



Illawarra Woodworkers Group

Committee 2023/24

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Newsletter Editor	Virginie Schmelitschek / Julien Leveugle

Hello Fellow Woodies

A fresh hello from your new Newsletter editor. It is my first time writing this for our club and hope you will assist me in making these newsletters an interesting read.

I have returned from my family visit overseas – in the Netherlands – where I did not do any woodwork, but kept a keen eye out for Dutch woodworkers' work. I also visited the unlikely combination of woodwork and embroidery in the 1 museum (funny, as these are my interests as well!).

See here for more info: <http://www.borduurmuseum.nl/houtsnijmuseum>

I have translated the short description of the origin of this museum:

WOODCARVING MUSEUM “THE LOOSE CHIP”

In the Embroidery Museum, you will not only be able to admire beautiful embroideries, but also jewels of woodcarving examples. Spread out throughout the museum you can see artfully carved furniture, which gives the museum a very nice ambience. In the attic there is a whole section set up with carved art, done in various techniques of woodcarving. There are wooden statues, farm carts, clogs, pipes, abstract figurines and much more.

Frisian woodcarving is an important part of the Woodcarving Museum. This type of woodcarving finds its origin in Northern Europe, namely Norway, Sweden and Denmark, as well the part where the Frisians used to live. This points to the name “Frisian woodcarving”.

Frisian woodcarving has a long tradition. The work was initially done to decorate objects in one's own home. The technique has been exposed to influences from merchant shipping and fishery. The oldest existing objects with Frisian woodcarving date from the **seventeenth** century.

Frisian woodcarving is decorating wooden utensils with the chip carving technique. Characteristic are the geometric patterns like rosettes, stars and wicker patterns. (The expression 'Frisian', to which this type of popular art owes its name, does not only refer to Friesland, a province in the north-east of the Netherlands, but to a much wider area).

The hallmarks of Frisian woodcarving are geometric shapes. The carving is mostly used to decorate wooden utensils with all kinds of motifs. For examples on jewellery boxes, trivets, spice racks, tea boxes, side tables and serving trays. Also the making of beautifully carved clocks, pendulums, photo frames and mirror frames belong to the possibilities.

It is one of the oldest hobbies and is seen as an art expression and a useful use of the carver's time. Frisian woodcarving is recognised as important national cultural heritage and in 2013 it became a part of the Dutch “National Intangible Cultural Inventory”.

Below are delicately carved Wedding Clogs. When a man asked a woman to marry her, he would present her with clogs like these. In some villages he would put them on her doorstep at night. The next morning everyone passing her house, knew someone in the house had been asked to be married!



TOOLS:

These two below are the only tools needed for this fine work.



The Master Carver at work

The carvers of Frisian woodcarving use a small chisel and a small, sharp knife. With the chisel notches of a few millimetres depth are made in the wood. The knife is used to cut out patterns. Hence the name 'chip carving'.





As you can see above right, a paper pattern is attached to the object that is to be carved. Each motif is carved out, following the paper pattern.

It was fascinating to see the work being done, by the Master Carver, who had been doing it for about 10 years and gave demonstrations in the museum.

GENERAL NOTES:

- **SCHOOL WOODWORK CLASSES** will resume after the current school holidays. *If you are interested in assisting with the classes on Thursday afternoons, from 2pm to 3pm, please speak to David.* Thanks to those who assist with the students during last term and who members put in a lot of time and effort to have the kits ready for the students each week.
- For those members who would like to assist with these Thursday afternoon school classes, the “Working with Children” check is required. This can be done online <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-for-a-working-with-children-check> , and then you will need to take the email you will receive plus your ID documents to Services NSW. As you will be a volunteer, this check is free. Once you have the paper, please take it to the school office for their records.
- During my 6-week absence, the workshop has been re-arranged following the recommendations of the Sub-committee. Thank you to all the members who assisted with this mammoth task. It is up to us now to keep it all clean, tidy and safe for all members.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Work shop safety must always be at the top of our list of priorities. Wear suitable clothes and enclosed shoes. Always clean up after yourself, especially the workshop stationary tools.

LIBRARY

Our club library is available to all members with copies of Australian Wood Worker, Fine Woodworking etc available to get some ideas on your next project. Just remember to sign out and back in anything that you need.

SHOW & TELL:

Always feel free to bring in you works, either complete or still in progress, to the general meeting for “Show and Tell”.

It can be a great opportunity to show off your work or to get some ideas from other members. A photo will be taken for our newsletter.

Drop me a line with photos of your current project with a progress update to the editor (virginies@exemail.com.au) and show off your works to other members.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

If you have any info or news to share with all the members, please email them to me. Send me photos of items you saw on your travels, or interesting articles that you may have read. It is **YOUR** newsletter!!

MEMBERSHIP FEES

A friendly reminder that our annual membership fees are due in April. Please pay \$30, if you have not paid these as yet.

BSB: 633000

Account: 140997834

Till next month, yours in wood

Virginie Schmelitschek

Editor in Chief

(well, the only editor, really)