

# The Woodworkers' Association of NSW Incorporated

ABN 51 544 261 324

June 2022

## From the Chair

The sudden passing of kind and gentle David Palmer has shocked and saddened us all.

At the April Annual General Meeting we celebrated with David and his family as he was awarded Life membership of the Association for his outstanding service to members, the Association and the wider community. Within weeks we have lost him. In this Newsletter, we pay tribute to David. A number of members have shared their recollections of David and we all extend our heartfelt condolences to Janet and his family. We are very fortunate that the Palmer connection with the Association continues through our members Michael and Jacqueline Palmer.

At the Annual General Meeting we also thanked the outgoing Treasurer, Oliver Addis, for his years of service and Steve Townsend for his extensive contributions to the Committee and the Association. Frank Duff kindly stood aside as Vice-Chair and Clare O'Reilly was elected to that position, with Frank remaining on the Committee. Gordon Joseph became the Treasurer and Mark Angelo was elected Secretary. Peter Harris, Richard Leniston and Phil Nanlohy were re-elected and we welcomed Tim Major to the Committee. It will be a busy and exciting year ahead as we emerge from restrictions and expand our activities.

Congratulations to members Leon van Vliet and Peter Harris for, yet again, taking the top woodwork honours at The Royal Easter Show this year. After making a series of prize-winning chairs, Leon changed to a beautiful side table this year. Peter crafted another very clever box to take second prize. The Association is continuing to upgrade and expand the machinery and equipment at our Workshop. Additions include a heavy-duty mortiser and air filtration. Workshop

bookings are now being handled by Andrew Honan at [bookings.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com](mailto:bookings.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com). Andrew kindly assumed that responsibility on short notice and has created a helpful online Shed Roster.

I hope to see you at the upcoming General meeting on Monday, 6 June.

Phil Greenwood

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)



Contents	Page No.
From the Chair	... 1
Vale David Palmer	... 2
News, News, News	... 4
Show and Tell	... 6
Meet a member – by Peter Dunn	... 7
Interview with Thor Diesendorf Owner of Thor's Hammer – by Andrew Honan	... 11
Who wants a Project?	... 14
Handy Links – by Fraser Cobb	... 15
Get it?	... 15
New Members	... 15
Many thanks to...	... 17
Get it solution	... 17

## Vale David Palmer

It is with the greatest sadness that we farewell David Palmer, a cherished member of our Association. David passed away on 15 May 2022 after a short illness.

At the Annual General Meeting on 4 April 2022, David was awarded Life Membership of the Association in recognition of his outstanding service to the Association and the woodwork community over many years. It was a happy and special occasion attended by his wife Janet, his son Michael and his daughter-in-law, Jacqueline. We were all unaware that David was unwell.

David was a fine woodworker who exhibited his work and modestly shared his great learning and expertise with others over a long period of time.

For the last 7 years David contributed diligently and conscientiously to the administration and welfare of the Association as its Secretary. This involved very considerable commitments of time and patience. He has always performed the task in a calm, careful and reliable manner. On a personal note, he was a great support to me in getting things done in the Association.

In addition, David performed the role of Supervising Workshop Supervisor and attended to the scheduling of Workshop Supervisors and, during the last 2 (covid) years, received all the bookings from members wishing to use the Workshop. As well, David conducted courses at the workshop for members and selflessly assisted many new (and old) members with their projects, helping them develop their skills with hand tools and the safe use of the workshop machinery.

We will greatly miss this kind and gentle man.

### **Phil Greenwood**

I have known David for close on 30 years and supplied him with timber for the painter easels which he made so beautifully. He was a very kind and friendly man, always someone you could get on with. He had a "laugh at yourself" humour which we could all have a good laugh with. I will miss him and remember him as a man who gave a lot to our association and helped many members.

### **John Brassell**

Like everyone, I was shocked when told about David's sudden passing. David did ever so much for the Association and will be sadly missed.

David joined us in 1991 and was one of our longest serving members. He held the role of Secretary for seven consecutive years, our longest serving Secretary since the Association was established in 1978. As we all know, he fulfilled the Secretary role in a most effective and selfless manner. He also willingly and generously looked after many other non-secretarial tasks.

He was a skilled and knowledgeable woodworker. In his capacity as a workshop supervisor, over the years, David guided numerous members with their projects and always ensured all work at the workshop, whenever he was there, was carried out in a safe manner. He accredited many members on the workshop machines and conducted or helped with various courses, one of them being on the safe use of our router table on which he was very skilled.



## Vale David Palmer

David's friendly and open personality and his willingness to help members made him very approachable by all. I will miss our chats and the many laughs we had over the years.

**Gordon Joseph**

I remember my first encounter with David - the Olympic Park Wood Show. Walking around the show, admiring the shiny new machinery I knew there was no way I could assemble even the basics of a workshop. In the mood for a chat, I stopped at the Woodwork Association stand; David's story of a fabulously equipped workshop in Abbotsford at a moderate cost was compelling and I signed up immediately.

On my first visit to the workshop, there was David again, happy to show me around - as I've seen him do many times since for new members as well as curious weekend visitors. He seemed almost to be a fixture; present every time I was in Spring Street.

