

NEWSLETTER

Woodworkers Association of NSW

July/August 2025 edition

The cooler months are upon us and there have been a number of fabulous courses run for members at our Workshop at Abbotsford.

Peter Young led the Veneering course, **Carol Russell** travelled from Melbourne to teach two courses on carving spiral-spoons, small animals, bowls and cups, **Paul Nicholson** showed members how to make a beautiful tray and this weekend **Sara Buchner's** course on technical drawing will commence. Four things are outstanding about these courses for members - they are cheap, the instructors' are world-class, members of all levels of expertise can attend and benefit, and they are fun with great camaraderie.

After organising all our courses for the year (and maybe overdoing it??), our wonderful Course Curator, **Phil Nanlohy**, is having a few months recuperation after major heart surgery. We all wish him the very best and look forward to having his happy face and calm manner amongst us again soon.

In late June, **Henry Black** kindly invited members to view his expansive workshop at Concord and have some morning tea. About 28 members attended. Henry can do almost anything in his workshop. He has an amazing array of tools and machines - woodwork and metal work - of all ages and sizes, and a heap of other stuff to boot.

Then in July, **Hugh Campbell** hosted the Young Members' BBQ at the Workshop which was a very convivial occasion. We hope this will become an annual event and include families.

Also, a small group of members attended the premises of **Henkel Australia** at Seven Hills - one of the world's leaders in adhesives manufacturing (and a lot of other things). We received fascinating instruction about the making and different qualities of various PVA and polyurethane glues, were guided through

the laboratory where formulation and testing occurs and then observed the manufacturing process. Another visit is planned for October.

Speaking of world-class instructors and world leaders, our guest speaker for the August members' meeting is **Professor David Lindenmayer AO**, a highly distinguished expert in forest ecology and resource management, conservation science and biodiversity conservation at the Australian National University in Canberra. He is the author of ***The Forest Wars: the ugly truth about what is happening in our tall forests*** (an excellent but troubling expose) and 48 other books and 943 scientific papers! It promises to be an informative and illuminating evening. Please join us if you can.

Phil Greenwood, President

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Next meeting:

Monday, 4 August 2025, 7:30pm

(Please arrive by 7:00pm for a 7:30pm start)

Guest speaker:

Professor David Lindenmayer is a world-leading expert in forest ecology and resource management, conservation science, and biodiversity conservation. He currently runs five large-scale, long-term research programs in south-eastern Australia, primarily associated with developing ways to conserve biodiversity in farmland, wood production forests, plantations, and reserves.

Professor Lindenmayer has published more than 1442 scientific works, including 943 peer-reviewed papers in international scientific journals. He has also published 49 books, including many award winning textbooks and other seminal books.

Professor Lindenmayer has recently published an important book - The Forest Wars: The ugly truth about what's happening in our tall forests. This book lifts the lid on the destruction of native forests by government corporations and the logging industry that is making bushfires worse, killing wildlife and costing taxpayers millions, for the sake of exported woodchips.

Prof Lindenmayer's full biography is available here:
<https://researchportalplus.anu.edu.au/en/persons/dayid-lindenmayer>

Upcoming meetings:

Monday 13 October 2025
Monday 1 December 2025

Venue:

William Room, First floor, Canada Bay Club
– 8 William Street, Five Dock

Meals and light snacks are available at the Club in the Brasserie, Canada Bay Phoenix, or the Café. Feel free to enjoy a meal and camaraderie with other members.

Members are welcome to invite family and friends. Members are also encouraged to suggest guest speakers or items of interest to members for future meetings.

Life Members

Richard Crosland	Les Miller
Geoff Hannah	David Palmer (dec.)
Peter Harris	Leon Sadubin
Phil Lake	Richard Vaughan
Kim Larymore	Alan Wale

New Members

A very warm welcome to our new members:

Sean Rewell	Juliet Cohen
Michael Sgaramella	Pippa Simmons
Bailey Chapman	Lee Bourke
Sandra Guyot	Samuel Finnemore
Alexis Bolz	Jonathon Nanlohy
Martin Leadbitter	Phillip Birthisel
Howard Emmett	Michael Smith

All members (new and existing) are encouraged to be involved in the Association's activities including attending our bi-monthly member meetings, undertaking a course, using our Abbotsford workshop, or sharing a story in the Newsletter.

Stay connected

Join the [Member-only Facebook group](#) to share ideas and have casual discussions about woodworking.

Use this group to network with other members and get feedback about projects in a safe online environment.

Ask to join by scanning the QR code below:



Workshop

Full details about the workshop, including workshop bookings, are available on our website:

www.woodworkersnsw.org.au/workshop

Coming Up

July/August

Sharpening Day

The annual sharpening day will occur on **8 November**. The day will include demonstrations on hand and machine sharpening by Tomek and Japanese Tools Australia. Brian Dawson will demonstrate sharpening with sandpaper.

So bring your dull edge tools (such as plane irons, chisels, spokeshave irons) for sharpening.

Council of Woodworking Clubs

The Association is a member of the Council of Woodworking Clubs, and its website (<https://www.councilwoodworkclubs.org/>) has a list of upcoming events and contact details for clubs all throughout Australia.



Editorial -

Another feature-filled edition with finishing, marquetry, mental states, Malawi, market places, masterpiece replication, meeting members, and workshop envy.

If you have contributions for the newsletter, including articles, advertisements, story ideas, or anything else please email Anthony at newsletter@woodworkersnsw.org.au

WWA of NSW Principles and Values

Under our Constitution, the purpose of our Association is:

- A. To provide a forum for networking and to encourage camaraderie amongst all those who work in wood.
- B. To promote public awareness and appreciation of fine woodwork.
- C. To encourage creativity, design and development of skills and application by all woodworkers.
- D. To represent professional and amateur woodworkers in New South Wales.
- E. To promote the sustainability of fine woodwork as a career.
- F. To promote awareness of environmental issues including encouraging the judicious use of our precious native timber resources and use of sustainably harvested, recycled and reclaimed timbers.

To achieve those goals, the Association has adopted the following Principles and Values:

Inclusivity and community	Respect and safety	Dedication to craftsmanship	Environmental responsibility and stewardship	Respecting tradition and innovation
We embrace diversity and foster a welcoming community, encouraging participation from individuals of all backgrounds and skill levels to enrich our collective experience.	We prioritise a respectful environment and value each member's contribution to maintaining a secure and supported community. Safety whilst working with wood is a prime concern.	We are committed to continuous improvement and excellence in woodworking, fostering a culture where members actively enhance and share their knowledge and skills.	We are dedicated to sustainable environmental practices, responsibly sourcing materials and educating members on eco-friendly woodworking to minimise our environmental impact.	We honour the rich heritage of woodworking whilst embracing innovative techniques, ensuring the craft's evolution and relevance for future generations.

