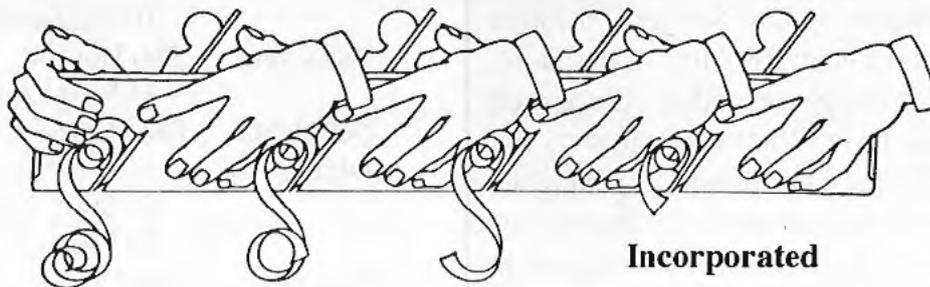


WOODWORKERS' ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W.



Incorporated

FROM THE CHAIR

Our next meeting will confirm a largely new committee to bring new energy to the challenge. Among our considerations will be devising stimulating activities for future meetings, organizing a new brochure, putting together the Hands On portfolio, arranging our stand at the Timber and Working with Wood Show, and setting up a catalogue of all our slides. We will also be working on some guidelines to clarify the intentions and expectations of membership adjudication.

You can offer opinion, advice, or even better, assistance, on any of the above so please do. We're all on the phone.

Crafts Council

Our Association is a member of the Crafts Council of NSW. This means that you are entitled to:

*Free promotion of your events in Eventsbrief in the quarterly magazine

*Promotion of your work to the corporate, architectural, interior design and retailing sectors by Designed and Made.

*Substantial discounts on the Crafts in Dialogue lectures and workshops as well as for the Monday Night Talks at Tusculum on design, public art and architecture throughout the year.

*Use of the gallery at The Rocks (probably at a discount) for individual or group shows.

*Discounted hire of a range of plinths.

*There is also a photography offer under discussion.

For details on any of the above just phone C.C.N.S.W. on 02-2479126 or fax 02-247641.

A.G.M.

Our next meeting will also be our Annual General Meeting. The formalities are unlikely to take any longer than our now usually brief general meeting procedure, with the only difference being the election of the new committee. As we don't have a surfeit of volunteers for the positions at this stage, this is most likely to be a confirmation rather than an election. Nominations will be accepted, in fact warmly welcomed, for positions not yet accounted for.

Our Articles require four Office Bearers, and permit up to five other members of the committee. Offering themselves for these positions are:

Chairman

Richard Vaughan

proposed: Richard Crossland
seconded: David Lockwood

Vice Chairman

David Muston

proposed: Richard Vaughan
seconded: Dale Dryen

Secretary

Paul Floyd

proposed: Nick Hill
seconded: Robert Howard

Treasurer

Robert Howard

proposed: Fred Blake
seconded: Geoff Hannah

Committee Members

Dale Dryen - Editor

Fred Blake

Rod Smyth

Get in touch with Nick Hill or Richard Vaughan if you wish to nominate or volunteer. You will be glad you did.

Uh Oh!

If you haven't paid your subscription yet this will be your last Newsletter till you do. Perhaps you's better check if you need to cheque.

OUR NEXT MEETING

At our next meeting, everyone who attends will get a free ticket for the door prize - a set of three brass modelling spokeshaves, those sweet things you may have coveted in the Garret Wade catalogue. They have been donated by Carl Scriber of 'Mother of Pearl and Son' (and a member of this Association). Carl will be there showing some other tools as well as both his and the Garrett Wade catalogues so you can find out where to get what, as well as getting the chance to indicate your needs. If Henry has recovered from the Tool Sale he will also be present with some of his choicest tools.

You are invited to bring tools you reckon may interest others, or maybe there's something you want identified.

You are also invited to bring photos/albums/portfolios of your work so everyone can enjoy the variety of work our Association covers. And you'll almost certainly pick up some tips at the same time. If you think your tools are sharp you may not enjoy comparing them with the exemplary edges of those that Bob Howard will be bringing along. In any case there's always plenty to talk about with sharpening.

This meeting will also be our A.G.M. (see details previous page) though rest assured that the formalities will be mercifully brief.

And it's true that the **beer will be free** for this meeting, along with red and white (bottles of) wine, juice, tea and coffee and tasty edibles.

Downstairs at the **Powerhouse Museum**, Harris Street, Ultimo. Use the entry in Macarthur Street and ask Security for directions. **Monday April 6, from 7pm.**

PARKING

We have been allocated a strictly limited number of parking places in the Powerhouse grounds for this meeting. If you wish to book one of these, phone Richard Vaughan after midday on the Monday of the meeting - first come, first served. In any case car sharing is a way of reducing parking problems.

Gardenesque

Michael Bogle, of "Modern Australian Furniture" fame is also curator of Vaucluse House and under this hat is organizing a 'Gardenesque Festival' to be held in the magnificent grounds of this stately and historic home on October 24. He has invited members of this Association to display and offer for sale, garden type furniture. Contact Richard Vaughan if you are interested.

WOODWORKERS' ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W.

Chairman:	Richard Vaughan	02 8181816
	14 Fred Lane, Lilyfield, 2040	
Vice Chair:	Geoff Hague	065 541207
	Minibah Road, Nabisac, 2312	
Secretary:	Nick Hill	02 9978788
	16 Chiltern Road, Ingleside, 2101	
Treasurer:	Bob Howard	02 8181816
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General	Bob Dixon	02 4892613
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Please phone committee members after hours.

Opinions expressed in articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee.

Minutes of the Meeting 10.2.92.

