

**ILLAWARRA WOODWORKERS
GROUP INCORPORATED
PO Box 121 Corrimal NSW 2518**

March 2008 NEWSLETTER

President	David Lipscombe	Oak Flats
Secretary	Mal Stewart	Thirroul
Treasurer	William Perry	Cordeaux Heights
Public Officer	John Parker	Corrimal
Librarian	Kevin Parker	Woonona
Newsletter	John Cashman	Fernhill

Events Coming Up

12 March. 7pm Club Meeting

2 April. 5pm Committee Meeting

5,6 April. Thirroul Seaside Festival

7-11 April. Seniors Week at Corrimal Uniting Hall

9 April. 7pm **#*Club Annual General Meeting*#**

7 May. 5pm Committee Meeting

14 May. 6pm Demonstration of Gabbett Machinery followed by the Club Meeting

Workshops will be held at the club: Saturday mornings 15th and 29th March and possibly on Easter Tuesday Our Secretary sold some items over the Christmas break, so stocks of items for sale are low. So we need to make and stock up for the Thirroul Seaside Festival in April.

Sponsorship. It was with much pleasure that our Secretary announced that **Wollongong I.T.eC** have sponsored us to the tune of \$1000 for this year. That is terrific news! Many thanks to Wollongong I.T.eC, and to Mal for applying for their Sponsorship.

The Sponsorship involves us in making toys or other items that can be used for, or given to charity. Already Mal has taken a partially built toy engine and enhanced, painted and decorated it in the manner of Thomas the Tank Engine, and built a truck to go with it. Mal's suggestion is to raffle this "Thomas" and build and paint others which can be donated to charities which they, in turn, can raffle.

Show and Tell

It is quite remarkable what different members have achieved in the two month break since we last met, and was displayed last meeting. (Does this mean that the fine work is done without meetings ! Good grief !)

Frank Cescon started the show with an 8 sided tapered pencil container made from plywood. With it he also had made a similar 8 sided vase from plywood, which he then turned in such a way as to display patterns of the ply itself both inside and out. Very ingenious.

Bill Perry showed a beautiful Document Box made from some wood he had salvaged from a family property of some years ago, with Queensland maple and Tasmanian myrtle. And all beautifully finished.

John Parker showed a very nice segmented bowl of contrasting coloured timber and with equally spaced air slots too. Another ingenious piece.

Albert Seath, not to be outdone, showed us five small boxes made to hold tissues, for his wife and various family members. They had a glass one which broke, but that gave Albert a chance to show his creativity. The boxes are neat, with each equipped with a roller. Albert has used his routing table creatively to get nice curves. The beauty of the boxes is also in the finish given to the various timbers. Stunning! One box has two inlaid Dalmatians, the spots on them were made from dyed shish-kebab sticks and toothpicks. What a man!

Ken Smith, indefatigable as usual, showed us a dozen wooden spoons which he'd made from floorboards. He had also been asked about his off-centre turning and he briefly outlined the method he uses, and showed us an off-centre turned goblet, mushroom and a double dish. Ingenious. Makes you look twice. Kind of fun and kind of crazy too.

Bill Hedley showed one of his scroll-sawed clocks, a large beautifully cut, double faced, sunburst clock made from blackwood. Three months work for Bill at up to six or seven days a week. Really quite extraordinary.

Mal Stewart showed us a 1/3 size rocking chair he had made: a prototype for making the real thing later in the year. The job required making a jig that enables holes to be drilled at certain angles.

All in all, a stunning Show and Tell. The items displayed a great variety of skill, ingenuity and beautiful finish. Congratulations!

OOPS!!

An Irishman and a pompous T-T Minister were seated next to each other on a plane flight. After take-off a hostess approached and asked them what they would like to drink. 'A whisky and soda, thanks love,' said the Irishman. The Minister snorted, 'I would rather be raped by a dozen brazen women than drink any of that stuff!' 'Gosh,' exclaimed the Irishman, 'So would I, but I didn't know there was a choice!'

Kiama Woodworkers

Bill Perry.

One of the interesting things about talking to different club members is to find out how different their backgrounds and personal stories are. Bill Perry is a country boy who made good in the city- well, in the industrial world.

