunderstorm. (For a full description of the many aspects of this subject, I suggest you google 'Lightning' in Wikipedia.)

This is the last article in this series. If you have any questions relating to electrical matters, I will be happy to answer them in a further article, or by email.

As revealed in the last issue, I have become the first Guild member to personally test the safety mechanism of a SawStop table saw (*as opposed to setting one off with metallic paint on picture frames, eh Phil! Ed*), so I can confirm the instantaneous operation of its earth-leakage device, to the direct benefit of my only-nicked finger.

In wrapping up, I would like to acknowledge the help of John Jervis with many of the practical points covered in this series. In a follow-up to my last article, John has recently installed incandescent lamps (on a trial basis) on those of our Shed machines which can exhibit the stroboscopic effect I discussed.

I would also like to thank our Editor – this is the first time I have really had the benefit of a concerned and conscientious editor, and I am grateful for Rod's POSITIVE contribution to the series!

John Armstrong 0413 021 669 j_s_armstrong@hotmail.com

PLAYING WITH PLYWOOD

Years ago, I used to make the odd go-cart for my children using those old “Smokey” two-stroke engines. They were a lot of fun, but as the years went by and the grandchildren began to arrive, I decided to make something a bit more environmentally friendly. I started with a Billycart that you pushed; then two Pedal Cars; and finally an Electric Car; all shown in this photograph.



Now you may not have given much consideration to using plywood to impress the judges at exhibitions, but all of these cars have won 1st Prize at recognised woodworking competitions, including the “Dewlin” (centre foreground above) which I entered last year in the Canberra Show, so I suppose it's not only what you use, but also how you use it, that matters.

I picked up the plans for the Billycart in a hardware store, along with all the materials needed to build it. The plans for the Pedal Cars (the “Poppy”), and the 12 volt Electric Car (the “Dewlin”) are available for purchase from a business called “U-Build Enterprises” (<http://www.ubuildit.com.au>).

The Billycart is made out of 12 mm plywood, and its box-like construction provides rigidity. It uses a steering mechanism similar to that of a rudder on a boat, using pulleys and rope.

The plans for the “Poppy” and the “Dewlin” include dimensions for constructing the bending jig shown here, as the mudguards and bonnet have to be formed to shape. This is where plywood comes into its own as a construction material, as it is both flexible and strong. The bending jigs are different between the two cars, but the principle is the same for the mudguards, where two pieces of 4mm plywood are cut to the correct size, with one piece being wider than the other. They are then glued together and placed on the bending jig. When they are dry, waste pieces are cut out to form lugs, to be

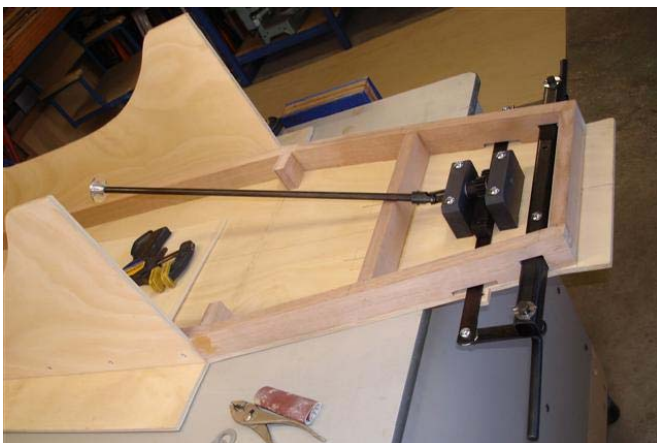


inserted into the rear side and bonnet of the car before being fastened with wedges. The bonnet is made of 4mm ply, which I soaked in the bathtub for about three hours, then placed on a special jig that I fabricated, shown at left below. It could, however, simply be placed, while still damp, over the body frame and secured, if there are extra hands to assist. The boot lid is also 4mm ply, formed over its frame, with piano hinges for operation. 9mm ply is used for the sides of the cars; and the steering wheel is formed from a piece of 9mm ply laminated between two 4mm pieces. The windscreen consists of a piece of 2mm clear acrylic plastic, cut to shape and fixed between 4 and 9mm pieces of ply.