- * Apologies were received from Alan Wale, Laurie Olive and Fred Warhani.
- * The minutes from the last meeting were proposed by Kevin Jacups and seconded by Rod Smyth.
- * A new event for meetings was instigated by Richard Vaughan - the lucky door prize which includes members of the committee as possible winners.
- * Congratulations were given to Dale Dryen for her first newsletter which included the awesome task of learning the computer systems and typing the whole thing, as you can see, success was reached in one!
- * The Ian Norbury workshops were reported as full and posters, catalogues and magazines were available for sale from Fred Blake the organizer. Thanks to Fred for his persistence on the workshops.
- * The Fine Woodworking magazine promises an article on the Hands On show in issue No. 94.
- * The door prize will be designed to enhance the possit advertising for the newsletter by offering a free ad. for a donated item to be given away at meetings so as to incur minimal cost to the Association.
- * Many thanks to Geoff Hannah for his immediate payment of a commission to the Association after the sale of his cabinet.
- * Nominations for committee members are still called for the AGM and free refreshments on this, a mainly social night will be provided.
- * The treasurer presented the financial report.
- * Subs for 1992 are NOW DUE. PLEASE PAY PROMPTLY.
- * Bob Howard offered more photocopies of the chair making information from his lecture at the Fred Lane workshop. Call him if you require a copy.
- * The meeting closed, we were entertained by Peter Duncan. A very interesting and diverse discussion followed. Our sincere thanks to Peter.
- *The lucky door prize of a Japanese water stone was won by Fred Blake.

Nick Hill

COMING EVENTS

March 31 - April 11. Bruce Howard - Galvanised Iron and Corrugated Furniture. Macquarie Galleries, 83 McLachlan Ave, Rushcutters Bay. (See article on page 4)

Sunday, April 5th - Annual Tool Sale, 9.00 am at Burwood Girls' High. Entry \$2. (See advertisement on back page)

May 10 -30, Sturt Gallery, Range Road, Mittagong. Light Fantastic - a travelling exhibition by members of Club Fed, an ACT based group of designer - makers. Grace Cochrane of the Powerhouse Museum will open the exhibition on **Sunday, 10th May at 2 pm.** This exhibition was reviewed in the August 91 issue of this newsletter, when it was shown in Canberra. It has since travelled to Melbourne. This is the last opportunity to see the exhibition as a body of work before the pieces go their separate ways.

The following Sunday, **May 17th,** there will be an Open Day at the Sturt School for Wood. Spend the afternoon

liking wood, visiting the workshops, meeting the new director of the School, Tom Harrington, seeing the work of his students and the resident woodworkers in the production workshop, viewing the exhibition and discussing the pieces with two of the exhibitors, Tom Harrington and Don Fortescue. This will be followed by a barbecue in the Sturt gardens (bring your own meat and drinks). In the evening, the Friends of Sturt have invited Don to present a talk about his recent trip to Japan where he studied papermaking, woodworking and lacquer work. (Don's article on pp. 6-7 deals with another part of his trip.) Supper will follow the talk. The evening will cost \$7. If you are interested in any or all of the open day's activities, please call the Sturt Shop (048) 602083.

?Hands On 1993?

Organisation has already started for an exhibition by this Association in the State Library throughout September next year.

But do you want this exhibition?

I have written to the Library to formally confirm our booking and to arrange a meeting where one subject for discussion will be the possibility of our charging an entry fee to help cover costs. (This is not Library policy.)

BUT: We have no indication of who or how many want to be involved or of what you do or don't want of an exhibition.

We have nowhere near enough money to match, let alone improve on, the presentation of the last one.

Also, it seems clear that an event of this scale needs an organizer with a clear mandate and as much help as possible. Perhaps you are, or perhaps you know someone who is competent and is willing to do the job on a purely voluntary basis. Certainly, I am no longer prepared to take on such a job for free. I haven't yet heard from anyone who is.

Richard Vaughan

OUR LAST MEETING PETER DUNCAN, DUNCANS HOLDINGS

Peter Duncan addressed a large crowd at our last meeting. Duncan's Holdings is a long established sawmiller and processor of hardwood, in fact, the second largest in Australia. Many of the group are interested in expanding their use of eucalypts for fine furniture and were keen to hear of Peter Duncan's interest in supplying cabinet grade material to the craft and furniture trade in the future. Australia's beautiful, varied and unique hardwoods could become a high quality value added export as well-designed and constructed furniture, if first we develop their use at home.

Traditionally, firms like Duncans have processed hardwoods non-selectively, mainly with the structural engineering and building market in mind. We learned that 1st grade clear kiln-dried 25mm and 38mm sawn boards are now available in a range of widths up to 300mm in Sydney Blue Gum, Flooded or Rose Gum, Spotted Gum, Blackbutt and Brush Box and in 25mm thickness in Tallow Wood and Turpentine.

Duncans also sell logs to veneer manufacturers so that veneer is now available in the above species in 250mm wide sliced cut sections from Briggs Veneers in Sydney. Duncans are interested in expanding their range of cabinet grade products but are uncertain of the market. There was overwhelming agreement at the meeting that carefully dried and handled boards would be in great demand.

Square stock and thicker boards have proved difficult to dry without surface checking by Duncan's present kiln-drying methods even with reconditioning. They are keen to explore new methods in the future despite being limited by the inevitable commercial constraints. Nick Hill expressed the view that there was room for a premium product at a premium price in the market. He made the point that the cost component of timber in fine furniture was low enough to allow the maker to pay much higher prices for the material without greatly affecting the final price of the article. We all hoped this revelation may tempt Peter Duncan to investigate the possibility of selection of quality logs at the mill, which would then be dried specifically for cabinet grade usage. His response was unfortunately not optimistic. The capacity and willingness of sawmillers to train in new methods is the obstacle.

We all left the meeting feeling excited by the prospect of fine Australian hardwoods being again readily available and with the hope that this may mean the beginning of a new era of selectivity and care in the whole operation of timber production.