My most vivid memory relates to the construction of a coffee table. The sizing of the main pieces was not a problem, but cutting straight finger joints in 65 x 35 mm stock was a minor challenge for me at the time! David took control (as he often did - usually on the router table). We cut the fingers on the bandsaw and I cleaned them out with a chisel. To my absolute amazement they fitted perfectly. This is not how my work usually proceeds!

Now whenever I'm seated at the coffee table, I remember David. RIP David, a quiet gentleman who always made time for others.

**Colin Carr**

Always met with an easy smile, David Palmer was a quietly mannered and genuine friend to all. A gentleman with a low-key dry sense of humour. His untimely passing represents a great loss to family and friends. Club members have also lost a highly knowledgeable woodworker who was always ready to guide and advise those requiring assistance. As club Secretary, David's diligence and commitment to the club was simply second to none.

David initiated me as a workshop supervisor. I clearly recall being taken through the workshop in a careful and methodical manner where he familiarised me with machinery operation and workshop etiquette. I am grateful to have known David, albeit for a relatively short period of time.

**Tim Major**



*David (middle right) receiving his Life membership with his son (Michael – far left), his wife (Janet – middle left) and Jacquie (Michael's wife – far right)*

## 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 woodworkers and promote 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 sustainable harvested, recycled and reclaimed timbers.

## WWA Life Members

David Palmer

Kim Larymore

Leon Sadubin

Phil Lake

Richard Crosland

Richard Vaughan

## Contribute to the Newsletter

Have you been working on an interesting woodwork project? Do you have some knowledge to share? Have you read a woodwork book and would like to provide a review for the benefit of other members?

Then please get in contact with Chris Gaskin and contribute to the next edition of the newsletter.

Chris Gaskin  
e: [chris.gaskin11@gmail.com](mailto:chris.gaskin11@gmail.com)  
m: 0423 554 406

## News, News, News

### General Meetings

The next General Meeting of the Association will be on the 6th June at the Canada Bay Club, 8 William Street, Five Dock, 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start.

Members are encouraged to arrive early to enjoy the company of other members and eat a meal at the bistro or restaurant available at The Canada Bay Club.

### Workshop Bookings

Our Abbotsford workshop is normally open for all members' use every Wednesday and Sunday between the hours of 10:00am to 4:00pm. Due to COVID restrictions, the numbers attending the workshop on any one day have had to be limited and it is therefore necessary to book a date with Andrew Honan, by email on the new email address: [bookings.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com](mailto:bookings.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com)

### Workshop Equipment

We have some new pieces equipment at our Abbotsford workshop.

A used heavy duty chisel mortiser was donated to the Association by the family of a deceased builder/carpenter. Peter Harris has checked it over and found it to be in good working order. It will be moved to its permanent position in the workshop in the near future.

Brian Dawson and Steve Townsend have donated to the Association a robust table saw tenoning jig. Thank you Brian and Steve. Peter Harris has been able to adapt it so that it can now be used on the sliding table on our table saw at the workshop. The tenoning jig and the chisel mortiser will provide members with another option to do mortise and tenon joints.

Airborne dust is a problem in most workshops including our Abbotsford workshop. To help ensure a safer workplace for members, the Committee has purchased two ambient air cleaners with electrostatic air filters. These will be installed after the requisite electrical work is completed.

Also the Committee has purchased a router lifter plate for our router table which will allow for quicker and easier router bit height adjustments.

### Henry Black is Back – by Phil Greenwood

It is with great pleasure that we note that Henry Black has re-joined the Association.

In the 1980's Henry was an active member of the "Woodworkers Group". In mid 1989 the Group incorporated to become the Woodworkers Association of NSW.

## Henry Black is Back - Continued

In December 1985, the Woodworkers Group did a profile on young Henry in their newsletter, which you can see on our website. It included the following information about him...

*Henry grew up in Lane Cove and attended Chatswood High School. His trade training as a Patternmaker was undertaken at HMA Naval Dockyard, Garden Island as a civilian apprentice. Patterns in sugar pine and ships crests in teak were the main work. He spent time in the Foundry and Drawing Office also. Upon completing his 5 years, Henry moved to Warman Equipment at Artarmon and worked on Jelatong, plastic and metal patterns for their production iron foundry.*



*Being a petrol head at the time, racing a Mini Cooper S, he next took a position as Experimental Technician at Leyland*

*Australia. During his two year stay he worked on patterns for mechanical parts and models for design and styling. This was an interesting place to work with a highly skilled workforce of various trades producing one-off cars virtually by hand.*

*Ballina Slipway was next, for about 18 months, making patterns for ships valves and fittings and local municipal requirements. Motor cycle racing had replaced cars by this stage. The move back to Sydney resulted in a 5 year job as Lab Craftsman at the Industrial Arts teacher training workshop at Uni of NSW. Besides maintaining and running the main skills workshops, Henry assisted in teaching of hand and machine skills. Industrial Design, Craft (Ceramics) and Ethnotechnology! were the major areas for study and these opened a door out of the engineering factory.*

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

*Henry was by now a member of the WW Group although in name only, besides some dabbling on the lathe and the odd piece of bedroom furniture, he found little time to participate further. The new job was little different from the old and when Stanley tools NSW offered him the job as education officer, he grabbed it.*

