

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

November 2007 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

14 November. 7pm Club Meeting

15 November. Sales and Demonstration at the Ladies Night at Bunnings, North Wollongong. From 5pm

17 November. Possible Sales and Demonstration again at Bunnings

2 December. Christmas Picnic at the Clubhouse from 12 noon. You're invited to come along and bring a friend

5 December. 5pm Committee Meeting

12 December. 7pm Club Meeting

The President and all the Committee would like to wish all members and their families a Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

First Club meeting in 2008 will be on the 13th February

Bulli Show

After the poor showing at Belmore Basin Court House, it is pleasing to report that things went much better at our Demonstrations and Sales at Bulli Show. Attendances were down, but this was to be expected, because the equine flu ban was still in place, and so the 'horsey crowd' weren't there. Nevertheless our Treasurer reported with a smile that we had sales of some \$450.

Trees and Wood –Tallowwood

Tallow-wood is a valuable eucalypt. It is unique in having a greasy feel to a fine-cut surface and it never has gum veins. What makes it so valuable is its excellent working properties and it's (once) abundance.

The botanic name *Eucalyptus microcorys* refers to the very small cap on the buds. Generally it is fairly common in the genus *Eucalyptus* for near related species to cross fertilise each other, resulting in hybrids. But tallow-wood is unique in not being closely related to other eucalypts, so it does not hybridise and retains its pure genetic identity.

Tallow-wood grows to a height of 60 m and a diameter of about 2m with a clean bole up to 2/3 of its total height. So it produces good logs for saw-milling. It occurs between the coast and the coastal range on the eastern side of the Dividing range, usually in a mixture with Sydney Blue Gum, Blackbutt, Flooded Gum, White Mahogany, Pink Bloodwood and Turpentine in an area from Newcastle as far as Fraser Island. Its best growth is in fertile gullies on the margins of rainforest. Its bark is persistent and rough to the small branches, brown to red-brown and fibrous, with horizontal cracks and small 'eruptions.' The upper and lower surfaces of its leaves are quite different, shiny dark green above and dull beneath. These features make it reasonably easy to identify. **Page 2**

It's wood is hard and heavy with a specific gravity of .99 so it only just floats in water. When green, it sinks. The grain is moderately coarse, but even, and often cross grained giving it a striped appearance. Growth rings are indistinct. Heartwood is yellowish brown, sometimes with a greenish tinge, and the sapwood is distinctly paler. It has a shiny luster and a definite greasy feel. The greasiness results from chemicals in the wood that prevent ordinary adhesives getting a good grip, so any gluing should have a prior treatment of a weak caustic soda 'wipe.' Otherwise tallow-wood is easy to work with hand or power tools. It turns well and takes a high polish. It is also good for steam bending.

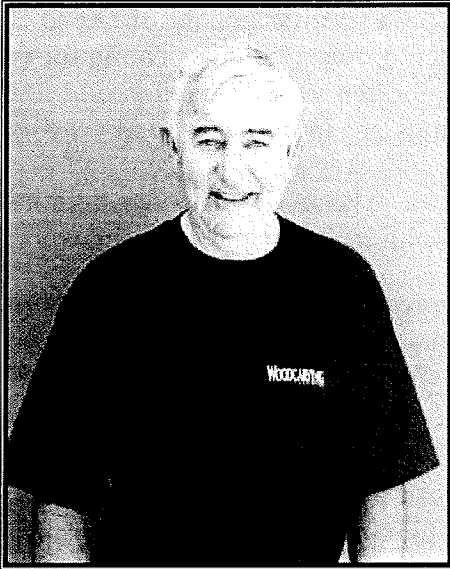
Its main uses have been heavy construction, bridges, sleepers, wharf-timbers, flooring, house-framing, poles and piles, cladding and decking. It is highly regarded as an excellent flooring, especially dance floors because of its greasy nature. The supply is now restricted and many of its former uses have now been taken over by alternate materials. But it is still a very fine timber. Ian McLaughlin *Bendigo Woodturners* March 2007

Show and Tell As well as the great Bill Body Trophy carved by Terry Elkins, and set on a stand by Albert Seath which was polished by Barry Long

*Barry Long showed an elaborate jewelery box of cedar, surmounted by an opening wooden diamond. The box has some 120 plus diamond tails, plus numerous other intricacies. Barry never goes for the simple and easy.

* Don Gray showed a nice small turned vase made from juniper and a classy little goblet turned from zebrano

* Ken Smith, showed two cooking spatulas made from old floorboards, and four turned and sharpened letter opening knives. Ken donated these to the Club's \$2 box. Thanks Ken



Terry Elkins.

Terry's place was easy to find. The Reece Plumbing truck was outside. His Dad wasn't a plumber. He was a farm worker and then a Power Station operator. But an uncle was a plumber. As a youngster Terry loved helping this uncle dig trenches and lay pipes. Curiously one of his young grandsons, loves doing the same kind of things with Terry.

Terry was born at Cowra, then at a young age moved to the Illawarra. His Dad died some years ago, but his Mum is still going strong at 91. Terry went to Christian Brothers School, and then did plumbing at TAFE. After he completed his course and qualified he travelled for a few years, particularly up in the Northern Territory, but finally came back to the Illawarra.