David Muston

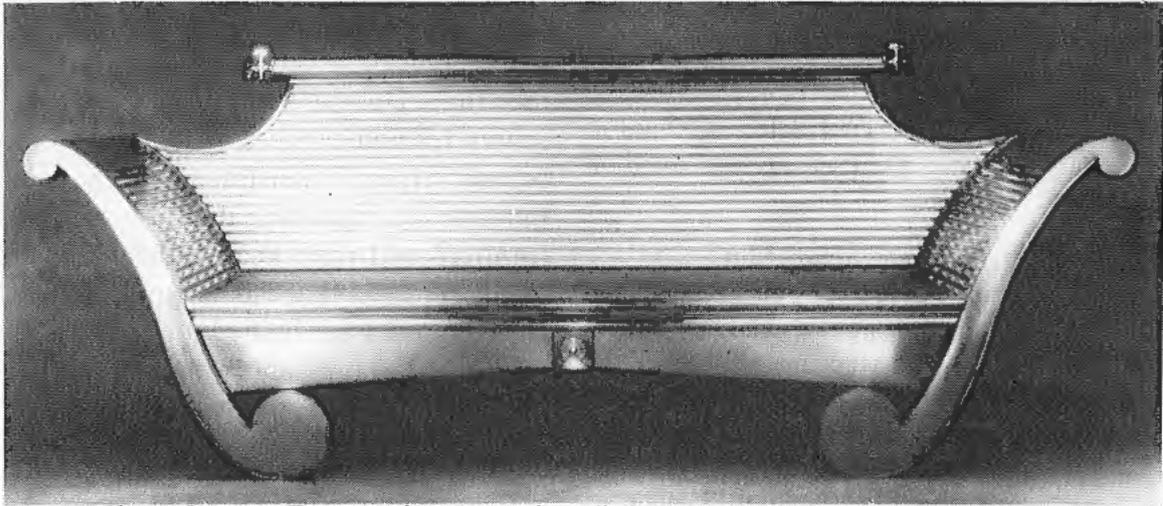


Photo: Courtesy Trustees of Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences / Penelope Clay.

A corrugated galvanised steel couch with brass fittings! A strange item of furniture to discuss in a woodworkers' journal you might ask. What interest can this piece of furniture possibly hold for woodworkers? And why should it be acquired by a museum?

The *Lysaght Couch*, made by Bruce Howard (b. 1943) in Lobethal, South Australia in 1990, is made of familiar Australian vernacular materials such as corrugated steel and brass plumbing fittings - provocative materials because they are not usually associated with furniture. Yet the form refers to the elegant styles of French Empire, German Biedermeier and English Regency furniture, some of which is represented in this museum's collection. However, it most closely resembles the Australian miner's couch which was also derived from traditional forms and is well-known to Howard as it is often seen on country cottage verandahs in South Australia.

These couches are known for their 'rolling pin' top-rail with turned finials - here replaced by casts of old bulls-head tap fittings (with horns to support the bucket handle). In the *Lysaght Couch*, because of its materials, the top-rail also refers to roof-tops and roof finials. Similarly, the well-known scrolled arms of classical furniture have been developed in this piece into elaborate scrolled arm-leg elements which are also reminiscent of decorative fascia-boards in architecture. And the decorative roundel is in the form of a brass bath-plug and chain. Other works of Howard's, which include tables, lamps and four-poster beds, refer to Koolgardie meat-safes, Tilley lamps, rainwater tanks and weather vanes - all undeniably part of Australia's visual and functional rural history.

Through its exhibitions, publications and public programs, the Powerhouse Museum seeks to communicate ideas about Australian material culture by making connections across decorative arts and design, science and technology and social history. This is usually carried out through presenting objects in interpretive thematic exhibitions. We believe the *Lysaght Couch* will be an excellent object to encourage cross disciplinary ideas to do with Australian decorative arts and design, and social and industrial history.

Based in Newcastle in NSW from 1921, John Lysaght was the original importer of corrugated steel (formerly corrugated

iron) in Australia, and the first to roll it in Australia. Australia became a large consumer of this material because it was easy to transport rolled. This particular narrow corrugated steel, known as *Lysaght Mini-Orb*, was well known as a decorative material in Australia, and in South Australia at least, was used to line the ceilings of country classrooms.

Its contemporary architectural use includes the ceilings in the Sydney Aquarium and the MLC Centre elevators. Lysaght and its parent company BHP were very interested in Howard's project and were helpful in providing suitable material for him.

Bruce Howard has worked for 18 years in South Australia as a conservator of paintings and ceramics. For three years he worked with Adelaide sheetmetal worker Craig Schubert, making utilitarian items such as water tanks and pump covers to learn the skills to enable him to make his own pieces. He not only hand made and finished all the elements of the *Lysaght Couch* including its internal steel frame and cast brass trimmings, but hand-rolled and finished all the edges. He also made a number of specialised tools to enable the fabrication of the piece. The work is sealed with polyurethane coating which was developed for the roof of the Adelaide Festival Centre. As well as protecting the surface and preventing it darkening with age, the sealer also gives the iron a surprisingly smooth silky surface.

Howard did not want to repeat a contemporary 'bush-furniture' theme, but wanted to make a new work using traditional materials and drawing on classical forms to produce a 'different Australian ethos'. While puzzling, the *The Lysaght Couch* appeals to the imagination and nostalgic memory through our familiarity with the forms and materials and the associations they hold for us.

The couch was exhibited in Adelaide in 1990 where it won the Craft in Architecture Award from the Crafts Council of South Australia and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in South Australia. It was acquired by the Powerhouse Museum from the Macquarie Galleries in Sydney in 1991.

Grace Cochrane, curator of Australian contemporary decorative arts and design, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.

In 1978 Rachel and I were looking for a VW Kombi to tour around Australia for as long as finances held out. We looked at a rather rusty old unit in West Pymble but decided against it. On phoning the joker who was selling it to decline the vehicle, we happened to start on a conversation about wood and those crafting type activities. The outcome from this chat with who other than Leon Sadubin, was that my father John Hill became a member of the fledgling Woodworkers' Group of N.S.W. Rachel and I spent our nine months on the road and 26,000 miles to return to regular employment in 1979. We remained interested in the WWG via my dad and frequented the various exhibitions.