If you think that a member of the Association has not complied with these *Principles and Values*, please speak with the member concerned. If you are uncomfortable speaking to the member, please inform a member of the Committee. Your concern will be passed on to the full Committee who will determine what action is appropriate. If you wish to remain anonymous, your request will be respected. However, that may limit the action that the Committee can take.

Woodworkers Association of NSW Committee

The Committee is seeking more workshop supervisors. Workshop supervisors give instructions and oversee the safe use of machinery, help members with their projects, prepare the workshop and close it up at the end of the session. Workshop supervisors need to be accredited to use the machinery and to be familiar with workshop, tools and equipment.

The number and availability of workshop supervisors limits the use of the workshop for members on Wednesdays and Sundays. The Committee encourages members with an interest, capabilities and availability to be Supervisors to reach out to Phil Harley (workshop_supervisors@woodworkersnsw.org.au) or other Committee members.

Wax-finishing

Tom Paley

Wax is one of the oldest finish mediums (media) for finishing timber items. Its application makes it almost impervious to water & moisture. It is easy to apply and can provide an acceptable-looking finish that requires little maintenance.

Due to the thinness of the finish standing water will penetrate eventually, however spills can be wiped- up without causing damage.

The main disadvantage of a wax finish is that (depending on the type of wax), dirt & dust & grime can become embedded into the surface, gradually darkening it and obscuring the grain.

Soft waxes are very prone to darkening; whereas hard waxes are more serviceable but harder to apply.

There are many waxes in common use:

Bees' wax: Fairly soft; can be polished to a high sheen.

Carnauba wax: One of the hardest waxes

Bees' wax + Carnuba + various oils: Form the basis of most commercial wax polishes.

Japan: Is extracted from the berries of the tree which produces lacquer resin.

Lac: Is one of the components of natural "shellac" and a by-product of the industrial process of de-waxing shellac resin. The addition of lac-wax provides a hard glossy surface that is desirable in some blends.

Parafine: Is distilled from crude mineral oil. For woodwork (polishing) it can be brought to a high gloss - but this is variable, depending on the source of the mineral oil.

Microcrystalline Parafine: Is basically parafine with a very fine crystalline structure that tends to impart a higher gloss than parafine.

Its main use (Museum Quality) is in the overfinishing of very valuable antiques, as it does not react with the original finish and can be removed without damaging the original finish.

Blends: Most of the waxes can be and are blended with various oils to accentuate particular properties and assist in the method of application.

Summary:

Softer waxes are easy to apply whereas harder waxes are more difficult. The harder the wax the higher the gloss that might be achieved.

DIY: A simple soft wax can be made from Bees' wax & genuine Art-turpentine. [NOT mineral turpentine]

Application of wax finish

Wax can be applied to bare wood and a finish built- up from there.

However, it is usual to apply a seal-coat of thin shellac (approx. 1 to 1-1/2 lb cut) which is allowed to dry - say 2 hr; then lightly sand and dust-off.

A soft wax blend is applied with a clean cloth in a circular motion; alternatively with a fairly stiff brush. In the same manner as with shoe polish and cleaning, a cloth is used vigorously to rub in the wax, producing a degree of surface heat which helps with its spread and also to remove the excess. Finish with the grain.

Allow the wax to dry and soak-in in a warm dust- free environment, for several hours. Buff the surface to the desired level of gloss.

The process of wax-application & buffing can be continued indefinitely. However it is important not to build the wax too thickly (it needs more buffing).

The wax coating may be stripped-off when it is desired by dissolving it - usually with "Art-turpentine", & wiping the dissolved wax away. Then the whole process can be repeated.

Wax over other finishes

Wax can be & often is applied over almost any of the traditional finishes: varnish; lacquer; oil; shellac (French polish); usually as a secondary finish, or an everyday maintenance/cleaning medium. These are usually special mixtures with a few more additives, in the form of wax emulsions (liquid furniture polish).

[Note: The above article on wax finishing, written by late member Tom Paley, was recently "re-discovered" in Association records. He passed away in 2020. Tom was a long-term professional member of the Association. He was a very talented and knowledgeable woodworker with an in-depth understanding of timber finishes. We do not know when Tom wrote his wax finishing article, but it provides a good overview on different wood finishes and, in the main, is still relevant today.]

Meet a Member: Ben Bywater

A bit about Ben

My background has always been in marketing, I've got both bachelor and master degrees in business, I started out in the design industry before moving into digital marketing, and have now spent the past six years at City of Parramatta running their social media channels.



Like most blokes in their mid 30s, I've picked up a few "identity" hobbies. Woodworking was an easy choice, obviously. Golf was my other (both expensive I know). Outside of those, you'll usually catch me playing some video games with mates or tinkering with my home server.

Journey into woodworking

My dad was an industrial arts teacher, so I pretty much grew up in the shed, messing around with offcuts while he worked on real projects, I still remember making a dump truck that was big enough for me to sit in when I was about 5 or 6 and my siblings couldn't believe I made it, I also remember making a very rudimentary spoon that I promptly used as a drum stick on one of mum's nice vases, the spoon won that battle (oops).

I always loved woodwork and made all sorts of things through high school, including a fretless bass for my Year 10 project. I still have it, though it could use a tune up if I ever want it playing properly again.

After uni, I spent about a decade living in apartments, so woodwork took a bit of a back seat. It wasn't until Dad showed me a netsuke carving he'd made that I felt the itch again. I figured carving on the balcony was doable, and it turned into a nice way to reconnect with him and give me something productive to do with my spare time.

Entry into the Association-

Dad first mentioned the Association during Covid, when I couldn't get to his workshop to mill up timber. I didn't dive too deep into research, just took his word for it, signed up, and gave it a go.

I didn't have huge expectations at the start, but I've really enjoyed the courses and learned heaps from both the instructors and other members. There's so much knowledge floating around, and I've come to appreciate that there's rarely one "right" way to approach a project.



Favourite tools

Type of woodworking you do and enjoy - what types of tools you have

My main focus is still small-scale carving. I enjoy making pendants and occasionally spoons, but after building a couple of desktops a la George Nakashima for my home office last year, I've started sketching out ideas for some larger projects.

Over time, I've built up a pretty solid carving kit, with a mix of knives, chisels, gouges, spokeshaves and drawknives. Most of my tools have come from Japanese Tools Australia, along with a few pre-war planes, Veritas planes and HNT Gordon planes.