Bill grew up at Eugowra, west of Orange, where his father was a sheep and wheat farmer, as was his father before him. Bill went to primary school in Eugowra, and later to High School in Forbes, about a 30 mile school bus journey each way. He was always interested in electrics and electronics: loved pulling old radios and other gadgets to bits to see how they worked.

After High school, with the encouragement of his parents, Bill did electrical engineering at UTS. By his 2nd year at UTS, he joined a group of country boys who shared digs, and they had a whale of a time together. He had an arrangement with BHP Newcastle, but they didn't have a vacancy for him when he finished Uni, but a job came up with the Snowy Mountains Authority at Cooma. In his senior years at Forbes High he had been on skiing trips to Perisher. Bill loved skiing. Still does. So do his two teenage daughters, Kate and Sarah. So it didn't take much persuasion to take the job at Cooma.

There were four consequences of his years in Cooma. The snowfields were only 1 1/2 hours away – great! Then there was his job. There are many sections of electrical engineering, and Bill went into the Power side: dealing with and designing layouts for electricity of 1000 volts upwards. At Cooma too, his interest in woodwork grew. He needed various items of furniture. He could buy them, but why not make them instead. A friend encouraged him to come to a 'Router' course at the local TAFE. This course was great and inspired his interest. But most importantly, it was while at Cooma, that Bill met Wendy, a

High School Home Science teacher, whom he was to marry.

After five years at Cooma they moved to Wollongong where Bill accepted a position with BHP, now Bluescope. Then, after several career moves he was made Senior Electrical Engineer: Power Systems, responsible for the design and engineering of the electrical power system from 1,000 to 33,000 volts throughout the works. Bill also came back and did a MBA at Wollongong University. *Why an MBA?* ‘Well,’ Bill said, ‘there is a terrific range of different management styles. What they taught in the MBA was how to analyse and see through all the ‘spin’ to what the management’s real motive was, so that you could make an informed choice, rather than just respond to the ‘spin.’ Bill said he also became interested in financial management. He learnt to understand and speak the language of finance confidently.

Bill’s interest in woodwork continued to grow back here. He went to a part-time course at the Sturt Workshop at Mittagong: one evening a week. ‘They were great teachers, very exacting, but thorough. I remember when I took my first project to the teacher. It was a chopping board. He said, “I’ll just check its measurements.” But instead of picking up a measuring tape, he brought out a vernier caliper to measure it! Boy. That was something! It made me realize that you can be so accurate in woodwork.’ It was a great course. Bill learnt both to use power tools wisely, and to really appreciate and value hand tools too.

He particularly likes working with Tasmanian Blackwood and Queensland Maple. He also prefers simple ‘Shaker’ lines in furniture rather than elaborate and decorative styles. He mostly makes furniture and various boxes – recently, a beautiful ‘document box’ for a family member. He has made desks and

tables and side tables for his daughters and Wendy, and a desk for himself is a project still 'under way'. Bill's workshop occupies half of their two-car garage. As both he and Wendy have cars, it can sometimes be a bone of contention about whose car can be parked in the other half of the garage!

After bringing up the girls Wendy went back to teaching. She is currently a Support Teacher for youngsters with learning difficulties at Warrawong High. Kate and Sarah are at Figtree High, in years 12 and 10, and they love dancing, skiing and their mobile phones !

When Bill went to Mittagong for the Sturt workshop, he often travelled with a former club member, and through him, joined our club. He has been a club member for a good few years, and has been our Treasurer for seven years. He does wonder about the future of the club, and would like to see the club members become more involved and participate in club activities. He sees a very high standard frequently in the "Show and Tell" section of club meetings which is most commendable. But he would like all members to feel confident to show and talk about their work. Bill says that every project we undertake is a learning experience, and from it there is knowledge that we can both store up and share.

Finances

Bill Perry reported that with the Sponsorship donation from Illawarra I.T.eC the club's book balance stands at \$4,403.53. A couple of Committee members are to investigate purchasing a Thicknesser for the club. It is reported that a good one was on 'Special' last weekend at an estimated to cost \$995.