*Henry then somehow renovated a house, co-ordinated the WW Group along with Gerard Gilet and Peter Kolasinski, and in his spare time produced a piece for "Woodcraft Afloat Exhibition". The "Anchor and Chain" was sold and a large key commissioned and made. Cabinet making was done for Peter Adams, Sheetmetal fabrication undertaken and model making for Nielsen Design Assoc. as well. Thinking of undertaking a design-based course of study, Henry travelled to Hobart and there met Hugh Scriven who later held a design workshop at Sturt for local woodies. He then went to Canberra where two years away from the distractions of Sydney allowed him to concentrate on wood. Don Lee's expertise and magnificent lathe enabled Henry to bring to reality the ideas he had developed.*

Henry travelled to Canada and the States where he met many woodworkers, those who impressed him most were Sam Malouf and Garry Bennett. 1985 has been a busy year to date, Henry received a grant from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council to re-establish his workshop at Botany.

## Henry Black is Back - Continued

*Amongst work done this year has been models for the SRA vandal proof seats, models and prototypes of chairs for Parliament house, dining table in painted custom wood and glass, dining and easy chairs to his own designs, the padlock and key, patterns for the "ENA" restoration and architectural furniture for a new street plaza. Henry is attending the Crafts Council professional development seminars.*

*We look forward to Henry filling us in on all his activities since 1985!*

For the past 35 years Henry has lived in Concord. He has an extensive workshop and has kindly offered to host a visit for members. We will organise that when covid is a little less prevalent.

We are hoping that Henry will become a regular at our Workshop, sharing his knowledge and expertise. Welcome back Henry!

## Show and Tell

What project are you working on? Have you finished something you are proud of and would like to share? Then please get in contact with Chris Gaskin and your project will be included in the next edition of the newsletter.

Colin Gaskin and Chris Gaskin are proud to present their bookshelf.

**Purpose:** to be kept in the lounge room and provide a neat shelf to store children's books.

**Wood:** Silky Oak purchased from Anagote in Marrickville and Silky Oak plywood recovered from Colin's shed.

**Build:** Blind routed joints between the shelf and sides, recessed plywood into the back to create a flush finish. No dominos or biscuits used.

**Finish:** Sanded to 240 grit, and applied 3 coats of Livos Oil.

**Thanks to:** Peter Harris and Gordon Joseph for their assistance as Supervisors at the Abbotsford Workshop.



*Photos from Peter Dunn's chat with Vince Berkhout – read on to find out more.*

## WWA Committee elected at the April 2022 AGM

**Chair: Phil Greenwood**  
9235 2874  
[pgreenwood738@gmail.com](mailto:pgreenwood738@gmail.com)

**Vice-Chair: Clare O'Reilly**  
0423 360 023  
[Clare.oreilly@inet.net.au](mailto:Clare.oreilly@inet.net.au)

**Secretary: Mark Angelo**  
0405 303 646  
[secretary.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com)

**Treasurer: Gordon Joseph**  
0409 488 919  
[treasurer.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com)

### Committee members:

**Frank Duff**  
9061 3061, 0422 778 380  
[fwduff@icloud.com](mailto:fwduff@icloud.com)

**Phil Nanlohy**  
0416 022 252  
[philnanlohy@gmail.com](mailto:philnanlohy@gmail.com)

**Peter Harris**  
0419 164 098  
[peterh47@ihug.com.au](mailto:peterh47@ihug.com.au)

**Richard Leniston**  
0402 306 249  
[richard\\_leniston@hotmail.com](mailto:richard_leniston@hotmail.com)

**Tim Major**  
0418 214 993  
[itmajor@bigpond.net.au](mailto:itmajor@bigpond.net.au)

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

## Assistance to the Committee

The Committee is assisted by a number of members on a regular basis with the overall management and administration of the Association. They are:

Newsletter editor: **Chris Gaskin**  
[chris.gaskin11@gmail.com](mailto:chris.gaskin11@gmail.com)

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)

## Meet a member – by Peter Dunn

Hello members and readers, this time I would like to introduce you to Vince Berkhout. Although he is of retirement age it seems that he is planning a change in direction to pursue a passion that he has harboured for a good deal of his life.



**Q:** Thanks Vince for giving us your time to tell us about yourself. Is your age a secret?

**A:** Not at all, I was born in 1957, so I'll be 65 in August. I was the youngest of eight children. I am married to Debra

(project manager), and we have two children, Freya 32 (film composer) and Elias 29 (creative technology).

**Q:** How long have you been a member of our Association?

**A:** I have been a member since 2019.

**Q:** Did your parents play a part in inspiring you in woodworking?

**A:** Indirectly, they probably did. Both of my parents were interested in learning how to make things. My mum was an avid knitter (I remember school jumpers she knitted by hand first and later with a fancy knitting machine), and she was a very good seamstress (cutting patterns for dresses for my sisters). With eight children to clothe and feed anything that made the money go further was a bonus. Dad was also pretty capable with his hands. I recall some bookshelves with timber and steel that he welded. Later he started making silver jewellery with renowned jeweller Eric Car, as well as pursuing calligraphy when he stopped his jewellery-making. He also repaired and made things around the house. Mum went to night school in Perth to do woodworking, making some planter boxes which are still in use. Despite raising eight children they managed to find time for their hobbies.