As business in Naval Architecture flagged, I resigned to concentrate on building our house in 1981 and on completion found myself properly unemployed except for driving a delivery truck and intermittent contract drafting for hydrology engineers. My woodworking interests were awakening from my earlier boatbuilding activities and the knowledge and interest I'd received from the WWG exhibitions.

In 1982-83 I joined the Group and became one of the guinea pigs in the window of the OTC House '83 exhibition with Nick Mastermann building that fated non-event rowing skull. From that high point one could hardly go lower, so in my cupboard size workshop at home I started making spoons, boxes, stools and other ODD bits of furniture. I expanded into a 5 x 3m workshop shed in the back garden, constructed for around \$1500 from second hand materials.

My full membership to the Group was just gained as one of the first to be put through the vetting system in 1985 when I exhibited at the first Opera show. (I'd arrived; my madness and destiny were sealed.)

From this show commissions began to arrive and that false sense of security had fastened its grasp on me. In '85 I took on with Phillip Bohringer the newsletter editorship and in 1989 moved to the prestigious job of secretary of the Association.

I have exhibited in every event since 1985, large or small and instigated the numerous small events, which I enjoyed organising and liaising with the various galleries, promoters and crafts shows to provide an ongoing exposure of the Woodworkers Association between the infrequent large self promotions as in the Opera house and now the Library.

Over these past nine years because of close involvement with the Association I've firstly managed to develop my own business and I've also developed my skills through being tutored and workshoped via the various events promoted by the members and committees. I've

also found numerous good friends and regular acquaintances who are essential for the furthering of business needs, through technical knowledge, suppliers, and social interaction. I also believe I've been able to pass on the knowledge and enthusiasm for this wooden activity to others, which I feel unfortunately has been sometimes forgotten by other long term members.

I find it time to step down as secretary and hope the new committee will continue to develop enthusiasm in the Association as the only way the Association can develop is to have a diverse group of people with plenty to say and give to further the voluntary nature of the Association. I must say the aftermath of the recent exhibition has left me somewhat disappointed with the direction that these events are going, but I hope that a serious, wholly professional approach is the way further events will be staged to relinquish the awesome task from the volunteer committees, so as those with the infrastructures at their disposal can work for us and independently of in-house disagreements. Exhibitors can then get on with the wooden task at hand.

Nick Hill

Endangered Wildlife of Australia Exhibition

The Grand Hall of the State Bank Centre in Adelaide was filled on the evening of 26th February with woodworkers and guests, as Ainsley Pyne introduced the S.A. Governor, Dame Roma Mitchell, to open the Exhibition and announce the prize winners selected by Ian Norbury. Some 60 exhibits were on display, covering miniatures, relief carving, sculpture, functional pieces, marquetry and an innovative section: combined artistic creations by jewellers and turners.

Matthew Harding of NSW presented three fine pieces. One of his two wonderfully executed frogs "Daintree Survival" - Giant Tree Frog, in white beech, shared the major cash prize with Silvio Apponyi's large Pignose Turtle in red gum, Simon Ramsey of the ACT won the Functional section with his clean, whimsical "Pottoroo Bowl" in Queensland walnut.

The catalogue, written with much work by Ainsley Pyne, features notes on the endangered species represented. All profits will go to the World Wide Fund for Nature, Australia.

Fred Blake

NOTES FROM THE NORTH - part 1 of a short series of personal reflections on the current designer-making scene in the UK.

by Donald Fortescue

Last year I was fortunate enough to be able to tear myself away from my order book (not exactly bulging!) and my workshop for a seven month study tour of Japan and the U.K.. Like several of our members before me I was assisted by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and by a small grant from the Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade. I won't bore you with the details of in-flight movies or out of date weather reports - I'd prefer to leave such for the uncontested raconteurs of the group! I won't even tell you about the exciting times I had in Japan studying papermaking, woodworking and lacquer work with some of the leading professionals there. As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter I will be talking on these matters and showing slides at Sturt Craft Centre in Mittagong during May and anyone who wants to hear about it will just have to make the effort to turn up!

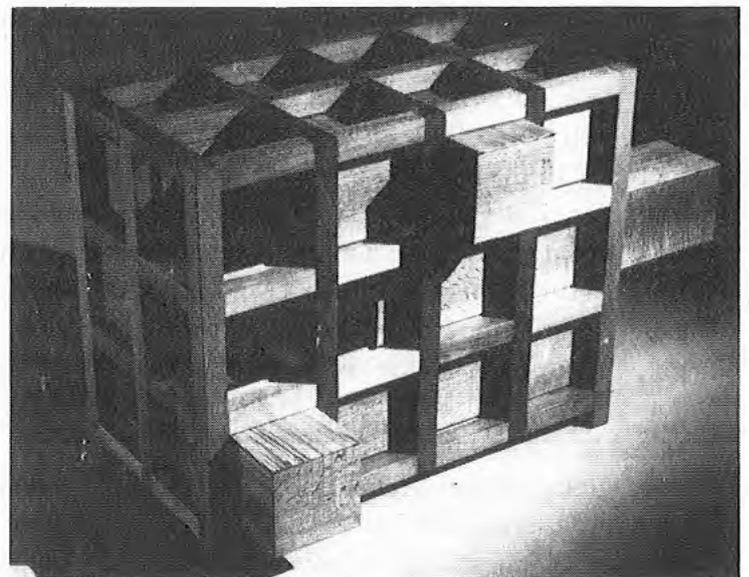
What I would like to talk about here, though, are some of my experiences in England. Many of you have had the good fortune to visit the old country and exchange rustic tales with the endemic woodies. In fact, many of you were originally poms before seeing the light - the bright, hot, UV laden light of Oz that is. Even umpteenth generation Aussies like myself still feel drawn to the home of my forebears. And this attraction is even stronger in my case as a graduate of the Canberra School of Art's woodwork course. My main teachers there were all trained in England and the structure of the Canberra course is very similar to that offered at the School for Craftsmen in Wood at Parnham House in Dorset. In fact, George Ingham's brother Robert is the main tutor at Parnham House. Over the years we have been fortunate enough to have many of Britain's top designer-makers and craftsmen visit us here and these personal contacts were invaluable in establishing my itinerary.