Home workshop

I mentioned my balcony workshop earlier, but I was lucky enough to buy a house a few years back with a 6 by 6 metre detached shed, which has since become my full workshop. The extra space meant I could look at bringing in proper machines, starting with a Laguna bandsaw. Since then I've added a 6in planer, a 13in thicknesser, mitre saw, router table and a table

saw, which has technically been promised to me but is currently living in a shed somewhere near Bathurst.

I've still got my old balcony bench, which is definitely due for an upgrade. But I now also have a 2400 by 800 assembly bench that's been brilliant for laying out projects and all kinds of glue-ups.

Dream workshop

My dream workshop wouldn't change too much, just a full upgrade to Felder and Festool gear if I had my way and the money to spare. My wife and I often talk about retiring somewhere a bit more rural, and having a dedicated studio space on a hobby farm sounds pretty ideal.



Plans for the future

I'm hoping to make a career shift in the next five years to see where woodwork might lead. One goal is to complete the Production Masterclass at Dunstone Design. I'd love to



learn how to take my own designs and turn them into something financially viable without compromising quality.

In the meantime, I've got no shortage of projects on the go, starting with the plantation shutters I promised my wife back when we moved in... it's definitely time to deliver on that. I've also picked up a 3D printer and have a few ideas for integrating printed parts into my builds, as well as using it to make scale models for reference.

Where do you see the Association heading in future

I'm keen to see the Association continue to grow. What I've really appreciated is how welcoming it is, whether you're just starting out or have decades of experience. It's been

especially great seeing more younger members get involved, learning hands-on skills and making things they enjoy.

It's pretty clear to many of us how important a community like this can be for mental health. That's why I'd love to see even more chances for members to connect, outside of meetings and regular workshop hours. The Young Members BBQ and Henry's workshop tour is a great example of this. I also think it'd be fantastic for the Association to bring back exhibitions. There's so much incredible craftsmanship among the members, and sharing that with the broader public could help spark interest and get more Sydneysiders on board.



As for the **Members Challenge**, I'm just excited to see what people come up with. It's a great excuse to try something new, push each other creatively, and work within the boundaries of a single piece of timber. If it's anything like past years, I'm sure I, and plenty of others, will walk away with a bunch of fresh ideas for future projects.



Visit to Henry Black's workshop on 29 June

On 29 June, Henry Black invited members to view his workshop at Concord. About 25 members took up Henry's invitation and enjoyed morning tea while inspecting his range of wood and metal working machinery and tools. Henry, a pattern maker by trade, used the workshop for his one-man furniture making business.

To the best of your knowledge, when was the workshop building constructed?

The house was built in 1928, so the workshop would be of a similar vintage.

I don't know what it was built for. But, an elderly neighbor mentioned it had been used to make aircraft components during the war with 70 workers.



What are some of the previous uses for the building and what legacies have those uses left in the fabric of the building

When we bought it in 1986 from Rivers Locking, a specialist security door and locking system company, they had 15 workers. There were seven in the workshop, two in a service truck and five in the house (office). The house was a wreck, we rebuilt it and added the upper level in 1997.

The lineshaft in the factory powered a metal lathe and grinder. Rivers took the lathe and I scrapped the grinder. On retiring I removed, cleaned and greased the five bearings and a couple of mates replaced the bearings in the 2 HP motor. I've fitted mice to keep the shafting rust free and have an old hollow chisel mortiser which one day I'll restore and get operational with the leather flat belting I've been given.

We reroofed and insulated the workshop in the early 90s and my brother (an industrial electrician) connected a new underground

supply and installed the Vass Electrobar busbar system. I can easily relocate single and three phase machinery myself with this arrangement.

Where did the large machinery come from, do any of the larger machines have interesting back stories?



I'm a longtime Wadkin tragic so the 8" Wadkin RS is well positioned to utilise its capacity for outside turning. I also have a Wadkin bobbin sander, bought all the Patternshop equipment when John Heine sold off their Patternshop when they closed their foundry. Thanks to a tip off and help from Andrew.

Another handy precision machine is the Hammond Glider compositors saw. It's the only floor model I've seen in Australia. These saws were featured in an article in Fine Woodworking #32 over 40 years ago. They can cut aluminum, brass and wood.



There's a few extra Wadkin machines which I need to sell as the new space is too small to accommodate a full size BGS 12" sliding tablesaw and a BOAS 12" under and over planer/thicknesser. I've recently been given a Luna combination planer/thicknesser and circ saw which fits ok and with access to the association's workshop for larger machining I should be ok for any furniture my kids want.

What is your relationship like with your neighbours?

I had a noise complaint a couple of years back so have built the enclosed area for my woodworking machinery under the old mezzanine area. I've used 95% scrounged

material for this having a ute and society being so throwaway nowadays.

3 x 2 from a house demo down the street, 20 large signboard panels the association was throwing out from the wood shows. Rob gave me large polystyrene panels to infill the walls. Doors from council cleanups, similar for the timber panelling.

The new enclosed area works well at keeping the noise to an acceptable level at the fence line and with the large shutters open will allow cross ventilation come summer when I'm not using machinery. It also keeps the dust off the metal and welding equipment.

Photos from the Workshop Visit



Historical French Marquetry Inlay Banding

Mark Angelo

Let's take a step back in time to 100 years ago in France and enjoy the works of a Company named Buffard Freres (the Buffard Brothers) who specialised in the production of fine Inlay banding.

The Buffard Freres company operated from the late nineteenth



century until the 1930's, when they were unfortunately bankrupted during the Great Depression. Their shop and offices were situated in the 11 th Arrondissement of Paris, which at the time was an area of authentic old Paris and age old craftsmen.

During their operating years, Buffard Freres made multitudes of inlay bands and shipped these all around the world, though mostly within Europe. Over their lifetime, the Company catalogued many thousands of designs.

In the 1970's, the few remaining members of the Buffard family finally decided to scrap the special machinery used to make the banding. This decision underlined that the intricate output of the Buffard Brothers had now become a historical memory. That is, until the Canadian Company Lee Valley / Veritas made a discovery in a Paris warehouse, finding commercial quantities of Buffard Freres' materials a few decades ago.

These materials were very quickly on-sold to lucky customers and collectors alike and in some cases on-sold again to lucky woodworkers (including myself, albeit many years later).