**Q:** When did you notice your interest in wood?

**A:** I went to Applecross High School in Perth, where I did technical drawing and woodwork and metalwork. It turns out that this was a good grounding for my developing interests. My woodwork teacher was Derek Howlett (I don't recall what we made with him.) It was about then that I took up wood carving. I got some woodcarving books from Mum and Dad as well as some Japanese carving chisels, and I taught myself to carve. I'm not a very proficient carver (don't ask me to carve a face or an animal); I'm more of an organic freeform carver. I still carve now – sculptures, mobiles, and where I can, hand-carved components for my furniture.

**Q:** What happened next?

**A:** After high school I went to the University of Western Australia doing urban geography, history and French with a view to becoming a teacher. But my first experiences on primary school "prac" at the end of 2nd year Uni cured my interest in teaching.

## Assistance to the Committee - continued

Membership Secretary: **Gordon Joseph**  
[membership.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com](mailto:membership.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com)

Workshop Supervisors Roster and Workshop Bookings: **Andrew Honan**  
[bookings.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com](mailto:bookings.woodworkersnsw@gmail.com)

Workshop Supervisors  
**Peter Dunn, John Evans, Gordon Joseph, Richard Leniston, Peter Harris, Peter Munro, Tim Major, Clair O’Rielly**

## Meet a member – continued

I met my wife at UWA, and together we did some woodworking at night school (using economically-priced pine of course) making a chest, a bed and a coffee table which we took with us when we moved to Sydney in 1980. Although modified a few times, the bed is still in use today. In our first few years in Sydney I didn’t do much making, focussing more on travel and weekends out of Sydney.

**Q:** You mentioned that you and Deb are keen travellers. Can you tell me a bit about that?

**A:** Yeah, we’ve been fortunate enough to have had careers that enabled us to do a fair bit of personal travel.

In 1982 after a winter trip to Tasmania, Deb and I decided we wanted to travel more extensively, so we started saving for a big trip. In early 1983 we set out on six months travel around Asia, then on to London, travelling around the UK, Ireland, Europe and Morocco for another nine months. We got our old jobs back in Sydney (where we had worked as local council planners) so returned to Sydney in mid-1984. I worked in town planning for a council and the state government until the late 1980’s when I went into consulting. In the early 1990s Australia was in recession, and consulting work pretty much dried up. After sending about a dozen letters to the US, Canada, Singapore and Hong Kong, I got some favourable feedback from a few Hong Kong consultancy firms. So Deb and I took the children to Hong Kong for work for about a year: Freya was just two, and Elias was a new born. I worked mainly on a masterplan for the redevelopment of the old Kai Tak Airport (yep, the one where pilots had to fly between the high-rise buildings on the approach to landing). It was a great project, and an exciting place to live, but HK is a pretty demanding place to work, and with two small kids we decided it wasn’t a place for us for the long term. By the time we came back to Sydney in late 1993, fortunately the economy had improved significantly.

**Q:** When did you start to get into furniture-making more seriously?

**A:** When I was in my mid-40’s the family bought me some Triton equipment which I set up in a basement of our house in North Sydney. Eventually the Triton made way for more sophisticated machines that allowed me to build better things, but it was still pretty rudimentary if functional.



## Meet a member – continued

I spent a number of years with Richard Crosland in Alexandria, which was great learning from such an experienced designer-maker. I managed to make a couple of cabinets, a bed, and day bed, setting me up with better making skills.



**Q:** Did you mention that you also lived in India for a while? What was that like?

**A:** In 2013 our kids decided to head to London to have a crack at the music industry, and asked if there was any chance Deb or I could find work in London. I was working with AECOM, a US-based multi-disciplinary consultancy company in Sydney, and I put out feelers. A job was available in Delhi managing a team of about 40 master planners, planners, land economists, and landscape architects. It was halfway between Sydney and London, we'd been to India twice before as travellers, so we thought, why not? We had 18 months there. I worked on some amazing projects, we were able to travel quite extensively around the country, and we came away with some fabulous new friends. We returned to Sydney in 2015. From 2016 I worked as a contractor for Sydney Metro, where I finished my last contract in mid-2019.

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)

**Q:** A number of our members did the course at the Sturt School for Wood in Mittagong. You did it last year. Can you tell us a bit about that?

**A:** Deb and I had visited Sturt a number of times on some of our trips to Canberra, and I always had an interest in doing the furniture course there. After my last contract with Sydney Metro I thought more seriously about enrolling, and my decision was made when I attended a presentation from Lou Harris on her year at Sturt. When she said it was the best year of her life, I thought, yes, I've got to do it.

For me the best parts of the year at Sturt are that you get to learn from the best furniture designers and makers in the country, who are also recognised internationally. We had a great group of 12 students aged from 25 to 65, with a blend of women and men. As a full time course it also allows you to hang out with like-minded furniture nerds, learning something new every day. Life was good! The course gave us a solid foundation in the use of hand tools, which is now a basic part of my furniture-making, as well as all the essential woodworking machinery you'll find in a well-equipped workshop. Working towards an end of year exhibition certainly focussed our attention on developing a work program for each piece, and collaborating on its organisation. One of my main objectives from Sturt was to learn how to make "fine" furniture.



