

**ILLAWARRA WOODWORKERS  
GROUP INCORPORATED  
PO Box 121 Corrimal NSW 2518  
www.illawarrawoodworkers.org.au  
April 2015 NEWSLETTER**

President	David Lipscombe	Oak Flats	
Vice-president			
Secretary	Pat Keefe	Towradgi	
Treasurer & P. Officer	William Perry	Cordeaux Hts	
Coordinator (Organ.)	Ric Funnell	Fairy Meadow	
Coordinator (W'shop)	Pat Keefe	Towradgi	
Coordinator (W'shop)	Mark Beaver	Towradgi	
Coordinator	John McMahon	Fairy Meadow	
Coordinator (Sales)	Janet Kearney	Warilla	
Librarian	Peter Hansen	Corrimal	
Newsletter	John Cashman	Fernhill	

**Events Coming Up**

**21,22 March – Thirroul Seaside Festival**

**26 March Last FM School Workshop** for Term 1

**8 April 5.15pm - Committee Meeting**

**11 April - Short Workshop - early** (8 ish) and then

**AGM Club Meeting** from 10.30am

**30,31 May. Bulli Show**

**AGM**

Our April Meeting is the Annual General Meeting of our Club. The President will give a brief report for the year and the Treasurer will present the accounts for the year too. All Executive positions on the Committee will be open for election for the following 12 months. Why not give it a try?

**SALES DOCUMENT**

This has now been finalized, after some robust discussion regarding different opinions and suggestions. Special thanks to the three members who made comments and critiques of the trial document.

It was agreed that Items for Club sales would have first choice of position at shows .Individual members wanting to sell their goods would share the other space equally  
All their items for sale are to be properly ticketed and listed  
10% of their sales would be given to the club on the day of sale

**THIRROUL and BULLI**

**Thirroul Seaside Festival** went well for the club despite the varying weather. Saturday was a good day with just a brief shower. Sunday was more showery and overcast but sales were quite reasonable. Janet Kearny reported that the new arrangement with club and individual sales worked quite well, though a couple of issues need to be ironed out.

**Bulli Show** is on at the end of May. It is another opportunity both to demonstrate woodworking and to sell items. The Bulli show organisers have strongly appealed to club members to enter items in the various woodwork competitions at the show. \$1 a pop. In the past club members have carried off numerous prizes at Bulli Show

## **Wollemi**

James Woodford, an environmental journalist, has written *The Wollemi Pine*. His book is about the discovery of this most ancient tree, the scientific efforts to protect it from the bugs, diseases and the ravages of modern civilization, and the efforts to propagate the tree

Despite the best efforts to keep the location of the small forest secret, some intrepid bushwalkers managed to find the secret grove and on the way also found two smaller plantations of Wollemi pines. Woodford's book is a very interesting read. *The Australian Geographic* says it is 'a fascinating mix of detective story, scientific mystery and human drama.'

Woodford also wrote a book about wombats, and more recently, has written a book about Great White sharks.

## **Kevin PARKER**

Kevin has had to resign from the Club. His resignation was received with understandable regret, as both he and Anne his wife do not now enjoy good health

Kevin was an Industrial Arts teacher who rose through the ranks to become Principal of James Cook High School

Some years ago he taught wood turning at the club on Saturday mornings. He also made some mallets for club sales

One evening at the club he showed his 1m model of James Cook's *Endeavour*. The ship was built from a kit, but Kevin improved in numerous ways. He did not include sails purposely, in order to show all the intricacies of the rigging. Kevin built the model as a memorial to his son who died some years ago, of cancer

**Page three**

## **MICHAEL BARRETT**

Michael has been a member of the club for about 18 months. He is a local boy who grew up in Thirroul and now teaches a 5/6 class at Balgownie Public School. He first became interested in timber by helping out and making things with his late grandfather. Michael went to the Illawarra Senior College for years 11 and 12 and thoroughly enjoyed the large and well-equipped workshop that they have down there. For his major work he made a pool table. During that year, on a class excursion, he visited a factory that assembled furniture for the big department stores. He knew a couple of the chaps there who had been at the college, but they were now doing monotonous jobs and their faces were dull with boredom. At that moment Michael decided not to enter the workforce on the completion of high school, but to instead go to university. At times now, with the never-ending workload of a being a teacher, the shortage of holidays and the continual torment of paper cuts, Michael wonders if at that moment in year 12, he made the right decision.

After Michael finished university he went overseas. He holidayed in Bali with his sister, and then continued on with friends surfing reef breaks in Lombok and Sumbawa. Later, Michael went overseas for a year – Vietnam, Germany, Austria, Spain, Portugal, USA, Mexico and Guatemala. 'I worked for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the time on farms and took holidays for the rest of the time. On the farms, mostly in Spain, you got your board and keep, and the cultural experience that goes with living from the land in another country. We would work for 5 or 6 hours a day. Most of all I enjoyed training horses and doing repairs to a 1500 year old stone house. It was a great lifestyle.'

**Page four**

Eventually Michael returned to Australia and, after a couple of years of casual teaching, army reserving and other odd jobs, Michael headed west for a teaching stint with the Aborigines at Wilcannia Central School (a pre-school to year 12 school) on the Darling River in outback NSW.



Wilcannia certainly was different. ‘The first Sunday Morning I was there I went for a walk down the street and didn’t see a single person. It was summer at that time and people didn’t come out until the evenings.’

*Did you have much problem with Aboriginal kids missing school a lot?* ‘For my last 2 years I had a 95% attendance rate – about the same as down here. We had many good times together.’