The core of my time in England was two workshop placements. One with that paragon of the designer-maker's art Alan Peters and the other with Geoff Hannah's 'old mate' Richard La Trobe-Bateman. I also had an intensive round of visits to a number of the tertiary teaching institutions (Parnham House, Hooke Park, The Royal College of Art, and Loughborough College of Art and Design) where I participated in the teaching programmes for a day or two and showed slides of Australian and Japanese work.

We timed our arrival to coincide with the innumerable graduate shows of the Art colleges in late June and July (coincidentally the beginning of a beautiful summer).

This was a great introduction to what is thought of as the 'hot new talents' on the scene. I was surprised to see that a lot of the work on show was pretty poor quality considering the hype that was backing it up. Particularly disappointing were the graduate shows at the City and Guilds School of Art and the London Polytechnic's London College of Furniture. Hell! this was supposed to be the cultural capital of the world and all I could see were badly made fashion statements lacking depth, quality or integrity. At least City and Guilds was doing some interesting work revitalising the 'decorative arts'; using the very traditional techniques of gilding, tempera and 'japanning' for contemporary artistic expression. The decoration was rich and exciting but the furniture substrate was nailed together and treated as incidental rather than integral.

Obviously what I needed was a trip to the Mecca of contemporary design **The Royal College of Art**: the home of luminaries like David Pye, Ron Carter and Floris van den Broecke and the alma mater of Richard La Trobe-Bateman, David Colwell, Freddie Baier, and our own George Ingham. The Royal College is purely for post graduate studies. Its students have already studied design for four years and so are ready for more advanced thinking and evolved work. The innovation displayed by some students was very exciting. I particularly enjoyed the work of Nazanin Kamali who designed the cabinet pictured here. Cabinets are simply boxes supported in space and this piece reveals that nicely. A series of simple rectangular boxes with lids can be slid into the timber lattice support from any direction and small ball catches click it into place when properly aligned.



Cabinet - Mazanin Kamali, MA graduate RCA 1991.
"Clean, simple and well resolved"

This designer also produced a floor level chaise bearing close kinship with some of the designs of her teacher Floris van den Broecke. This piece was fabricated from a sheet of plastic coated wire lattice bent into an ergonomic shape and then 'upholstered' by weaving thick, brightly coloured elastic shock cord through the lattice: very simple, very striking and remarkably comfortable and adaptable.

Even at the RCA, however, I felt that much of the work lacked depth. The students seemed to have only a minimal grasp of manufacturing process. Admittedly, the work was viewed as prototypes rather than one-offs and this could justify a lower quality finish. The design of the pieces in wood, however, often betrayed a fundamental lack of technical knowledge. The pieces that were most successful were those where the resident cabinetmaker (ex Parnham House) had clearly determined the construction techniques. The students seemed much more interested in style and photogenics than producibility or durability. Many of the RCA students are picked up by manufacturers or design companies and so causing a sensation and drawing attention to your work is a good way of ensuring a healthy future.

This attitude seems to pervade the thinking of many of the students I encountered throughout the UK. A fact which I found quite depressing considering my fundamental belief in the philosophy that furniture should be constructed in a sound and sensible way so that it will survive use and the vagaries of climatic change and is even better if it improves with time and use. This applies to both construction and design but is harder to achieve with the latter! We are all children of our era and its difficult to design something now which won't be labelled as late 80's - or even late 70's as has happened to Leon in a recent newsletter. I feel that the best way to avoid this premature ageing of our work is to avoid fashion statements and to create work which reveals deeper levels of meaning as we use and get to know it better. Superficial styling on a basic product results in an object that can catch the eye for a moment but then rapidly begins to bore. Much of the current output from UK art schools was greying before my eyes and looking back now very little has stuck in my mind despite the close examination only a woody can provide.

More next newsletter on Parnham House, Hooke Park and some inside stories from the workshops of Alan Peters and Richard (lets not beat around the bush) La Trobe-Bateman.

Don Fortescue will be speaking on other aspects of this trip at Sturt Craft Centre in May. See "Coming Events" p.3.

The Norburys' NSW Visit 11th-20th February

Chris Medlicott reports the Newcastle/Hunter leg was successful and very informative. About 70 people attended the lecture of the Norburys working in tandem. Ian showed through his slides his perfectionist approach to all aspects of his work from start to finish. Betty's advice for marketing was basic: "aim for perfection" and "the only complaint anyone should have of your work is that it is too expensive".

"The Fortunate Few who Have the Foresight to See an Overall Goal are usually Counted Amongst the Successful People of This World" - Ian Norbury.

The two Sydney 3-day workshops were held at the old Cleveland Street Boys School, all participants gaining from the experience. Most there were of some ability, two in fact gaining senior awards at the Adelaide Exhibition, while one relative beginner enthusiastically sculpted a female form in record time.

Ian Norbury, to me, is a gifted wood sculptor rather than a precise wood carver. One major ability he demonstrates is rapid removal of the necessary wood to gain the form he seeks. This however is still done in the main with standard carving tools, reserving such as the Dremel for the pupil of an eye or the inside of an ear. Another major advice he stresses is full research, definition and structuralisation of each subject prior to carving.

As evidenced in his wonderful slides, the very high standards set, from concept through technique, to finish, are the reasons behind his fine results. He will go to considerable trouble to gain small desired effects, e.g. turning small buttons to fix on a sleeve, or incorporating jewellery such as stud earrings, and silver armlets to cover a junction. He has no hesitation in adding sheet silver or copper beaten onto the carved face, to form a mask. The mythological, classical and Shakespearean sources for his work make a further interesting subject in itself.