## Meet a member – continued

And although I'm still learning how to do that, the course far exceeded my expectations, and as a bonus it has left me with an additional new family!

**Q:** So, Vince, what are you making right now, and what's next?

**A:** I've just finished off a hall stand commission for a friend of ours in Kirribilli – integrating a shoe stand, key/ wallet drawer unit, and a coat rack. It's made from Tasmanian Oak, and is quite organic in its form. It's more a sculpture than a piece of furniture. And I've been able to incorporate a number of hand-carved elements, bringing me back to my early years playing with wood. I've got some bookshelves to finish for home, and a few commissions for family and friends to keep me busy this year.

In terms of what's next, Peter, I'm not a fan of the "R" word, so after going back to (Sturt) school to retrain, I'm planning to set up a furniture design workshop and studio sharing with fellow Sturt grad Paul Nicholson (probably best known for his woodworking tools, and his furniture school) who will be continuing his furniture school. We're on the lookout for space in the Inner West, and hope to have something set up in the next couple of months. My Dad lived to 96, so it's way too early for me to retire.

Well, once again Vince, thanks for giving us your time to tell us your story. I am sure it will have the same effect on a lot of our readers as it has on me and that is I could have fitted a lot more into my life if I had tried and grabbed some of those missed opportunities.



## Interview with Thor Diesendorf Owner of Thor's Hammer – by Andrew Honan

Thanks very much for doing this interview, Thor. I read a bit about your background and I listened to the Canberra Property podcast from early last year. Your background is very interesting. I just wanted to ask you a few background questions before we get into the business side of things.

**Q:** Were you actually born in the ACT?

**A:** I was born in London. My parents are both Australian. They were over there, when I was born. But I grew up here in Canberra; went to Lyneham Primary School and Lyneham High School.

**Q:** And I understand that your father was a scientist and grandfather an aeronautical engineer? And that you got your first taste of woodworking from your grandfather working in his shed?

**A:** Yes, my grandparents were in Sydney. My grandfather Tom was an aircraft mechanic in World War 2 in New Guinea. The Commonwealth Government had this Return Serviceman scheme where he could go to university. He ended up becoming a lecturer at Sydney University and designed the wind tunnel in the aeronautical school. His name was Tom Thompson and was on the Australian side of my family.

My other granddad (on my father's - Austrian side) was an engineer as well, but an electrical engineer, on the snowy scheme.



*The man, the myth, the legend - Thor Diesendorf*

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)

**Q:** I understand you started a degree at ANU; what faculty did you enrol in, before dropping out to start your business?

**A:** I did 1.5 years of an Arts-Science degree before the business got too interesting.

**Q:** And I heard you had this life changing experience. I think with Paul Lynzaart, with two weeks experience in a bus or something? Was Paul in Canberra too?

**A:** So, me and my friend Loren Lockwood, who was a carpentry apprentice, (actually for Paul Fox in Bungendore). We were starting a business together, and we're doing all kinds of things on the environmentally sustainable side of things - we were doing landscaping and carpentry and painting as well, a bit of everything. And we had a job building solar shutters for a house down the coast. I went around and asked Paul for a bit of advice on building ladders so that we could install the shutters. I was thinking to just build some really temporary ladders - Just screwed together. But then he got me to make them properly with wedged mortise and tenon joints, and taught me to blacksmith the hinges. Took about 2 weeks of evenings working in his driveway in the old bus he had set up as a wood workshop.

**Q:** Was this your first experience with Paul Lynzaart?

**A:** We met together at the NEIS (New Enterprise Incentive Scheme), which is a scheme to help you start a business. They give you a business course and if you are successful, they give you a small amount of money to help you get started, but also mentoring.

We started Thor's Hammer quite small and just build up organically. We started in my early twenties. So, at first, I was buying a lot carpentry tools.

**Q:** What was your first major salvage job – was it the old Kingston bus depot?

**A:** We did do quite a bit of salvage in the Kingston Foreshore area, but it wasn't when we first started, more like in the early 2000's. My first big salvage job was some old buildings in Duntroon including stables which had been converted into vehicle workshops.

## Interview with Thor Diesendorf Owner of Thor's Hammer – Continued

**Q:** So I'm interested in your machinery. What was your first machine?

**A:** I leased a five head moulder, a Weinig Profimat. It is a German machine, and they're one of the biggest manufacturers of machines for dressing timber.



**Going through the 6 header moulding machine**

**Q:** I thought you were an Otto Martin shop?

**A:** We do have quite a lot of Martin. Martin used to make a moulder a long time ago. I probably should have bought one back in the day, but I just felt like I couldn't afford it. They don't make them anymore. Weinig is like a long-standing company that's been making moulders for over a hundred years.

**Q:** So how are you finding this old Tip Top Bread Company building? Because I remember this as a Tip Top building in Canberra? I would imagine that it suits your purposes really well?