Brush Box

As a young forester I was introduced to many trees including Brush Box (now *Lophostemon confertus*) It's surprisingly common. It makes an excellent street tree, because it is hardy, survives most droughts, is free from disease and doesn't grow too quickly.

It's natural habitat is the coastal fringe from Newcastle to Fraser Island with isolated groups further north. It grows best in deep fertile soils, but will grow in a wide range of soils, including fairly infertile sands. It is a component of 'the brush' (semi-tropical rainforest) and extends to dry eucalypt forest on exposed slopes.

The bark on upper branches is shed leaving a smooth red-brown surface. It's an evergreen. In its best development it grows with a single straight trunk to a height of 40m and a diameter of 2m. Its dark green leaves are grouped at the end of branchlets, and are elliptical in shape, about 12 cm long. The white flowers have petals and feathery bundled stamens. The fruit are like gumnuts, woody when mature, about 10cm wide and long, bell shaped, and in clusters of up to seven.

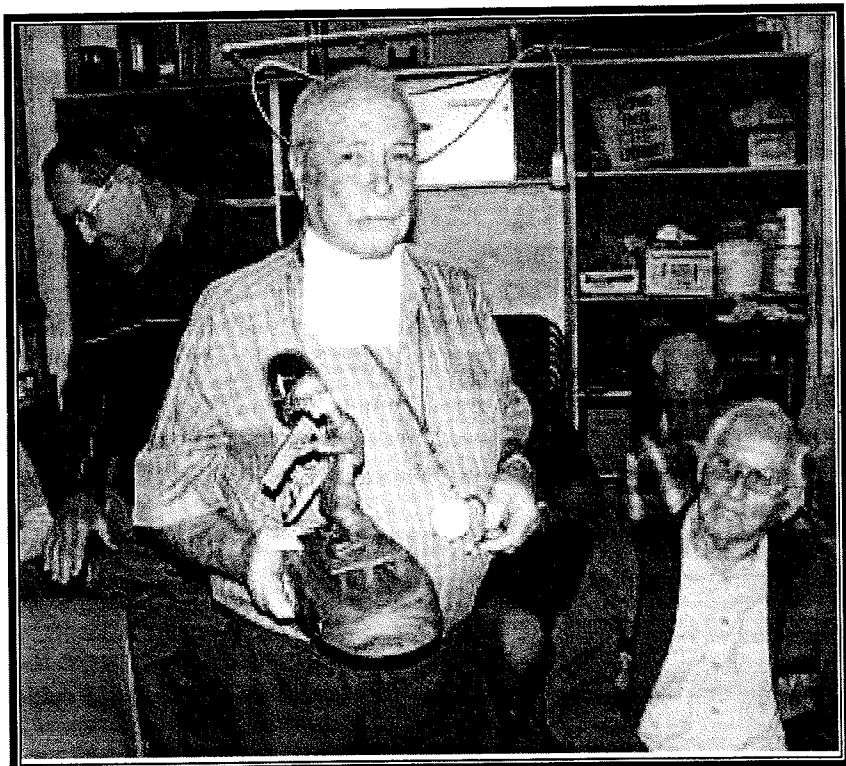
The Wood: The heartwood is pinky grey to reddish brown, the sapwood being distinctly paler. It has fine texture and even grain, often interlocked, which can make it difficult to work. At an air density of about 900kg/cubic m, it is a heavy timber. It is strong, hard and tough. It contains crystals of silica which results in blades being blunted, requiring frequent sharpening. It is 'waxy' making it unsuitable for some highly solvent floor finishes. Otherwise it will take other suitable finishes and smooths to a fine surface.

It has been used for flooring, scantlings, weatherboards, paneling, mallets, bridge decking and turnery. Altogether its a pretty useful timber.

Ian McLaughlin *Bendigo Wood turners* Feb 2007

Bill Body Memorial Trophy

The Bill Body Memorial Trophy was awarded to John McMahon for his unstinting and practical devotion to the club throughout 2007. The trophy was handed to John at the February meeting with much appreciation and great acclamation.



A modest and slightly overawed John McMahon:
the first recipient of the Bill Body Memorial Trophy

Photo Dave Lipscombe