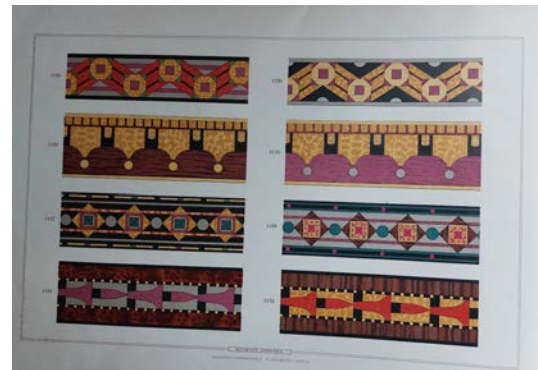
What stirs curiosity in the Buffard Freres patterned inlay bands is imagining how they were manufactured over 100 years ago using more traditional workmanship. The bands were all made with cut face grain throughout. Some

of the more complex patterns during the "Art Deco period" with curved and circular internal components must have used very specialised equipment for their times, as well as significant skills to make.

Timbers used by Buffard Freres were many and varied – they list Pear, Walnut, Mahogany,

Sandalwood, Holly, Ebony, Sycamore and many more. In addition, some dyeing of timbers was used to add colours like green and orange to patterns used in Art Deco inspired inlays - or occasionally to accentuate already beautiful timber shades.

Inlay banding can have a dramatic effect on the design of a piece of furniture, as many talented woodworkers in our Association can attest to. A



nicely placed inlaid band around the circumference of a box lid (as portrayed beautifully by some of our award winning Members), or desktop or the legs of furniture. If carefully matched, it attracts attention and adds intricacy and beauty.

Many years ago, I was able to purchase some of the Buffard Freres century old inlay banding on eBay, for a surprisingly reasonable price. Not long after I noticed an entire Buffard Freres antique catalogue dating back to the 1920's also for sale on eBay, which again I was also lucky enough to purchase.

Here are some samples of their work from this old world catalogue of yesteryear.



Fine woodworking: Being in the “flow zone”

Tony Anderson

Being in the flow zone is associated with skilled outcomes for both physical tasks in fine woodworking, and creative work such as design but the causes of flow are shrouded in mystery (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020). The elusive flow zone is believed to happen when high concentration is coupled with skills which have been made automatic, meaning you can perform the skill without thinking.

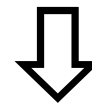
Flow is believed to occur in challenging situations which demand intense levels of concentration, contain clear goals and provide immediate feedback (Moran, et al., 2018) and you have a strong drive to excel (you are motivated to achieve a quality outcome).

The flow concept is an attempt to explain how, in situations when you are calling for extra effort, complex electro-chemical brain wave processes can free-up additional brain resources. It is believed that flow stimulates the release of neurotransmitters in the brain. The release of neuro-transmitters has a major contribution to the experience of the “Flow state” (Bertollo et al. 2020). Neurotransmitters act on other nerve groups, muscles and glands. If accompanied by synchronised brain waves, the effect could be that more brain resources are assigned to the present task heightened concentration, leading to reports that “It seemed time stood still”. High performance requires a high level of skill backed by total immersion in the task. Flow is not essential for high performance.

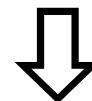
There are many examples in fine woodworking of tasks which require repetitive or near repetitive actions. Research has shown that the brain briefly retains the last nerve signals sent to activate the muscles (Whitford, 2017). For repetitive actions, when no error messages are received by the brain, a job can progress smoothly through to completion because the brain can perform an action while simulating the next successive action. This is shown during fast running. The brain does not wait for the leading foot to fall before starting the rear leg moving.

Stages of high task performance, based on neuroscience research, are:

Concentration: Total immersion in the task
Boundaries are pushed but achievable
Heightened visual awareness
Shift to automatic control begins
Release of neurotransmitters, changes to brain wave patterns

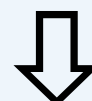


Awareness is high
Attention is pulled into the ‘now’
Faster response time
Decision-making, pattern recognition, and creativity increase
Can experience feeling of control, slowing of time and tranquil feeling
Awareness is heightened



Visualisation of the ‘look and feel’ of a perfectly executed action, using ‘self talk’. Then ‘get your head out of it’: have a mind open, intensely aware as the action is commenced.

Conscious level (monitoring role)



Automatic skills

Action sequence completed

The box on the right side of the graphic above assumes that the person has engaged in prior mental preparation which can be visualisation of the look and feel of a perfect outcome, prompted by 'self-talk' (pertinent instructions to self about what works best). Studies of flow in sport performance highlight the importance of terminating instructions to self as an action sequence begins (get your head out of it) (Katwala, 2016). Making your mind open and intensely aware helps in applying full concentration. In a flow state the conscious level of the mind becomes relegated to a monitoring role, ready to act if required. Flow requires strategic control monitoring and cannot be considered fully automatic (Moran et al., 2018). A person stays aware of what is happening, though may not have to intervene.

You cannot just enter flow, it arrives, and the experience is said to be effortless. It can include: a feeling of control over the activity; experience of time distortion, in which a person loses the awareness of themselves and thoughts of everyday problems; and a feeling of transcendence where the person feels a sense of unity with the activity (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020). In the flow state a shift in brain processing away from the frontal left area to the visual-spatial process of the right portion of the brain, can result in higher levels of performance by fully utilising attention (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020). "Flow is denoted by smooth and accurate performance, which can be accompanied by separation (dissociation) from the passage of time" (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020). Performing an action sequence can be like "watching a movie" of the action one is carrying out (Anderson, 2019).

The "flow state" is said to be easily lost if one thinks about how well things are going. Can you train for "flow"? If you were to try, then train to make skills automatic, set the training goals to challenge the top level of your current ability and drive your concentration to the highest level.

What causes flow?

A review of 20 relevant studies of "flow" listed the likely factors for entering flow as being: a challenge-skill balance (the challenge is not unreasonable and within reach of existing skills), a state of deep involvement in the task (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020); the goals are clear; and the feedback is unambiguous (Harris et al.,

2021). It has not been possible to say whether those factors cause flow. Their review gave a summary of the experience of flow as: the merging of action and awareness; loss of self-consciousness; transformation of time and that the experience is rewarding (Harris et al. 2021). They refer to a previous explanation for the flow-performance relationship as comprising performance enhancement and enhanced motivation to develop the necessary skills.

Gold and Ciorciari (2020) conclude that it is not possible to be sure how flow benefits performance. Did what was done cause flow, or was flow inferred after the experience? The authors report that with flow states there can be inhibition of certain executive functions of the brain which free up more resources to be dedicated to faster processing, leading to more automatic functioning (and the release of neurotransmitters, Bertollo et al. 2020).

Another view is that synchronisation in neurons and networks occurs creating efficiencies which improve communication within the brain creating high level experiences that resemble Flow states (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020). Experts develop more efficient processing of essential actions.