**A:** Yes, really well. It was a really good move from the Brickworks at Yarralumla, to find this place which was a little bit abandoned when we moved in.

Tip Top had shut down manufacturing here, and it was just using the back part of the building as a transport depot, and the rest of it was closed up and it was pretty run down.

It still had all the old machinery and stuff like that. And so yeah, the landlord put a bit of money in and we put in quite a lot of money and fixed the place up and cleaned it out. We bought a lot of new machinery when we did the move (from Yarralumla Brickworks), so that we could try to future-proof things a bit. We put a lot of effort into designing the layout and work flow process.

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)

I'm pretty interested in lean manufacturing and we were really looking at trying to create a flow in the material and process side of things. So, there's less waste, less walking between machines, all that kind of thing and it did work out very well.



**The shop setup**

**Q:** So how long have you been in business now?

**A:** It is 27 years now, starting in Yarralumla

**Q:** And how do you find on the business side? You obviously have a passion for recycling timber and the environmental side. Do you have the same passion to own your own business and to look after 32 people - to be the CEO, CFO, the technical manager?

**A:** It's pretty interesting. I think that was one of the reasons why I left university because it was so interesting. I started the business while I was at university, just started working, to get through the summer holidays, and it was really interesting dealing with all the different kinds of people that you deal with, when you're in business.

Like when you're at university it is a bit of a limited group of people, you know, kind of going down the education path. Whereas when you're in business, you're dealing with all kinds of people, from your customers to your suppliers to tradies.

**Q:** I was wondering about your clients, what are they like?

**A:** I think there's a bit of a mix. We're definitely not just working for, you know, the really high-end of town. Our average customer is probably in their thirties, forties, or fifties, and a home owner.

They might have bought the first furniture purchases from IKEA or from second hand shops. And then now they want something nice, and so, it's sort of within their reach.

## Interview with Thor Diesendorf Owner of Thor's Hammer – Continued

And then they want something nice, and so, it's sort of within their reach. I feel like it is within the reach of people who are in fairly normal jobs, but a little bit older and a little bit more money to spend.

**Q:** I heard on a recent podcast that, really, you're the only one, in terms of recycling timber for furniture at scale that is in Australia. I mean, there's people that recycle wharf, bridge and telegraph pole timbers, for architectural products. I know you do not deal much in outdoor timber because the moisture content is too high for furniture.

**A:** Yeah, there's quite a few businesses around Australia making floorboards from recycled timber or supplying posts and beams and stuff.

We're probably the only business doing the whole process, recycling the timber, making architectural products, and then also making furniture and joinery.



*Finishing sanding*

**Q:** Our last Woodworkers Newsletter stated IKEA consumes nearly as much as Australia's total annual commercial log availability. You mentioned recently that Australia is blessed with a large variety of recycled hardwood and really the US has only recycled Pine and Oregon.

I wonder if you had a view about recycled timber coming out of Canada or Europe, or even in the Scandinavian countries.

**A:** There's a bit of recycled oak coming out of Europe and the USA, and then mainly a lot of softwoods. It's not like the quality of our Australian hardwoods. There's a little bit of recycled Oak, but there isn't a lot.

I think a lot of old buildings in Europe were destroyed in the Second World War and in the development after the Second World War. Most post war building was concrete and steel.

So, there's not a lot of timber available, so you can't build a market if there is not the supply.

**Q:** Do you have demolition people you know? And so, you get a constant supply of timber - you don't have to go and chase it. It sort of comes to you?

**A:** We try and build up really close relationship with particular demolition companies. And so, it's like a win-win relationship and they can just put all the timber aside and we'll take it at a fair price.

They don't have to muck around trying to find customers for it and dealing with small amounts of timber, wasting their time, talking to people. We take everything from them, we don't say we only want this size, but we get a consistent supply of timber.

You know, there's some sizes that are better for us, like the old 4x2's - 100x50's in mm. This is a really good size for us because we can just split them in half and make floor boards or two decking boards out or we can use them to make a tabletop. But we have to take all the sizes from them, 100x75's, 100x38's all the odd ridge board pieces and all that kind of stuff.

You know, with these odd sizes, once there's enough of one size, then we can turn it into a bit of a product. We make barn doors out of the old ridge boards for example.



*Recycled timber waiting to be turned into something great*

## Interview with Thor Diesendorf Owner of Thor's Hammer – Continued

**Q:** What about the joinery processes, is that labour intensive?

**A:** Yeah it definitely is, but having the right machinery can reduce the labour significantly. And then, you know, we're going on this new adventure with this new CNC machine.

For example, our thickness-sander saves us so much time. After gluing things up, you put it through the planer head, it flattens it and sands it in one hit. We're upgrading our sander at the moment to put it in a three head machine, so we should be able to get a much finer finish and it will mean less hand sanding. It will be getting rid of like really boring work, the guys in the workshop will be doing more interesting work, you know, rather than just standing there with the hand sander going backwards and forwards. And once we have the CNC as well, it will be more about learning to operate it, final tuning of the joints and hand work, doing the final assembly and so on.