Not included in the plans are the details shown at right above – the headlights and horn trumpet, which I turned out of Tasmanian Oak and Jarrah; and the spare wheel, where the rim was formed from 4mm ply glued between two 9mm pieces. I used 6mm dowel for spokes, inserted into a Tasmanian Oak hub. The outer rim has a “U” section routed into it to take a round-section rubber moulding.

There are drawings in the “Poppy” plans for the metal parts forming the operating mechanisms, including the front axle, steering assembly, and crankshaft. The “Dewlin” is a bit more complicated, however, as it is designed around a rack and pinion steering system (shown at left below); a foot and hand operated disc brake; and a 12-volt geared electric motor with controls (shown at right below). Just like I imagine restoring any old car would entail, half the fun was in tracking down, or making, all the necessary components. This took me some time before commencing the final construction, so I could make allowances for installation of these mechanisms as the body was being built.



I found producing a reasonably good finish on plywood a bit of a challenge, as I brushed on and sanded down many preparatory and primer undercoats before gaining a smooth base for the final spray-on top coat. For the “Dewlin”, however, I used one coat of acrylic spray-on putty between two coats of acrylic primer surfacer, then sanded down before spraying on three top coats. All up, this involved about ten or eleven pressure-pack spray cans, which prior to using I placed one by one on an electric shaker that I fabricated for this and other projects.

As a final comment, I would say that, while cars like the “Poppy” or “Dewlin” may not qualify to grace your lounge room, if done properly they can become treasured family items for many years, providing you with the satisfaction of knowing that toys you made with your own hands are giving great joy and pleasure to the children who play in them.

Leigh Brown leighandkatey@westnet.com.au

GUILD TIMBER SUPPLIES

Over the past few months, Grahame and Jenny Hargense and a team of helpers have been slabbing logs at Government House (left photo below). A storm late last year brought down a large number of trees in the Government House grounds, and the Guild was offered access to the timber, providing we supplied them with some quality items made from the timber. We now have a range of slabs laid out in the Guild drying shed (right photo below). Depending on the thickness, these will take from one to three years to fully dry. Timber will then be offered for sale to members, on the condition that some high quality items are produced and returned to the GG for use as presents from the people of Australia to visiting dignitaries.



The species now in store from Government House include English Elm (*Ulmus procera*), Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*), Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*) and some Redwood (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*). We should be able to provide good timber for turning as well as cabinet-making, just as long as you are patient!

We have also acquired green logs from a large Box Elder (*Acer negundo*), most of which still have to be slabbed. The genus “*Acer*” denotes that it is actually a Maple, but has pinnate leaves, whereas most maples have single-lobed leaves. The wood is relatively light, soft, and close-grained. It is reputed to be excellent for carving, and no doubt will provide useful material for toys and other products.

Robin Cromer 6286 8568 robinandjill@bigblue.net.au

Postscript to Robin’s Report:

Member and pen-turner **Steve Drummond** hasn’t wasted any time taking advantage of the salvaged Government House timber – he gleefully seized an off-cut of Elm (*Ulmus procera*), and has produced the impressively-figured pen shown at right. The age and size of the Elms salvaged promise to produce similar results in the seasoned slabs.



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) REPORTS

(SIG Coordinators: please note the deadline for newsletter input: 2nd Friday of each month.)

SIG MEETINGS (EXCEPTIONAL)

(For details of normal SIG meetings, please refer to the Calendar on the Guild website at <http://www.woodcraftguild.org.au/calendar.htm>)

SIG COORDINATORS' NOTES

Pyrography SIG: Our next meeting will be on **Sunday, 11 September**, from midday to 4pm(ish) at the Shed. I have been finding that an email reminder a week before the SIG works well, but if you're not on my list, at least the information is in the Newsletter (assuming you read it ...).

I would like to thank Chris Rumley and Peter Bloomfield for giving me the opportunity to be involved in Peter's presentation on decoration by scorching at the last Saturday Turning SIG. It was a great example of how diverse pyrography can be in interacting with other woodwork disciplines, and I had a great time. Pyrography isn't just the woodworking version of painting a picture on a flat surface. As a SIG coordinator and a seasoned pyrographer, I am seeking to promote pyrography by exploring as many variations of woodburning as possible, including scorching and experimenting with different surfaces like gourds, leather, horn, bone, paper, nuts, eggs – anything that makes sense. All this, combined with assorted shapes like turned bowls, square or rectangular boxes, and furniture, plus the enormous variety of timbers, helps the art of pyrography to continually expand and evolve.