There is some evidence that the brain can send signals to parts of the brain which control movement and stimulate neurotransmitter release, as well as dopamine release (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020). When task expertise and the flow experience combine they appear to change parts of the brain which facilitate a greater allocation of brain resources to the visual-spatial process of the right brain. This would benefit hand-eye coordination well as design work.



Does "flow" cause improved performance, or does having a good day, bring on "flow" or does performance and "flow" act to build up each; a

reciprocal relationship? Another factor which drives high performance is the pressure situation, where you want to do better. In athletic performance this could be a competitor closing in on the sprint to the line. This can "lead to increased effort and intensity in pursuing specific goals (Swann et al. 2021). The need to lift performance, can constitute the challenge which brings on an energised state and effortless attention, lifting performance (Bertollo et al. 2016). The synchronisation of brain activity associated with flow can, it is said, produce smooth execution of movement (di Fronzo et al. 2016).

Conclusion

Possible explanations for a flow experience during performance of a skilled task are:

- The experience of flow resulted from having developed high level skill applied with concentration, stimulated and by the release of neurotransmitters in the brain.
- You pushed yourself to higher intensity in pursuing a goal (Swann et al., 2021).
- You achieved the required goal postures for success in the task. This explanation is based on research by Schack, (2020) who proposes that the brain represents skilled action, from start to finish, as a sequence of movement postures or goal postures, together with information about how the movements merge. These represent critical control actions (Lappi, 2022) are specified before movements are initiated (Schack, 2020) and can be repackaged into a fluid arrangement of actions that can be set off by a single thought (Gold and Ciorciari, 2020).
- The result could have been by chance. The job went well because high concentration was applied to existing skills and the tools, under your hands, did exactly what you wanted; just a good day!

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- Schack, T. (2020) Mental Representation in Action: A Cognitive Architectural Approach. In *Handbook of Sport Psychology. Fourth Edition*, Vol. 1. Edited by Gershon Tannenbaum and Robert Eklund, 2020 John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Whitford, T., J., and others, (article relating to efferent copies) <https://doi.org/10.7554/eLife.28197>

Courses Report

[Editor - Phil Nanlohy is on a break and will be back on deck soon.]

Please visit the [Courses section of the website](#) for more information on one that may have sparked your interest. Please tell friends and family about our courses if you think they may be interested.

We are very fortunate to have the calibre of course leaders.

Peter Young is a teacher in the year long course at the Sturt Woodwork School in Mittagong.

Paul Nicholson runs a busy wood working school in Marrickville and brings a deep focus on hand tool use.

Sara Buchner is a designer, artist, and co-founder of *Among the Trees*. She will teach essential techniques for converting woodworking ideas into precise drawings that turn into real projects.

Lou Harriss has extensive experience working on commissioned furniture and runs the safe use of hand held routers and Domino loose tenon machines courses

Spiral spoon carving with Carol Russell (Saskia Freidrich)



Carol Russell's workshop gave members exposure to gouges, cabinet scrapers, rasps, spokeshaves, and knives. Saskia loved the sculptural aspect of furniture and this workshop was inspiring. Carving is a great way of learning how to read wood and understand how to work with fibres.

Hand made tray with Paul Nicholson (Anthony Seiver)

Six members learnt new hand tools skills while making a tray from Kauri pine. There was a mix of skills and experience in the class and Paul gave everyone confidence to use joinery planes, chisels and saws. Paul's jigs and hand tools made operations like edge jointing, ploughing, rabbetting and mitre joints easier, more accurate and repeatable. The completed trays were finished with Danish Oil.



Participants learning new hand tool skills on the Tray Making Course.



Paul Nicholson explaining joinery on the Tray Making Course.

Not sure which course is best for you?

Getting Started

For those new to woodworking or returning after a break. Great first courses.

- Bowl or Cup carving
- Planning Your Ideas
- Meet the Machines
- Baby Bench
- Domino Basics

Core Skills & Techniques

Build your foundation with essential machine and hand joinery skills.

- Introduction to Veneering
- Meet the Machines
- Joinery by Hand
- Hand Held Routing
- Domino Basics
- Mortise and Tenon Joinery

Creative Projects

Learn by making — functional or decorative items to take home.

- Spiral Handled Spoon Carving
- Bowl or Cup Carving
- Meet the Machines
- Hand-made Tray
- Baby Bench
- Mortise and Tenon Joinery

Specialist Materials & Techniques

Explore specific tools and the techniques for application to your own projects.

- Introduction to Veneering
- Spiral Handled Spoon Carving
- Bowl or Cup Carving
- Joinery by Hand
- Hand Held Routing
- Domino Basics

Learning from Career Professionals

Courses led by full-time woodworkers and professional educators.

- Spiral Handled Spoon Carving – Carol Russell
- Bowl or Cup Carving – Carol Russell
- Hand-made Tray – Paul Nicholson
- Planning Your Ideas – Sara Buchner
- Joinery by Hand – Paul Nicholson
- Hand Held Routing – Lou Harriss
- Domino Basics – Lou Harriss
- Mortise and Tenon Joinery – Peter Young

Course	Leader	Dates	Skill Focus	Spaces
Planning Your Ideas	Sara Buchner	2, 9 & 16 August	Design & Drawing	Full
Meet the Machines	Henry Black and Peter Harris	23 & 30 Aug	Safe machine use	Full
Baby Bench	Peter Darby	11 & 12 Sept	Jig making	2
Baby Bench (Repeat)	Peter Darby	13 & 20 Sept	Jig making	Full
Joinery by Hand	Paul Nicholson	22 to 26 Sept	Hand Tool Use	Full
Hand Held Router	Lou Harriss	18 Oct	Machine use	Full
Hand Held Router (Repeat)	Lou Harriss	25 Oct	Machine use	Full
Using the Domino	Lou Harriss	1 Nov	Machine use	1
Mortise and Tenon Joinery	Peter Young	13 & 14 Nov	Joinery	5

Update 2025 Member Challenge – Teak

Ben Bywater

We're pleased to share that 18 members have registered for the Teak Challenge. A diverse range of ideas is already underway. Proposed projects include:

- Boxes featuring all timber hardware, with a member looking to experiment with wooden hinges and locking mechanisms.
- Carving with some participants focusing on ornamental or functional pieces.
- Turned bowls: exploring grain and form through lathe work.
- Small stools: combining joinery, stability, and compact design.

If you've registered but haven't yet collected your allocated timber, please do so at your earliest convenience during the opening hours of the Abbotsford workshop. Unclaimed timber may be difficult to track down later when left in the workshop, and we'd like to ensure all participants have what they need to get started.

The final deadline for submission is the December General Meeting, where completed projects will be exhibited. This will be an opportunity for members to share techniques, gain inspiration, and appreciate the range of interpretations drawn from the same material.

