

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

**NOVEMBER 2005 NEWSLETTER**

**Committee.**

President	David Lipscombe	Oak Flats
Vice President	Bill Body	Balgownie
Secretary	Mal Stewart	Thirroul
Treasurer	William Perry	Cordeaux Heights
Public Officer	John Parker	Corrimal
Librarian	Bruce Keats	Primbee
Coordinator	Peter Hansen	Corrimal
Coordinator		
Newsletter	John Cashman	Fernhill

**Coming Events** – Peter Hansen announced these were

November 9: Club Meeting

November 26 Christmas Dinner, with the Kiama Woodies, CWA  
Hall - 2 courses, \$18 a head BYO. RSVP Nov 11

December 11: Christmas Picnic BarBQ 9.30am at Sublime Point

December 14: Club Social Meeting

**Show and Tell**

Last month Roy Thomas showed some solid lamp bases that he turned, and asked what the wood was ?

Your scribe also showed a small bowl, turned from 'found' wood, and asked the same question ?

Rick Funnell showed an intricate piece of carving and arrangement of a snake curling around some tree branches.

Bill Body brought his old wooden mallet with its faces showing much wear. He then showed us his spanking new mallet which he made from two pieces of cedar. Style !

## **Recent Events**

Several members participated and demonstrated at Fairy Meadows School's Expo last month. The day from our point of view was only hastily organised. Some people around, and about \$40 sold from the \$2 box, but the response was less than 'moderate.'

We were also 'on show' over the weekend, 5,6 November at the old Courthouse, opposite Brighton Beach. Our Secretary worked very hard to get publicity for the weekend, but with mixed results. *The Advertiser* gave us a bum steer. And then it rained ! Ahh !

This was a new location for us. Our display looked great, very classy ! But with the rain and overcast skies, it was fairly slow as far as visitors and customers were concerned. But there were some sales and some interest shown in the club.

## **Routing Group**

This group met on Tuesday evenings under Mal Stewart's guidance, help and instruction. Yesterday night was their last for this year. Thanks to Mal for all the effort he has given to this group. Mal has indicated that with enough interest shown, the group is likely to start again next February. Meanwhile work on children's table and chair sets, and small wheelbarrows continued, Dennis and Michael are making a classy wall cabinet for router bits, and Bruce is working on building a rocking chair.

## **Good Grief !**

Old plumbers never die, they just go down the drain !

Old woodies never die, they just reach the end grain !

Old writers never die, they just get writer's block !

Old miners never die, they just go down the mine !

Old electricians never die, they just go up in sparks !

That last one is shocking ! Ahh! Get some good ones !!!

## **Maintenance**

Bruce Keats and the Monday toymaking group chiseled deeper the holes in the concrete floor, and then filled them with cement. Thanks men ! A good even floor is an investment against accidents. There are a couple of other tasks on the maintenance list for the clubhouse, but at present these have been put in the 'Too Hard' or 'Don't Tell Us About It' trays !

## Newsletters

Currently there are 56 members in the club, (5 Life Members), who receive our newsletter. On average about half the members collect their newsletter at Club meetings. The rest are posted out. We also post a further 18 newsletters to other Woodies clubs (10 in NSW, 2 in Victoria and 1 in the ACT, and to 5 industry groups.

## Make them flat !

A new range of workbenches from Michael Connor Woodwork feature 65 mm thick laminated tops. Michael believes that near-as-possible flatness is critical for a benchtop and strives for this when building his benches. (02) 6628 4385

## Thinking of a Mini Lathe ?

In the *Australian Wood Review* no.35 well known Canberra turner Richard Raffan reviewed four Mini Lathes on the market, the *Vicmarc VL100* (\$486 basic, \$1066 complete), the *Omega Nugget* (\$3277), the *Jet JML 1014* (\$560) and the *Delta Midi* (\$549)

He concluded, 'the *Omega Nugget* is a superbly made machine which weighs twice the *Vicmark* and three times the two smaller lathes. With double the power and a bigger swing, it is very attractive until we get to the space it occupies ....and the price.'

'Either the *Delta Midi* or the *Jet* make adequate starter lathes on which to learn basic techniques through small projects less than 150mm diameter. And both are far superior to most of the small no-name lathes you'll see in homeware stores.'

'My preference is for the *Vicmarc VL100* although it is almost twice the price of the *Jet* or the *Delta*. It performed well through all the test projects and my only gripe is that the tool rest banjo is too short to reach round larger faceplate work.' The Club's latest lathe of this size, is the *Jet*, which Bill Body, as good as any salesman, got for us at less than the listed price.

## Polisher's Bible

Woodworker Neil Ellis, has produced a finishing book written for the men from Oz. Sanding, staining, French polishing and waxing are covered. The book sparkles with jokes, and is sure to help turners, carvers et al. Info from *Ubeaut* (03) 5221 8775 or [www.ubeaut.biz](http://www.ubeaut.biz)



## Rick Funnell

Outwardly Rick is a kind, quiet, gentle man, who is not known for pushing himself forward. Yet inside this exterior is a man of wide experience and skill.