The last SIG before the Working with Wood show occurred on 14 August, with most attending working on projects nearing completion for entry. It's a good thing the guild has purchased two new 'Ironcore' machines, as the Razertip pen nib finally wore through its wire and decided it had had enough. It also means the SIG can accommodate maintenance delays on other machines; or cater for those who want to sign their name on a piece, or just have a go. Also, I have 3 people interested in an 'Ironcore' machine, and only need another 2 or more to place an order for a discounted purchase, so get in touch if you want to take advantage of this offer. Good luck to everyone entering in the Exhibition, and hopefully the pyrography representation will inspire the incorporation of more woodburning into all fields of woodwork.

Vivien Laycock 0438 877 711 viv_bungendoreart@bigpond.com

OFF-CUTS

Miscellaneous Items of Interest

SHED SAFETY – FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The Shed is equipped with three types of fire extinguishers:

1. **Water-based (Large Red)** extinguishers suitable for putting out wood, paper or grass fires.
2. **CO2** extinguishers suitable for fires involving live electrical equipment. or flammable liquids.
3. **Dry Powder (Small Red)** extinguishers suitable for fires involving live electrical equipment, flammable liquids or cooking oil.

We also have Fire Blankets, which should be used if someone's clothing, or hair, catches alight.

Use of Extinguishers

There are four basic steps for using fire extinguishers, which can be described by the acronym **PASS**:

1. **Pull (Pin):** Pull the pin at the top of the extinguisher, breaking the seal (when in place, the pin keeps the handle from being pressed and unintentionally operating the extinguisher). Immediately test the extinguisher, aiming away from yourself – this is to ensure the extinguisher works, and also shows you how far the stream travels.
2. **Aim:** Approach the fire, remaining at a safe distance. Aim the nozzle or outlet towards **the BASE of the fire**.
3. **Squeeze:** Squeeze the handles together to discharge the extinguishing agent inside.
4. **Sweep:** Sweep the nozzle from side to side as you approach the fire, directing the extinguishing agent at the base of the flames. After the fire is extinguished, check for smouldering hot spots that could reignite the fuel.

Remember that you only have seconds to extinguish the fire, not minutes – but **only do so if it is safe**. If in any doubt, call the Fire Brigade.

Operational Safe Working Practices

- Remove the safety pin by pulling it sharply (this also breaks the plastic seal). Test to ensure that the extinguisher is operable, immediately after removing from mounting bracket.
- Always try to work in pairs for safety.
- Carry or drag extinguisher to the scene of the fire.
- Hold the hose near the nozzle, or hold any moulded handles.
- Squeeze the handles together to completely discharge the contents onto the seat of the fire.
- Operate extinguishers at their maximum effective distance.
- Never stand in an open doorway when attempting to extinguish a fire. This is usually the ventilation point for smoke, heat and steam, and you could be injured by their passage.
- Always back away from a fire.
- Always lay the extinguisher down on its side when empty.
- Do not touch the metal components of the Carbon Dioxide extinguisher, because the build-up of “dry ice” could cause frostbite to exposed skin.
- Avoid pointing Carbon Dioxide extinguisher applicators at people – frostbite, particularly to the face and eyes, may occur if they are hit by the discharge.
- After Carbon Dioxide extinguishers have been operated into a confined space, the level of oxygen will be reduced, and suffocation may occur if the operator remains, or the area is entered prematurely.
- Do not discharge water extinguishers onto suspected electrical fires. Water is an excellent conductor of electricity, and you may be electrocuted.

- Do not discharge water onto flammable liquid fires, as flammable liquid floats on water, which may cause the fire to spread.

A Follow-Up to Last Month's Safety Report

After switching off a woodworking machine, it is easy to forget that risks remain until the cutting edge comes to rest. The recent accident with the Sawstop table saw is an example where this has happened.