Even if you haven't committed to an idea yet, there's still time to participate. Seeing what others are planning may help shape your own direction.

Members still wishing to enter the challenge need to register by [emailing Ben Bywater here](#).



Workshop Updates

Machinery Upgrades - Alex Worley

The association purchased a new JESSEM Router Power Unit and switch assembly and a brand new Carbatec Lift Unit to overcome some of the idiosyncrasies of the current router setup. This should help members use the router a little easier. If you are relatively new to routers please see the Supervisor for your first use of the machine just to be sure.

The TORMEK T8 is a significant upgrade for the workshop that will be a particular joy for the wood turners but also for all those who use chisels and hand planes. The current T4 is ok but it has loose parts and is tricky to use. The T8 has a 250mm stone, the Square Edge jig for sharpening chisels and plane irons and the Truing Tool to name a few of the inclusions. In addition, the association also purchased the rotating base, a Tormek Gouge Jig, the Tormek Profile Leather Honing Wheel, a Tormek Turning Tool Setter, and a machine cover. We encourage members to use the T8 as with all equipment in the workshop. Please make sure that you speak to a supervisor if you are unfamiliar with the T8 and please ensure that you clean up the area and replace the cover over the machine.



Maintenance Update - Andrew Honan

On 18 July, Peter Harris, Peter Darby and Henry Black and Andrew Honan carried out another scheduled maintenance day at the workshop.

The main tasks were:

- We unpacked and set up the new Tormek grinding station. This new kit will be very welcomed by everyone at the workshop. It is a fantastic piece of kit, which will be a delight to use for all.
- Both ceiling mounted dust collection systems had their bag filters and first stage air filters thoroughly cleaned. There did not appear to be much build of dust in the filters. The machines should stay at peak performance. Supervisors and woodies are encouraged to have these dust extractors machines on, when using machine cutting. These dust extractors remove suspended micro fine dust suspended in the air,
- A new dust duct was installed at the base of the cabinet of the table saw. The previous one had been taped up several times and there were still cracks in the duct. As well as replacing the duct the table saw cabinet was swept clean of wood chips and sawdust.
- The fines filter on the 2-stage cyclone dust extractor system was removed and thoroughly cleaned (similar to previous maintenance day). There was not a large amount of build up, however with the clean, the system will maintain peak performance.
- All the sash clamps were thoroughly cleaned of all the glue. Woodies, please clean all excess glue after glue-up. Once glue gets embedded on the clamps it builds up and makes flatness impossible. There is usually thick paper in the back room, to minimise any mess during glue-up.
- Jointer and thicknesser cutters were checked and broken cutters replaced. The thicknesser rollers were lubricated.
- The large band saw had its blade changed, and the guides adjusted and dedusted. There should be a real performance improvement in the large band saw.
- Add lubrication to the bench saw height mechanism.
- We also put a few pop rivets in some of the sliding air gates to hold them shut. Any leakage in the dust extractor system really impacts on the overall performance of the system

Book Review:

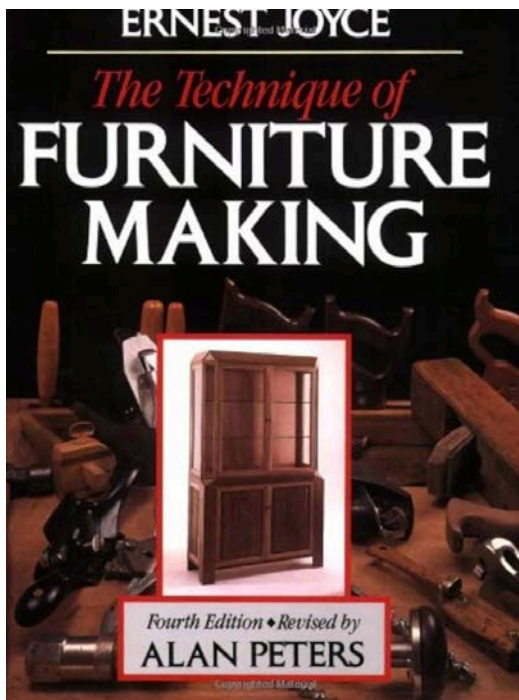
The Techniques of Furniture Making

Alex Worley

Author: Ernest Joyce

First Published: 1970

Genre: Woodworking / Craftsmanship / How-To



Summary

If you're starting out in woodworking and want to go beyond just building flat-pack furniture or weekend projects, *The Techniques of Furniture Making* by Ernest Joyce is one of the best books you can read. It's not a quick "how-to" guide with colour photos—it's a comprehensive, trusted manual that teaches you the real foundations of furniture making. Joyce was a master cabinetmaker, teacher, and examiner for the British City & Guilds. He wrote this book after years of hands-on experience building fine furniture and training tradesmen. He knew what mattered, what worked, and why—and he laid it all out in a book that's stood the test of time.

What Is It About?

This book dives into all the essentials, including:

- Choosing and understanding wood
- Importance of wood grain and drying
- Right way to make joints
- Assembly and finish furniture properly
- Use and care of hand tools

It's filled with clear diagrams and explanations, helping you understand both the how and the why of every technique.

Real Example: The Dovetail Joint

One of the standout parts of the book is how it explains traditional joints—especially the dovetail joint. In Chapter 19 Joyce walks you through how dovetails are angled interlocking joints often used in drawers and boxes because they're incredibly strong and resist pulling apart.

He doesn't just tell you how to cut them—he explains why the angles matter, how the joint behaves under stress, and why they're often left visible in high-end furniture as a sign of craftsmanship. This kind of insight is what makes the book so valuable: it connects technique with purpose.

Why It's Useful for Beginners

While this book might seem a bit advanced at first, it's perfect for beginners who are serious about learning. You might not make a perfect dovetail your first try—but with Joyce's guidance, you'll understand what went wrong and how to improve.

The writing is clear, though a little old-fashioned, and the lessons are grounded in real, hands-on woodworking experience.

What to Keep in Mind

It's not flashy—just black-and-white drawings and lots of text. Some woodworking terms may feel unfamiliar at first, but they'll make more sense as you practice. It's more of a reference book than a project guide — but it's one you'll return to again and again.

Best For:

Beginners who want to build things that last
Hobbyists looking to improve their technique
Anyone who wants to understand the "why" behind traditional furniture making
Students or apprentices in cabinetmaking or carpentry.