For the future, Ian feels he has gone nearly as far as he can with single figure pieces, and looks now to the challenge of the grater complexity and the interaction of two and more figures.

Betty visited several leading Sydney workshops and homes and was shown around the Sturt Complex finding this inspiring - the Norburys are currently developing their own new craft centre just outside London.

Being seasoned visitors, both also filled their social obligations nightly in true English manner, revealing strong, resilient and rapidly rechargeable constitutions. Thank the stars I have time for more practice before their next visit. Ainsley Pyne and the S.A. Woodgroup are again to be commended for arranging this extensive tour.

Fred Blake

PRICING YOUR WORK

by Bob Howard

I'm sure that many people who go to our exhibitions look at the prices we put on our work and think that we must be intent on getting rich very quickly. Sadly, the truth is otherwise. The fact is that very little of the work is priced according to normal business procedures, for if it was the prices would probably double. Rather than set our prices as we should if we look at the raw figures, I suspect most of us merely put them as high as we dare, and vaguely hope that some day, one day, we will be able to really charge what the work is worth.

To make this clear, I thought it might be instructive if I detail the general way I go about pricing my work. There is nothing complicated about it, but unless you have ever had to do it there are a few things you probably will not have thought of. (This method is the same as the one detailed in the Australian Government Publishing Service publication "Job Costing and Estimating" - Number 25 in the Managing the Small Business Series. This and a host of other useful booklets are available from the AGPS in 120 Clarence St. in the City).

The general idea is to work out the total amount of money we need to earn in a year, and divide that by the number of hours each year we can actually charge to jobs. As I said - common sense.

The money I need to earn each year is made up as follows:

<u>Labour Costs:</u>	\$	\$
Gross wage - say \$800 a week x 52		41600
Wage oncosts:		
Holiday pay (included above)	0	
Payroll tax (below threshold)	0	
Insurance (worker's comp., sickness and accident)	750	
Superannuation (7.5%)	3120	
Sick pay (included above)	<u>0</u>	
Total oncosts	3870	<u>3870</u>
Total labour costs		45470

<u>Overhead Costs:</u>		
Rent - say \$420 per month x 12	5040	
Electricity (included above in rent)	0	
Phone and fax - \$40 per month x 12	480	
Depreciation on plant or equipment - say \$20,000 at 20% p.a.	4000	
Depreciation on motor vehicle	0	
Interest on loans	0	
Repairs and replacement of tools etc	1000	
Travel expenses	0	
Insurance (theft and fire)	750	
Misc. materials (sandpaper, glue, screws, etc.)	1000	

	\$	\$
Photography (for portfolios, publicity etc.)	1000	
Advertising	0	
Exhibition expenses	750	
Sundry (office expenses, business cards, journals, typing, photocopying etc.)	<u>750</u>	
	14770	<u>14770</u>
GRAND TOTAL OF ANNUAL COSTS		60240

Some people recommend including an amount to show an investment return on the money you have tied up in the business. I have not done this, and I'm not sure how it works if you also claim an amount for depreciation as I have done).

As you can see, the business overheads are a considerable amount even when trimmed to the bare bones as this is. Rent would normally be much higher, as would interest on loans, and advertising, to point to just a few. For the other half of our general equation - chargeable hours - a typical list might be as follows:

<u>Chargeable Hours per Year:</u>		
Days per year		365
Less		
sick days	say 5	
public holidays	say 10	
annual holidays	say 15	
weekends	<u>104</u>	
	134	<u>134</u>
Actual working days		231

Working hours per day	10
Less non-chargeable hours	
- say 40% average	<u>4</u>
Chargeable hours per day	6
Chargeable hours per year = actual working days x chargeable hours per day	= 231 x 6
	= 1386 hours

Hence the hourly rate needed = total annual costs -
chargeable hours per year
= 60240 - 1386
= \$43.46 per hour

The major thing usually overlooked in this entire question of working out rates is the amount of each day that is spent on non chargeable work. (Of course it is eventually charged for if accounted for in this way in overheads, but it is not charged for directly and in total on any one specific job.) I have estimated this at 40%,

which you might think is a bit over the top, but it certainly reflects my experience. This is possibly due to the fact that I work in the inner city surrounded by other woodworking businesses, rather than on my own out in the bush. All I know is that there are a lot of interruptions in a normal day - telephone, customers or potential customers calling in, paper-work, plotting and planning, equipment breakdowns, talking with friends, etc., etc., etc.

Once I have my hourly rate I can price my work. All I have to do is estimate how long it will take and multiply this by the hourly rate. To this figure I add the cost of whatever materials I want to charge directly to the job (this would certainly include the cost of the wood and any hardware, such as hinges, castors, glass, locks, etc.). At this point it would be nice to also multiply the resulting figure by a profit margin, or Murphy Factor, the size of which might vary according to my degree of certainty about my estimated hours and other costs, or how desperately I needed the job. I might also add that I should multiply my material costs by some factor to compensate me for the time it takes me to track them down and to go and buy them.

The final figure I will call my Wholesale Price.

This figure now has to be multiplied by the Sales Tax percentage (10%) if applicable, and again by the retail mark-up or Gallery commission (usually at least 30%).

If my sums are correct, what we now have is:

Final selling price = 1.43 x Wholesale price.

At this point it is pertinent to note that our labour cost of \$43.46 an hour becomes, at the retail end (if we work on a 20% profit margin) \$43.46 x 1.43 or \$74.58. In other words, every extra \$43.46 hour we work on a job adds not \$43.46 but \$74.58 to the retail price.

How about a real life example? Let's look at one of my rocking chairs. If I was to make one of these, it would take me at least three weeks - probably four if I worked at 6 chargeable hours a day. Let's split the difference and say three and a half weeks.