Bandsaws in particular, unless equipped with a brake (and none of ours are), can take some time to idle down – so please remember to **check that the blade is stationary** before doing anything around the saw table. Always try to keep your hands out of a Danger Zone extending in a radius of 100mm (4”) at least from the blade, unless the machine is switched off **and disconnected from the power**.

Ted Riesz, Safety Officer 6247 2886 triesz@actewagl.net.au

2011 ANNUAL EXHIBITION JUDGES

Leon Sadubin www.leonsadubin.com.au

Born in Mt. Carmel, Israel, 1948; arrived in Australia 1958. Both parents were designers. Studied for BA (UNSW) 1969, Dip Ed (UNSW) 1970. Taught in NSW Department of Education 1971-76, (including Industrial Arts); Guest Lecturer, School of Architecture and Dept of Industrial Arts UNSW 1979-2011; Part-time Teacher of Woodwork Practice, UTS Interior Design 1989. Attended Australian School of Fine Furniture, Launceston, 2006 (6 week chair design and making course); Sturt School for Wood, Mittagong, 2011 (12 week course).

As a Designer / Furniture Maker, commenced full-time workshop at Thornleigh, Sydney, 1977; founder in 1978 of Woodworkers Group (later Association) of NSW; founding Member and Director 2011 of Studio Woodworkers Australia.



Awards: Churchill Fellowship, to study organization of small furniture workshops in Denmark, and study under a master woodcarver in Bavaria, Germany. 1982; Life Member, Woodworkers Association of NSW 2001

Major Commissions / Collections : Newcastle University Great Hall Lecterns, 1981; Wedding Gift from Australian Armed Forces to Prince and Princes of Wales, 1981; Australia Council Conference area furniture, 1981-86; Forestry Commission NSW Research library furniture, 1984; New Parliament House, Canberra, 93 benches for public and administration areas, 1986-88; Powerhouse Museum, writing table for permanent collection, 1988; St. James Church Sydney, furniture for Chapel of the Blessed Spirit, 1989.

Thor Diesendorf www.thors.com.au

My interest in timber began as a kid, when I spent many evenings and weekends “helping” my grandfather make furniture in his shed. Granddad also sometimes helped me with my own projects, such as billy-carts, stilts and picture frames for Christmas presents.



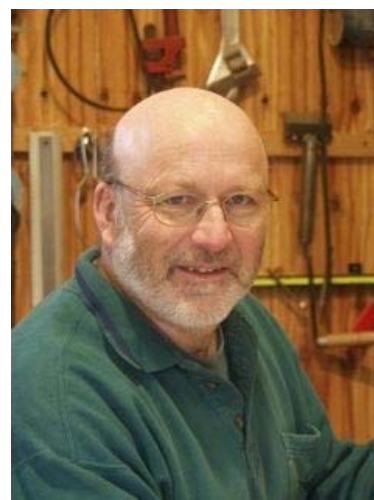
After leaving university, I worked with carpenter Paul Lynzaat in his backyard workshop in Braddon, making furniture and kitchens on commission. From Paul, I learned to make furniture with hand tools and only the most basic machinery. We used to collect timber from demolitions and store it in his shed. I was inspired by all the beautiful hardwoods we were salvaging, and began to get more and more timber from the local demolition companies. This developed into my business, Thor's Hammer, which now employs 12 people and supplies a full range of recycled timbers for products including flooring, decking, posts and beams. Thor's Hammer also operates a joinery, specializing in tables, entry doors and kitchen bench tops.

Over the years at Thor's Hammer we have experimented with a range of different environmentally friendly finishes for timber. In the end, we found a product called Osmo Hardwax Oil from Germany that we were happiest with. In 2008, I started a company called Osmo Australia to import the Osmo range of timber finishes from Germany and distribute them in Australia. We now have distributors in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth.

When I'm not working at Thor's Hammer, I like to be off doing something outside – skiing, cycling, bushwalking or kayaking, although housework often ends up taking priority.