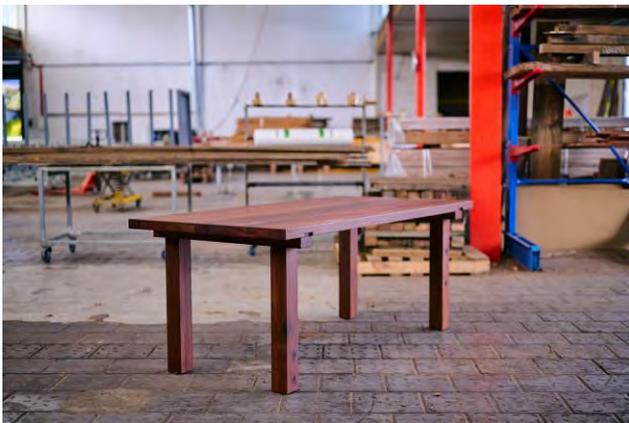
**Q:** And finally, I see you have a display of OSMO finishes in your display area. How have you found them (say compared with Livos)?

**A:** OSMO is a really interesting story; it was developed by a big sawmill and timber supply company in Germany; trying to find environmentally oils and finishes that gave a great result on their timbers. Most coatings come from chemical companies who don't know as much about timber.

OSMO developed the hard wax oil products back in the 70's, and these are excellent for making timber look great like an oil finish, but with the added protection and moisture resistance of the wax component. I was the national distributor for Osmo at first, but now they have distributors in each State and I am the distributor in the ACT. Their national distributor in Melbourne is very good.

The Livos product is also very environmentally friendly and I mainly used it and the BIO products back when I first started. Back then they were supplying oil varnish type products, so when we found the Osmo hard wax oils, we moved across. I haven't used it for a long time but I believe now they have got on board with the hard wax oils as well.

Thank you Thor for taking the time for this interview.



*Finished product*



*Thicknesser*

## Who wants a Project?

Here is a challenge for a member...

The Association was recently donated a "deconstructed" Jarrah (probably) dining table that has seen better days. It just needs some love and expertise to bring it back to operation. The top is 1100mm in diameter. It is available for collection from the Workshop. The first member to email [pgreenwood738@gmail.com](mailto:pgreenwood738@gmail.com) can have it.

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)



## Handy Links – by Fraser Cobb

Do you want to improve your wood working knowledge? Are you interested in watching some handy videos on wood working? Thank you Fraser who has compiled the links below.

If you know of any other handy wood working links, then please send them to Chris Gaskin ([chris.gaskin1@gmail.com](mailto:chris.gaskin1@gmail.com))

Description	Link
Hand tool woodworking guru	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/PaulSellersWoodwork">https://www.youtube.com/c/PaulSellersWoodwork</a>
Modern designed furniture	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/ChrisSalomone1">https://www.youtube.com/c/ChrisSalomone1</a>
Great all rounder, in depth reviews/comparisons	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/KatzMosesWoodworkingShop">https://www.youtube.com/c/KatzMosesWoodworkingShop</a>
High end epoxy tables	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/BlacktailStudio">https://www.youtube.com/c/BlacktailStudio</a>
Has fantastic tutorials e.g. 15mins on how to use a marking gauge correctly	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/MattEstlea">https://www.youtube.com/c/MattEstlea</a>
Modern furniture	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/GetHandsDirty">https://www.youtube.com/c/GetHandsDirty</a>
Very popular maker with great skills in many areas	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/achappel">https://www.youtube.com/c/achappel</a>

## Get it?

### Imperfection

Use the pictures on the right to guess the solution from the clue above. Solution on the last page.



## New Members

We are delighted to welcome new members Kain Tietzel, Henry Black, Bruce Chan, Eric Clark, Noel Davar, Paul Hodge, Brodie McMahon, Declan McMahon, Simon Perdriau, Harrison Akdeniz and Tim Wills.

We look forward to your involvement in the activities of the Association and meeting you at our bi-monthly general meetings as well as at our Abbotsford workshop.

# Advertising



## Boutique Timbers

High quality furniture timbers. Slabs up to 1 metre wide, boards, burls, burl slices, blocks, hardwoods, softwoods. Mackay cedar, Australian red cedar, Rosewood, snakewood, Queensland maple, Camphor Laurel, Huon pine, bluegum, redgum, greygum, flooded gum, tallwood, blackbutt, blackwood, pencil cedar, Hairy oak, N and S silky oaks, and more. Cheap Camphor boards and slabs for benches, bars, tables, cutting boards or food display boards.

Delivering to Newcastle, Central Coast and Sydney Metro. Small orders can be collected from Cremorne, Maccas Heatherbrae or Wyong.

**Boutique Timbers**  
**256 Spokes Road, Ballengarra**

16km west of Pacific Highway, turn onto Rollands Plains Road at Telegraph Point. Follow road for 16km, turn left at Spokes Road and travel 2.5km of gravel road. Visitors welcome from 7 to 7, 7 days a week.