Final Thoughts

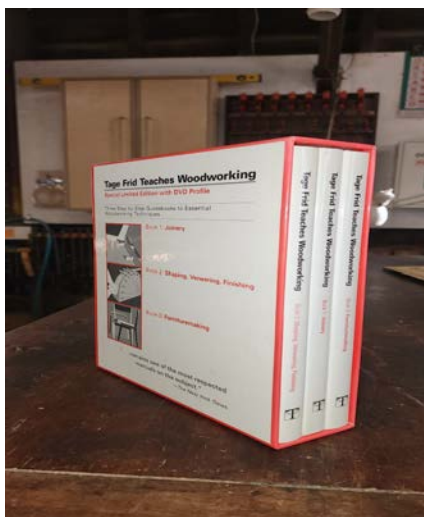
The *Techniques of Furniture Making* is like having a wise old craftsman by your side. It doesn't rush you — it teaches you to slow down, understand the materials, and build furniture the right way. Whether you're learning how to make dovetails or choosing the right timber, this book gives you the foundation you need to become a skilled woodworker.

Highly recommended for anyone starting their journey in woodworking.

Donation to the Association Library

Association President, Phil Greenwood has donated a box set of Tage Frid Teaches Woodworking to the Association Library.

The box set will compliment the well-used copies of Tage's books in the Library.



The Association Library is stored in the book case at the Abbotsford Workshop and books are available for loan or to inspire your next project at the Workshop.

Preserving the Past, Building the Future: AVCA's Work with Vulnerable Communities

Patrick Kennedy

In 2001, I was deployed with the Seventh Australian Detachment to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor to assist in preparing the country's people for independence and separation from Indonesia. I was younger then—twenty-three years old—when I shipped out of Sydney to Darwin to meet my detachment for a two-week operational briefing before we boarded a Chilean Air Force C-130 and crossed the Timor Sea into Dili. At that time, I knew very little about indigenous cultures, but I would soon learn how vulnerable communities and traditions can be to the influence of the modern world.

In a small village on the southeast side of the island, the children of Viqueque gathered to watch the arrival of the impressive UN force, which rolled into town in a motorcade of white UN Range Rovers. This was a village with no running water and no electricity—meaning no TVs, no iPhones and no internet at all.



Children from Viqueque, Timor Lorosae with Patrick Kennedy circa 2001-2002

As we unpacked our kits and settled in over the coming days, weeks, and months, the children of the village watched our every step, fascinated by the technology we had brought with us: stereos, and video cameras, two-way radios and satellite phones.

Although I have mixed feelings about it now, we set up a movie projector too and the Australian Army kindly strung up an enormous white canvas sheet at the end of a soccer field so that we could introduce the village to their first Hollywood movie—The Magnificent Seven, and every Saturday night thereafter we screened a new film, all the classics we could get our hands on.

It all seemed to be going well for us and for them.

Only now, nearing fifty, do I wonder how many of those children walked away from their traditional lives, customs, and crafts to adopt the technologies and ways we showed them.

Which of them would continue to learn to carve pillars of *Uma Lulik* - sacred huts with intricate posts often detailing sacred crocodiles, or to create *Aitara* - hand-carved ancestral statues symbolising family lineage, a visual representation of ancestors.

I think often about the impacts that the ever so sudden leap from a 'simple' life towards a life now exposed to modern technology has had on their culture and on the passing down of knowledge from mother and father to child, especially in woodworking and carpentry which are passions of both myself and my grandfather Ashley Fordham Mack, a master carpenter from Scotland who carefully taught me the trade when I was just a child.

I've observed the same thing happening in many other vulnerable communities around the world, children disinterested in their indigenous cultures in places that have opened their communities to tourism, and I've seen the attrition rates increasing in places experiencing

a foreign and modern presence for other reasons. I've observed it happening even in the most remote areas of the world and it's happening faster and faster nowadays. I think of the youth among the hill tribes in Laos, and on remote islands in the Maldives, and even here at home in Australia where



young people are being drawn to technology and an existence that seems far more exciting and fulfilling than life in small villages learning the skills of their mothers and fathers and it worries me that those unique woodworking and carpentry traditions might soon be lost—perhaps forever if some much needed attention isn't drawn back towards those indigenous crafting techniques, and their importance to their culture and our collective human history.

With those thoughts in mind, I spoke to my wife, Lucy, and shared my concerns with her and she was more than supportive of my proposal and together we founded the Australian Carpentry Collective and its subsidiary, Australian Volunteer Carpenters Abroad—better known on social media as AVCA (see Instagram account @carpentry.collective harnessing the power of social media for the benefits of vulnerable communities).

AVCA and the Australian Carpentry Collective are a not-for-profit organisation with a mission to preserve indigenous woodworking and connect carpenters and woodworkers worldwide, especially in the regions most vulnerable to the loss of their cultural identity. Our aim is to document indigenous woodcrafting methods carefully so they are never lost and can be learned again and to work alongside these communities to give them the modern skills in tradecraft that will help them build their own future.



Our organisation is preparing for our second mission where teams will travel to Malawi, Africa, a land locked country and one of the poorest nations on earth.

Once there, some of our volunteers will meet with the elders of the Chewa, Yao, Tumbuka, and Ngoni peoples to study their woodworking crafts and document everything from the selection and cultivation of timber to the crafting of traditional *Nyau* masks for the *Gule Wamkulu* dance, and the *Mpando wa Mfumu* and *Bwalo*—traditional chairs for their chiefs.



The work of these volunteers is as diplomatic as it is investigative, and our volunteers will be expected to write a report and to produce illustrations of those methods along with taking careful video so that future generations can observe those techniques and hear the language used and understand its meaning.

Other volunteers will teach modern carpentry techniques at trade schools we have partnered with, including St Joseph's Carpentry Works in Zomba. This school currently produces doors, storage cabinets, and food-service trays for local hospitals but is in urgent need of new equipment, safety improvements, and additional skills training. With this support, they can expand their production, diversify their output, and train more apprentices—an invaluable contribution to a community that has weathered five cyclones in the past six years.



Some volunteers will also have the opportunity to work alongside local tradespeople and apprentices rebuilding the Nsanama Primary School, which sits at 1,800 metres above sea level on the Zomba Plateau overlooking central Africa. This school is in a severe state of disrepair and currently has no tables or chairs for its students. Our goal is to rebuild and secure the schools structure by repairing its walls and roof, and then we will furnish it with cabinets, desks, and chairs locally sourced and finally, our aim is to install a solar powered battery and a Starlink modem so that these kids, whom the world has forgotten, can link up with an Australian Primary School and other primary schools around the world and find friendships there.



AVCA Volunteers will participate in three-week missions: two weeks on the tools, followed by a week on safari. The country offers incredible recreation opportunities whether you're interested in hiking, swimming, or experiencing your first safari, Malawi's national parks—some inaugurated by Prince Harry—are among the

most beautiful in the world, and home to Africa's most iconic wildlife.