Number of chargeable hours = 3.5 x 5 x 6
= 105 hours

Hourly rate = \$40 (this is the rate I pretend I charge)

Total labour cost = 105 x 40
= \$4200

Material cost for an Australian cedar chair = \$450

Total so far = \$4200 + \$450
= \$4650

Let's cast caution to the winds and assume a 10% (Gasp!) profit margin. (I should work on a much higher margin in order to recoup the cost of the six months or so it took me to design and prototype the chair in the first place)

Therefore my Wholesale Price = \$4650 X 1.1
= \$5115

Add 10% Sales Tax and a 30% Gallery margin and what do we have?

Final Retail Price = \$5115 x 1.1 x 1.3
= \$7314

The truth is that my rockers retail at about \$3900 or, as I said in the beginning, about half of what they would if I charged according to regular, normal business practices. So how, you might wonder, do I stay in business? What usually happens, I think, is that my wife carries a burden she should not have to carry. Then there are the solutions of starting early and finishing late, working weekends, taking no holidays, sick days or public holidays, living poor, and so on. And of course it helps if I do other things instead of making rocking chairs - such as making reproduction furniture, doing repairs and contract carving, all of which pay better.

However all is not lost. I live in the hope that once I have arrived at a final design for my chair - and it still has a considerable way to go - I can really jig up for it and make them in batches. If I organize myself efficiently, I believe I will be able to make them for around about the price I now sell them for.

This possibility does not exist for one off designs, where all the costs need to be charged to the one job. Finally, you might think that my initial target of an \$800 a week wage is ambitious, but when you consider that I could earn \$700 a week with a bit of overtime in a kitchen cupboard factory stapling chipboard, I don't think it is too much to ask for the standard of work we do.

* * * *

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

Monday, May 11th for the June issue;
Friday, July 10th for the August issue;
Friday, September 11th for the October issue;
Friday, November 6th for the December issue.

Swan Song - The Ratbag's Lament

In which Michael Gill exercises his right of reply and explains his withdrawal from membership of the Association.

Not every Frenchperson is a pig because nuclear devices are tested just over the fence. Not every Briton is a murderer because plastic bullets have failed to bounce off in Northern Ireland. Not every Japanese is a monster because a few still have a taste for whale steak and dolphin sushi. And not every Australian is genocidal because Tasmania's aborigines were wiped out.

So not every Forestry Commission employee is a criminal because that body must be dragged into court repeatedly and forced by the judiciary to comply with the law relating to Environmental Impact Studies.

I have had dealings with the F. C. for over 20 years. From many of its people, from the office to the forest floor, I have had the very best of help, information and service delivered with enthusiasm and a love of their work. Others were the rude, belligerent clock-watchers you find taking refuge in most public service bodies. My sincerest thanks to the first-mentioned and my commiserations to you for what you have seen the Commission become. I trust you will understand that my comments are political and in no way personal.

Not every member of this Woodworkers' Association is a treasonous ingrate because Michael Gill has a loathing for a floundering bureaucracy and considers its management a joke. I was asked by Sian Powell (S.M.H. Good Living, Aug. 6th, 1991) to give an honest, personal opinion and I did so. That article in no way implied that I was speaking on behalf of the Association. Indeed, it very properly took pains to stress the differences between exhibitors on the sponsorship issue.

So what is the Commission squealing about? Their reaction has been that of the guilty kid who contrives to play and umpire at the same time because he owns the ball. When one of the team of thirty-odd disputes a decision, he shoots home taking the pig-skin with him. Future exhibitors will swear an oath of allegiance to the sponsor before slapping down the \$500 fee. We will have to promise to purge ourselves of all ethical qualms, to lie when asked for truthful opinion, to mumble "no comment" when interviewed about autonomy and integrity.

So far, I've not heard of any tobacco company demanding that the footballers under its financial wing smoke cigars in the scrum or suggest to our youth, in the media, that fags build iron-men. These corporations are capable of accommodating dissent and fair division of moral outlook. Not so the Forestry Commission.

We owe Mr Peter Fisher a vote of thanks. He was the F.C. mouthpiece whose kind advice on opening night of Hands On was that any exhibitors unsympathetic to the sponsor should quietly boycott the thing. His was a succinct declaration of the rules: You're with us or you're out. Shut up and smile for the cameras or run away.

After almost ten years of fairly active and creative involvement in this Association, is it surprising that I and some other senior members might have found this posturing a little arrogant?

At the very beginning of all this, before I formally committed myself to all the artwork for Hands On, I sought and was given personal assurances that the F.C. understood that it was buying advertising and exposure in all our promotional material, but not purchasing our loyalties. All exhibitors were to have freedom of opinion and expression on their individual catalogue pages. My own, as you know, ended with: "My involvement with Hands On does not imply support for the Forestry Commission." Not very rabid. Not much froth flecking the fangs. But...

The day after our exhibition opened to the public, I was told that an ultimatum had been issued "from the highest levels" of the F.C., requiring withdrawal of the offending words. Failure to do so would result in the withholding of \$20,000 of remaining funds.

I think Chris and I both sweated blood that day before resolving to stand firm. Two days later, my frank remarks appeared in the Herald. I do not offer this as an explanation or an excuse for my forthrightness, but these facts should have been laid in front of you before any honest discussion of future sponsorship was called for.

Hands On was our ninth group exhibition. Never before has any sponsor dared to attempt to deny us the right of free speech. Never before have there been so many comments in our visitors' book deploring the cynical hypocrisy of a sponsor. (No, I did not engineer any of these.) The sanitised, adulatory quotes dished up to us on p.9 of October's newsletter convey nothing of the public's keen perception of a Forestry Commission anxious to dovetail itself into the ranks of skilled, well-respected craftspeople.

To my great sorrow, I realise that some members have raged, purple-faced at my pig-headedness, at my lack of proper respect, at my unwillingness to see which side of the bread is buttered. "Keep your bloody ethics to yourself! Serves you right if you stick your chin out and somebody takes a swing at you. Think of the money. Think of future funding. Think of the Association." Those ethics are the very reason I live in Australia instead of Hungary, where most of my blood comes from.