Richard Raffan www.richardraffan.com

I began to turn wood in England in 1970 at the age of 26, after a successful career in the London wine trade. I was never a hobby turner – when I decided to turn wood for a living late in 1969, I knew nothing of the craft other than it involved a lathe and tools with long handles. I reckoned that if I enjoyed the craft, all I had to do was develop good technical skills and marketing, and I'd earn a decent living selling what I enjoy making. And that that's what I've done since mid-1970 – first in England; then from 1982, in Australia. Being the only turner juried into The Craftsman's Art, a seminal exhibition in London in 1973, was a great boost to my career, as that led to my bowls being in a lot of major exhibitions and on the British Crafts Council Slide Index Selection Panel from 1973 to 1980.



In 1970 I had to create a market for the one-off bowls I inevitably produced as a novice, but after two sales trips I got repeat orders. I was turning utilitarian bowls, scoops, and plates that sold to kitchen, gift, and souvenir shops; and I also sold a lot of delicate bowls, scoops, and boxes to gift shops and craft galleries. I never needed to consign work, and that's why I've seldom had work in American galleries. Immigrating to Australia was risky business-wise, because I had to start over in a new environment, but fortunately that didn't take too long.

I began teaching formally in 1978 when Highland Craftpoint, in Scotland, asked me to advise embryo craft businesses in the Highlands and Islands. Apart from that, I did very little teaching until I became a regular presenter for Dale Nish at the Utah Symposiums in the 1980s; then demand took off after my book and video *Turning Wood with Richard Raffan* were published in 1985. Subsequent books and videos increased requests for me to lead workshops, and, although I enjoy teaching, it's only ever been ancillary to my woodturning business, and a welcome change from my workshop routine.

I am proud of the fact that, unlike so many in the arts and crafts community, I have always been able to earn a good living by selling what I make, rather than teaching to pay the bills. But now, after forty years of turning wood, and as I drift into my retirement years, I'm moving away from the lathe and making a few little boats and other stuff using wood and found bits and pieces — and having a great time!

TWILIGHT ZONE

I just know I'm really going to regret this, but some weird impulse made me include this second offering from Steve Drummond:

I thought you might be interested in the pen blank I turned today. A 'smiley face' turned up in the wood grain. The wood is Hairy Oak (*Allocasuarina inophloia*). "Sometimes you look at the wood and smile, and sometimes it smiles back."

Thank you, Steve – incidentally, has anyone suggested that you might try to get out more often...?

(NB ALL MEMBERS: I do *not* want to be sent photos of the Face of Jesus in your breakfast toast, or similar – keep all such revelations to yourself! Ed)



A FAREWELL GESTURE

*As many of you know, Past President and Life Member Keith Houston has decided to forsake the company of his fellow Guild members and seek bucolic serenity in the bosky environs of Berry – in other words, he's bugged off down the coast, like so many retired Canberrans. Before leaving (although it has been hard to tell when he actually *was* leaving), he sent me the following item as a farewell gesture to the Guild. I will leave you to decide exactly what the nature of the farewell was...Ed*

You may have seen pictures of those fantastic pencil carvings on the web (see for example <http://themodernartist.wordpress.com/2010/04/19/pencil-carving-art-by-dalton-getty/>), and you may also have been one of the many who sent me copies, with the obvious implication: 'Beat that!'

Well, how could one dismiss such a challenge? So an old discarded pencil stub, pleading to be rescued from a box in the Smithy, seemed an ideal incentive to meet the challenge – and promised to be good physiotherapy for the injured hand. Yes, there's more than words lying in wait in those discarded remnants – imagine what might be lost forever. This one is a victory sign, of course, but then that depends on your viewpoint!

Keith Houston



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Please see the Guild website at <http://www.woodcraftguild.org.au/membership.htm> for detailed information about Guild membership, or contact the Membership Secretary, Mike Nash, on 6262 5096, or by email at mike.carol.nash@bigpond.com

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Members' Articles: Articles from members are very welcome, **providing copyright rules are followed and sources acknowledged.** Preferred format is in **Times New Roman 12pt** font, in an MS Word document, attached to an email. Articles will be published when space is available, and entirely at the discretion of the Editor, who may make editorial changes where necessary (especially if you can't spell). **NB:** If you are illustrating your article with images, please send them separately as JPEG files, so they can be adjusted to fit.

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Editor