Last year Rick served as one of the Club's Coordinators, but didn't stand for reelection this year as he has been made Vice-President of Wiseman Park Bowling Club. Rick has always been and still is a sportsman. He was a lifesaver at City Beach for years, and was also in the swimming club at the Continental Baths. It was there that he met Pam, his wife to be, and Bill Hedley's sister. According to Rick, Pam kept chasing him until she caught him. (Pam however tells a different story ! )

It was tennis that the family enjoyed. Rick and Pam and their two children, Darryl and Sandra, all played regularly for years. Later Rick became an official Umpire. One time he was a linesman when John McEnroe was playing. Rick called a ball 'out', but was overruled by the Umpire. This brought an outburst from McEnroe, 'Hey, you silly fool. The linesman was right !' A backhanded compliment. But later Rick found some high flyers were very rude. One player abused a young woman linesman twice. That player was reported and was docked a point. At the summing up meeting, Rick and his friend asked what was going to be done to stop that sort of behaviour. 'Well, nothing, for if that player was dropped from the tournament, the tournament Sponsor would cancel.' Ahh! That was enough. Rick resigned from this \$5 a day position !

Rick's dad was a railway man, and during Rick's schooldays they lived in 8 different towns around the state, before coming to Wollongong. Rick has been here ever since. He went to Wollongong Tech College, and was good at woodwork and Tech Drawing. This resulted in an apprenticeship with F C Fritt Constructions. After 10 years he moved to the Design Dept of A.I.S, later BHP. He worked his way up to be head of the Architectural Section. Colloquially the section was called the 'Shithouse Engineers' as among other things, they designed and built numerous toilet blocks in the vast BHP complex. Then after 34 creative years at BHP, Rick called it quits.

Rick and Pam have a comfortable home. Their block of land had been part of an old dairy in Fairy Meadow. When they built there

were still old cow bails at the end of the street. They haven't moved but their house has had several transformations; an extra bedroom added, then a gamesroom, then Rick's doghouse down the back, and then the weatherboards came down for brick veneer. It's a comfortable quiet suburban house, but inside it is like an Alladin's Lamp cave, revealing one treasure after another.

In retirement, Rick and Bill Hedley took some lessons in carving from Enn Muller, and carving is Rick's specialty. In his office, in the garage, in the gamesroom, there is a bonanza of Rick's carvings: relief pictures and sculptural models, and, and, and.....Behind his drawing board, is a cupboard full of Rick's goodies, mirrors with curly carved edges, a small harp I recognised from a club competition, fish swimming amongst seaweed, a wonderful relief picture of a watermill in Tasmania, then an extraordinary sculpture: a fairy on a large mushroom with a gnome underneath. It goes on and on. And wonderful carved hiking sticks, with snakes wriggling up the sticks to catch a frog on top ! Makes you want to take up hiking just to get a stick ! You'd be the talk of the hikers !

Rick's garage has more work, including a ¼ sized motor bike: with extraordinary detail and made from numerous types of wood. Rick took it to a big show in Grafton. He was awarded a special prize, because the word got around, 'Have you seen the motorbike at the show !' The organisers had never had such an attendance before !

I noticed a shelf of model cars in Rick's study, and commented on them. 'Come and I'll show you in the games room.' There, arranged in order was an extraordinary collection of Matchbox cars. Rick had kept his own childhood cars, and added to them prodigiously. But he only collects the vehicles made when Matchbox was an English Company, not when the Yanks bought out Matchbox and shifted the manufacture to Macau. It is his 'other' hobby, a wonderful collection. Also in the gamesroom is a Celtic harp Rick made; fully working too.

As well as Rick's creativity, Pam is also very artistic, and a great cook. The games room has numerous paper etoil pictures she has made. Paper etoil is where a picture is cut up and made three dimensional, by pasting layers and layers of paper behind the 'forward' parts of the picture. Painstaking, but a beautiful effect.

There are so many beautiful handmade pieces in this house, I felt quite overwhelmed. Talk about quiet achievers !!!

## **Seath's Magical Moments**

Albert Seath entertained and instructed us last meeting. Whether the Seaths eat lots of bread and meat at home is not known, but Albert is a master at bread board and cutting board construction. Albert makes them in various sizes, in contrasting stripes, and in chess board patterns.

Particularly interesting was Albert's recycled clamping system. Albert likes to make cutting boards three at a time. So instead of buying 6 clamps at \$68 each, he devised a system using solid lengths of timber and tightening screws, which he modified from car and 4WD jacks. His modification is ingenious, and he said you can often buy old jacks for \$6-8 at garage sales. Talk about recycling ! The resultant cramps are neat (they fit on each other) and do a fine job. Some very classy cutting boards. Good enough to pinch !

Albert's wizardry was also shown in his arrow through an apple. First he showed a wooden apple with a wooden arrow. I naively assumed that the arrow was made with a removable head. But no such obvious tricks for Albert. No! The arrow was made in one piece from quarter sawn timber (Jacaranda fits the bill well). The arrowhead is slowly squeezed in a vice until it is no thicker than the shaft, and then quickly pushed through the hole in the apple. Dipping the arrowhead in hot water and some gentle side pressure helps restore the arrowhead to its original shape. Quite a feat.

If that wasn't enough, Albert was then challenged to put an arrow through a light globe. A glass blower friend, was sceptical but eventually came up with three light globes with holes in the globe, and Albert was able to do the rest, at least to the third lightglobe. This is pure wizardry ! What will Albert come up with next ? Is Albert looking for a 'William Tell's son' volunteer ?

## **Christmas !**

Best wishes for Christmas to all club members and their families. We hope Santa brings you at least some of the tools you drool over in those classy catalogues.

Don't forget the Club's Christmas Picnic for members and spouses.

9.30am at the Sublime Point lookout, on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> December.  
Bringing your own meat and drink to BarBQ, and rolls and salad etc. will be provided.