Terry went to Wollongong RSL Club one night. It was the 'in' for the young set in those days. What surprised Terry and knocked him for six was a young woman, Nora. Until that night they hadn't met, but talk about 'eyes across a crowded room!' Terry fell, hook, line and sinker! They married, and have three children Rachael, Tanya and Matthew, and now have three grandsons, Sam, Jake and Murphy! They are very happy with their children and grandsons. Nora still does part-time office work, but is to retire at Christmas.

Terry worked for a few years with different plumbing firms. Had a go at plumbing on his own, but went back to working with others. But while doing a lot of roof work, Terry started feeling sharp pains in his hips and legs. These pains became excruciating, and made him unable to work. So followed some 18 months when he was off work, or doing some part-time work and making numerous trips to doctors. One doctor explained that he had two bones grating against each other (with a nerve end in between!) Terry tried all kinds of things to master his situation but finally accepted that he had to change his work and live within his limitations.

When he couldn't do plumbing because of his hips he got some part-time work with BBC hardware. It wasn't bad, and when an opportunity came up to demonstrate Triton power tools, Terry grabbed it. His boss said, 'You'll be OK, and I'll be there if you need me.' In fact Terry was thrown in the deep end, and his boss only turned up at closing time. But Terry enjoyed doing demonstrations, working with wood and selling tools. He was also fascinated with Dramels, and 'power carving.' Dramels are hand held power tools, vaguely like dentists drills with which you can shape timber. The chap demonstrating them made little boots from different timbers. (100+ of these boots in different timbers are now on display in the swish wood showroom at Bungendore) Terry bought a Dramel and began experimenting. From BBC Terry moved to Plumbrule, plumbing supplies, and then 6 years ago they were taken over by Reece. Terry stayed on. They offered him a job in management, but it was not really his thing. He was happy doing delivery, and Reece, a very efficient company, are happy with Terry.

With his interest in power carving, he joined our club in the days when it used to meet at the University. From power carving he

gradually moved to traditional carving with knives and chisels. He started a couple of carving courses, but he is an independent spirit. Most of his learning has come from magazines and books, though he particularly admired the work of then club member Kevin Gillis. 'I love the beauty and texture of timber' he said, and occasionally enhances it with water paints. Favourite timbers for carving are jelutong, beech, camphor laurel and rosewood. Currently Terry is working on a nativity set of about a dozen pieces.

Terry doesn't only carve, though that's his first priority. His workshop also has a hot rod under way, which he will mount on rockers for children. In past years he has made several such rides mounted on rockers, a fire-engine, a tractor, a motorbike, for the Cancer Council to raffle and raise funds.

Terry also has an opal mine at Lightning Ridge, though these days he only gets up there once a year or so. Nora can't stand it, but he and a son-in-law or friend go up and work away with pick and shovel 45m underground. Terry said that opal finds have been minimal but it is fascinating and it is a rich field for fossils.

In some ways Terry's pains and problems with his hip joints stopped him reaching his fulfilment in plumbing. Yet by learning to live within limitations, and with his love and interests in Nora, his family, his carving, and his job with Reece's he has found a fine level of contentment and satisfaction.

Finances.

Thanks to a reasonable response to sales at the Bulli Show Bill Perry, our Treasurer, is able to report that the Club Bank Account now stands at \$3,299 (but it's not yet enough for the Committee to have a weekend on Lord Howe Island !)

It's wood is hard and heavy with a specific gravity of .99 so it only just floats in water. When green, it sinks. The grain is moderately coarse, but even, and often cross grained giving it a striped appearance. Growth rings are indistinct. Heartwood is yellowish brown, sometimes with a greenish tinge, and the sapwood is distinctly paler. It has a shiny luster and a definite greasy feel. The greasiness results from chemicals in the wood that prevent ordinary adhesives getting a good grip, so any gluing should have a prior treatment of a weak caustic soda 'wipe.' Otherwise tallow-wood is easy to work with hand or Power tools. It turns well and takes a high polish. It is also good for steam bending.

Its main uses have been heavy construction, bridges, sleepers, wharf-timbers, flooring, house-framing, poles and piles, cladding and decking. It is highly regarded as an excellent flooring, especially for dance floors because of its greasy nature. The supply is now restricted and many of its former uses have now been taken over by alternate materials. But it is still a very fine timber. Ian McLaughlin *Bendigo Woodturners* March 2007

Sharpening .

On the ABC's *New Inventors* a Newcastle man showed a different device to help sharpen chisels. The chisels are attached to a framed at a chosen angle and the 'stone' rolled across the chisel edge. He also had an ingenious device to roll gouges while rolling the stone over their edges. However at an estimated cost of \$400, the judges were somewhat skeptical.

Good Grief !

Lady: Yes, my husband and I got divorced because we found that we had unreconcilable religious differences.

New Friend: O dear. Were you from different denominations?

Lady: Oh. Nothing like that. It was really because he thought he was God, but I didn't!

Bill Body Memorial.

The Bill Body Memorial Trophy has now been finished and was displayed last month. It's a wonderful man of wood carved by Terry Elkins from camphor laurel donated by Albert Seath. Albert also made the base, polished by Barry Long, and the box for the trophy, Congratulations to these three members.



Photo Rick Funnel