Two of the highlights of Michael’s time in Wilcannia were organising and building a Stephanie Alexander garden with the kids and welding football posts to set up the football field. ‘Tackle football with the kids was the norm.’ The principal actually tricked him into building the garden. Upon agreeing to participating in ‘some gardening around the school’ Michael was awarded with the status of ‘Project Manager’ of a 120 square meter \$60 000 project. He said that in the end it worked out okay as he did the project (which also required irrigation systems, tanks, a bungalow, sheds and large play rocks) for half the week and taught for the other half.

In his spare time at Wilcannia, he enjoyed swimming and fishing in the river, cooking in the pizza oven that he built in the back yard (which included a hot water system that let out an initial burst of

steam which was great for attaching a train whistle to annoy the barking dogs), riding motorbikes and helping out station owners. He said there were many problems in the community such as welfare dependence, drunkenness and violence, however there were also many good people and positive aspects of community living that we lack here. After 4 & 1/2 years he left far wiser than he had been when he arrived, not to mention with his future wife in tow.

After a stint fishing and surfing down the coast he took a job a Balgownie. Last year he bought a house, got married and now has a beautiful little daughter Rosie. His wife, Kathryn, is also a teacher and a talented musician. Michael enjoys accompanying her violin playing on the guitar. Michael said that she showed the other staff in Wilcannia that talent in both teaching and music was far better at reaching the tough Indigenous students than sternness. Kathryn is enjoying her new role as a mother and may look into tuition later.

*What kind of wood projects are you interested now?* ‘I enjoy all aspects of wood and it is great to have the club here to work with people that are far more experienced than myself. At the moment I am interested in small furniture pieces and would, down the track, like to make chess boards and chess pieces. I look forward to making projects for the club this year.’

## Precious Timber

Recently the magazine of the *SMHerald* featured a number of African entrepreneurs. Most were bent on making stacks of money but Lorna Rutto, 30, the founder of EcoPost was seeking to change society for the better. EcoPost ‘collects waste, especially plastic, and turns it into eco-friendly products including fence posts, tiles and furniture. The aim is to provide a sustainable substitute and so help reduce pressure on Kenya’s depleted forests.’

Since 2009 the firm has sold 30,000 fence posts. Rutto said, ‘We need to stop cutting down trees because Kenya has only 2% of its forests left.’ That 2% is down from 10% in 1998. Rutto says, ‘Also about 550 people have gained some employment through my recycling efforts.’ Good one!

## 'Don't Fence Me In'

Our President and Treasurer met with the School Principal regarding funding for a fence around the workshop. The Principal is exploring ways to possibly contribute to the expense. The Treasurer appealed to members for a volunteer to oversee the arrangements of the fence – to be the Fence Project Manager. Tony Bell put his hand up. Great applause, and he was promptly designated as the 'Minister of DeFence!' Thanks Tony

## Show and Tell

### February

**Bill Perry** showed a jig made from High Density Polyethanol (HDPE) which is a great aid to sharpening saws. Bill also showed a very attractive free standing wooden picture frame for mounting photos

**Pat Keef** showed a large platter of Huon Pine. Someone quipped that it could be used as a 'spy hole' Pat also showed two other platters/bowls of Sassafras and Tasmanian Oak. Very nice!

**Rick Funnell** showed three turned bowls of jarrah, jacaranda, and cypress pine and two irregularly formed and shaped bowls for Club sales. Rick also brought along two toy bright red London buses he also donated to Club sales Thanks Rick!

### March

**Rick Funnell** showed a cute little engine and truck recycled and repainted from the Sallys. Thanks again Rick

**Pat Keef** showed some neat bowls mostly turned from burls. He then uncovered a wonderful massive eucalyptus platter, almost 1 m. across. Pat started turning the burl blank at 50 rpm and gradually increased to 350 rpm. The platter is finished with 10 coats of fine buffing oil and a further four finishing coats. Really magnificent!

**Peter Hansen** showed dozen or more small bowls and other pieces finished with Peter's particular care for detail, and donated them to Club sales. Thanks Peter

## FEES

Annual fees are now due. Still \$25, and cheap at that. Please pay Bill Perry our Treasurer, promptly, preferably just before or after the meeting general when he has his receipt book handy

**Thanks** to Bendigo Bank, the Oak Flats and Shellharbour Community Branches, who have again sponsored the club with a grant for consumables

## New Members

Congratulations to new members Peter Speer and Craig Shaw Peter has actually been around for a while, checking all our machine tools and electrical equipment to ensure that they are electrically safe. Peter has done this pro bono. And now has joined us as a club member. Craig also joined us after finding us on the internet. Welcome Peter and Dave. Nice to have you aboard

## FMSchool Workshop

This term's Fairy Meadow School Workshop finishes on 26 March. We have had five boys this term, Glen, Hayden, Jack, Jake and Karryn and two teachers, Ms Pip and Ms Meg. Somehow the 6<sup>th</sup> boy went missing. 'Sebastian, where are you?'

Ms Pip presented each of the five club Trainers with a bottle of wine as a thank you gift. 'It's a hard life!' (Club members who would like to become Trainers can join the queue and Ms Pip will size you up?)

The five boys have worked well on their wood projects, as well as enjoying the afternoon tea that the school provides.

Rick Funnell added a nice touch by scroll-sawing the initials of each boy from thin ply. These initials were glued on the lid of the pencil boxes the boys were making. Thanks Rick – a nice gesture.

Rick also makes the small plaques that the boys are presented with at the school assembly after the conclusion of the course. Thanks again

## **Punography.**

I wondered why the ball was getting bigger. Then it hit me!

Broken pencils are pointless!

What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary?

A thesaurus

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool!

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest!

**Page Eight**