Phone Mal or Greg - 02 6585 8296 or 0416 096 827  
 Sydney enquiries - 0407 613 002  
[boutiquetimbers.com.au](http://boutiquetimbers.com.au)

**Finishing for the recreational woodworker**

Take the mystery out of finishing furniture. Learn how to prepare and finish a wooden surface. Increase your knowledge of the different materials and tools used. You will learn how to finish with: oil, shellac and water-based polyurethane

For bookings call 0425 217 269, or  
 nik@  
[nikteplyrestorations.com.au](http://nikteplyrestorations.com.au)

*Terry Gleeson*  
 maker of  
 Fine Furniture

### Terry Gleeson's School of Woodwork

We teach woodwork, turning, carving, dovetailing and other joinery in our workshop at Middle Dural in Sydney's North West.

Tuition to suit all skill levels from novice to advanced.

Fully equipped workshop. Small class sizes.

1191 Old Northern Road, Middle Dural  
 Phone 02 9651 1012

[tgchairmaker@gmail.com](mailto:tgchairmaker@gmail.com)

[www.woodworkersnsw.org.au](http://www.woodworkersnsw.org.au)

**FELDER** **Hammer**

Immediate-Info:  
 NSW (02) 4735 1011  
 WA (08) 9209 9055  
 QLD (07) 5543 5599  
 VIC (03) 9018 8346

### Tradition - Innovation - Perfection:

A decision without risk

Outstanding results, innovative developments and impeccable quality standards make the woodworking machines from Hammer and Felder a class of their own.

**K3** Sliding Table Saw  
**RL125** Clean Air Dust Extractor  
**N440** Clean Air Dust Extractor  
**A3-31** Planer - Thicknesser

**FELDER-GROUP AUSTRALIA**  
 NSW Emu Plains, Email: [admin@felder.net.au](mailto:admin@felder.net.au)  
 WA Malaga, Email: [sales@kengineering.com.au](mailto:sales@kengineering.com.au)  
 QLD Darra, Email: [info@felderqid.com.au](mailto:info@felderqid.com.au)  
 VIC Melbourne, Email: [info@felderVIC.com.au](mailto:info@felderVIC.com.au)  
[www.hammer-australia.com](http://www.hammer-australia.com)

## Many Thanks to...

**Richard Leniston** who has been busy organising our stand at the 10 to 12 June Timber, Tools and Artisan Show at Rosehill Gardens Racecourse.

Our two new workshop supervisors, **Clare O’Rielly** and **John Evans**, for volunteering to help with workshop supervision.

**Phil Greenwood** for collecting the very heavy chisel mortiser and oregon timber donated to the Association and delivering it to our workshop.

**Andrew Honan** for accepting the invitation to look after our Workshop Supervisors Roster and member workshop bookings.

**Phil Nanlohy** for his diligence in rescheduling many courses over the last few months which has been challenging and time consuming, not helped by COVID related issues.

**Peter Harris** for his work inspecting the donated chisel mortiser and his in depth research into room air filters for our workshop.

## Get it Solution

Makers-mark



### Richard Crosland’s

#### School of Fine Woodwork

All tools are provided and work in progress can be stored at the Alexandria workshop.

Phone 02 9313 4142

[www.crosland.com.au](http://www.crosland.com.au)



Canada Bay Club membership - Just \$3.30 pa or \$11 for 5 years

Benefits of membership include - reward points every time you swipe your membership card to purchase food, drinks and other services at the club, discounted food and drink benefits, free parking, birthday rewards, health and fitness classes, discounted holiday accommodation in NSW’s beautiful Forster

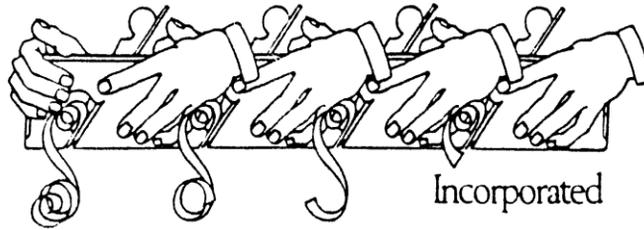
Join at reception next time you visit the Club.

More details at

<https://canadabayclub.com.au/membership.html>

# WOODWORKERS' ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W.

---



## DAVID PALMER LIFE MEMBERSHIP

In January 2022, the Committee unanimously decided to award Life Membership of our Association to David Palmer.

David has been a member of our Association for 31 years and he has given outstanding service to the Association.

Over the last 11 years he has contributed diligently and conscientiously to the administration and welfare of this Association as its Secretary. This has involved very considerable commitments of time and patience. He has always performed the task in a calm, careful and reliable manner. On a personal note, he has been a great support to me in getting things done in this Association where we are dependant upon volunteers and goodwill.

In addition, for many years David has performed the role of Supervising Workshop Supervisor and attended to the scheduling of Workshop Supervisors and , during the last 2 (covid) years, received all the bookings from members wishing to use the Workshop.

As well, David has conducted courses at the workshop for members and selflessly assisted many new (and old) members with their projects, helping them develop their skills with hand tools and the safe use of the workshop machinery

David is a fine woodworker who has exhibited his work and has modestly shared his great learning and expertise with others over a long period of time.

He is a most worthy recipient of the honour and recognition of becoming a Life Member of this Association.

It is very pleasing that tonight, by coincidence, his wife Janet, his son Michael and his daughter-in-law Jacqueline are also present.

Would you please encourage David to come forward to be presented with his certificate of Life Membership.