Think of the Association? In 1983 I worked on the exhibition committee designing and producing all the artwork for that show, including our current logo. I designed and launched our newsletter, scrounged sponsorship, wrote much of it and pasted together the first seven issues or so single-handed. In 1985 I was invited to join the executive committee that soon became known as "The Gang of Eight" which, apart from presiding over the most vibrant and exciting years of this group, also staged the first Woodcraft Goes To The Opera. Since then, I have written articles on conservation for this newsletter and other journals and magazines, become NSW representative of the Australian Woodcraft Federation, collected funds on behalf of the Association for rainforest plantings at Clarrie Hall Dam (another attempt at the positive approach), travelled the state by invitation addressing woodies' guilds on green issues and, most recently, undertaken the naming, design, art and catalogue for Hands On. Many could have done all this much better than I have, but nobody seemed inclined.

Thinking of the Association, however, I smell a witch-hunt brewing. Mr Laurens Otto feels I have damaged the Association and demands my justification on the Forestry issue or my expulsion.

Haven't I spoken, written and broadcast enough for you, Laurens? Have you been living in a shoe-box for the past seven years, mate? Are you really so ignorant of current affairs and environmental issues that I must whip you up a thesis to calm your inquisitorial fervour? I'm not going to lead you by the hand through all the reading, watching, listening, analysing and researching I've done in that time. Believe me, sitting in on chats with ex-high-ranking F.C. officers would leave you open-mouthed.

Perhaps you could begin, Laurens, by reading the reports of the State Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (Forest Estate 1990-91) and of the recent Resource Assessment Commission. You might find yourself lost for words in your letter of apology to the Forestry Commission. But I doubt you'll bother. You're very busy labouring tirelessly for the Association.

On the other hand I applaud Peter van Herk for his developmental work on hardwoods. I know your efforts will change attitudes, reduce some timber wastage and improve some practices (p.4, December newsletter). I'm sincerely glad you're doing it and offer genuine congratulations on your success to date. But please, Peter, do not become an apologist for the F.C. and I would ask you not to put down those who work for forest conservation in other ways.

Timber conservation means value-adding - money, jobs, skills, art, prestige. It's indisputedly essential, sexy and saleable as an ethic.

Forest conservation, including habitat and endangered species protection is a heavy commitment to the integrity of what little is left unspoilt. It's harder to sell and to cost and you're much more likely to be branded "ratbag" than "progressive businessman". You know as well as I do that no furniture-maker will ever be short of hardwood even if all our sensitive areas are preserved. The problems lie elsewhere and are much older than the trend to environmentalism.

It is not necessary to champion the F.C. and all that implies to achieve reforms and improvements. I'm afraid that hand they have "held out in the spirit of co-operation" is sticky. How far do we have to go to "gain credibility" with them and "be listened to without defensiveness"? The answer is, as we have seen: "too far".

You quote our chairman: "that more is gained by parties talking to one another than raging apart". Talk? Who is going to talk? Sure they are eager to hear that hardwood is great stuff, but is that all? What else?

If professionals and academic specialists from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the National Trust, the Botanic Gardens, the museums, universities and conservation groups have so little effect on the Commission's activities, will they heed Professor Otto's learned squeaks as they tighten the purse-strings about his neck?

The sad truth is that they couldn't care less what we think unless it fits their agenda.

In all my time as A.W.F. representative, (apart from literature forwarded by two committee members) I have not had a single communication from any member of this Association regarding the forestry issue. Not a spark of interest, not a murmur of comment and certainly no invitation to discuss it. For most woodworkers, it remains a deep, dark, frightening pit of hysteria, media hype, hypocrisy, mis-information and political bullshit. After considerable effort, I am afraid that this Association is unlikely to be a strong force for reform except perhaps to negotiate for a basic share of the haul to keep us going. I am no longer willing to undertake that job. The position is now free. I can not continue to represent a body whose only firm agenda is self-interest. This vital discussion is far broader than simply making sure somebody keeps our boards and veneers coming.

Perhaps that is the Association's role? The full extent of its environmental responsibilities as it perceives them in the final decade of the 20th century? Then by all means send Laurens to F.C. headquarters to beg forgiveness for one renegade's lack of feudal humility. But get your story right and use the money well because I fear that history and the Australian public will deal harshly with the minders of the F.C.N.S.W.

Not every white South African is a racist because its government has had to be dragged to the brink of reform by an outraged world community. Many of them have talked themselves hoarse for decades. What shall we talk about? One-person-one-vote? Police batons? Shanty towns? Or could we just have a nice chat about cricket?

Good luck with your 1993 exhibition. And don't juggle the plinths!

Does this argument really hold water on the idea that if the high profile footballer sponsored by a tobacco company makes a well publicised anti-smoking stand will he be still happily accepted by his sponsor? Also doesn't the public's perception of the main stay footballer tend to accept that the team may be of the same opinion as a whole? My feelings are that it's unlikely a sponsor would stand for this sort of dissension and certainly a few individuals with positive drug tests can bring a whole team into disrepute in the public's eyes.

Nick Hill

CLASSIFIED ADZE

In case you didn't know it, these classified adze are free for all subscribers. So when you want to buy or sell or rent or notify, give Dale a call and she'll give you the space. Display ads will cost a nominal fee however.

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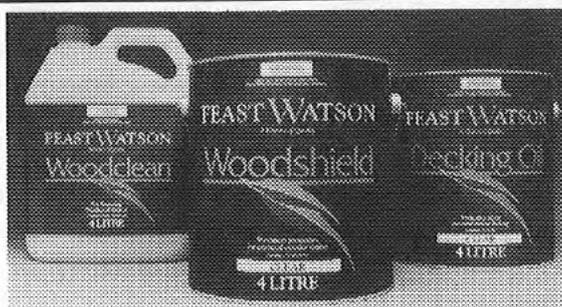
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