Our missions are designed to ensure that we preserve the past and build a better future and because we are big believers in transparency we are one of the only charities in the world where you can see video updates of your contributions in action weekly through our Instagram account, @carpentry.collective, where you'll meet our Malawian ambassador, Yvonne Mwakhiana—a young female carpenter from Lilongwe—as well as other carpenters including Faison, Theresa, Alinafe, and our young friend Precious, a 17-year-old apprentice learning from his father, along with many others who support the Carpentry Collective.



If you care about indigenous communities and share our values, we invite you to register as a member of the Australian Carpentry Collective Limited, you can register at avca.org.au.

And, if you would like to make a donation, please do so —every contribution helps and you can donate through our *GoFundMe* Campaign -

<https://www.gofundme.com/u/carpentry-collective>

Reference: Mtuta, A.G. Gulewamkulu institutional and organizational factors influencing community development projects in the area of T.A. Chauma in Dedza District, Malawi. *Int. j. anthropol. ethnol.* **7**, 21 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41257-023-00100-4>

Patrick is a Carpenter and Australian Volunteer Carpenters Abroad for the Australian Carpentry Collective Limited, and will speak at the Association's October meeting.

Chair Tales

John Austin

Replacing chairs stolen from a church

In 1986, I was approached by an insurance company assessor who specialised in finding replacements for valuable items that were either stolen or fire damaged.

Two chairs were the property of a Sydney church and one had been stolen. The chairs were used for ceremonies (including weddings), so the church management sought to replace the stolen chair, if at all possible.

He did not think he would be able to find a replacement anywhere and asked if I could replicate the chair.



(Left photograph) The original chair was made of English Oak and this timber was sourced from England for the project.

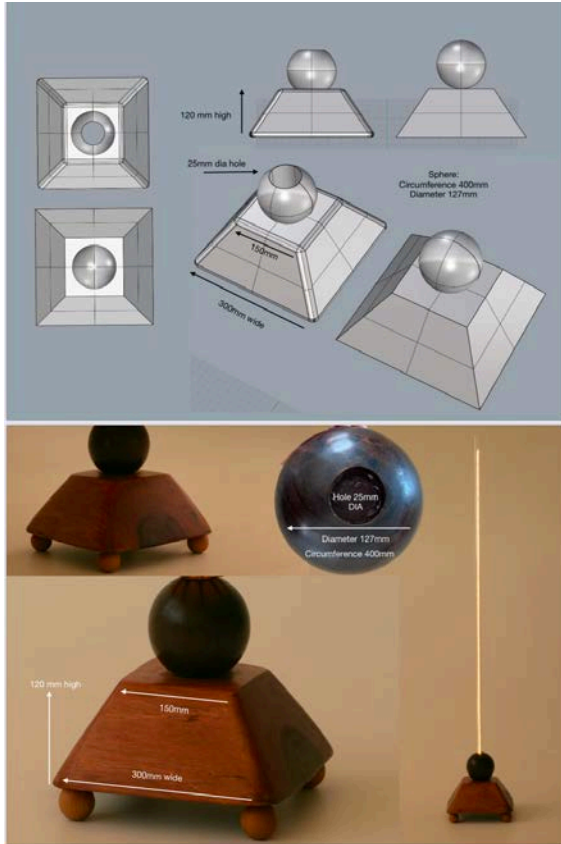
(Right photograph) Original chair with replica after upholstery and polish – barley twists and carving all by hand.

Two other chairs were stolen at the same time. While they were slightly less ornate, they proved to be an interesting project all the same. These were made out of Brazilian Mahogany (photograph right).



Artist looking for a woodworker

[Editor - I was approached at the Abbotsford workshop about placing a job ad for a woodworker to help an artist with wooden parts for her lamp. The text and images are from the artist, Lana Launay, please contact Lana directly at the contacts below if you are interested.]



This design is for one of my lamps called the 'Modular Lamp'. I am looking for someone to make the wooden parts (see specifications and photos - a sample can be supplied for reference).

Timbers that we have used in the past are cedar, eucalypt species, blackbutt and ironbark species, which have all worked well. The only timbers that haven't worked so far are silky oak (too oily) and pine.

The final result is stained, so the raw colour is not so important. Before the stain photo attached for reference.

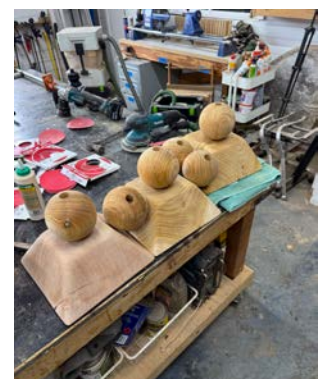
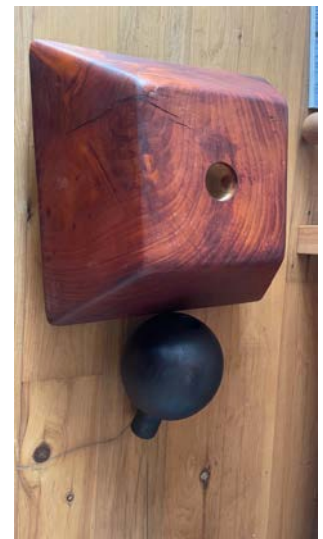
There can't be any big cracks in the wood, as one has spread in the past and broke the base in half.

The base is also slightly hollowed out underneath to avoid an overbearing weight, and to make room for the power supply / driver that is attached later. The driver/ power supply is approx. 40mm deep.

The sphere is made separately and it attaches like a plug. The 25mm hole into the top of the sphere is approx 50mm deep, this hole must be straight, at 90 degrees to the base, as the

lighting rod sits in here to hold the entire lamp erect. There is a smaller hole (7-8 mm) drilled directly through the plug and the sphere for the electrical cable. I put the round feet on separately.

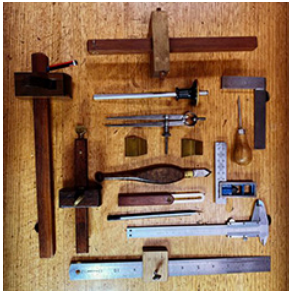
On average I need two per month (or three bi monthly). Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns - 0466 559 130; lanalaunay@gmail.com; Instagram: lanalaunay; or www.lanalaunay.com



Our Professional Members

Advertising in the newsletter is available to all members at no cost. [Email the editor here](#) with an image and a short description of the services on offer.

Members are also encouraged to send through advertisements for woodworking related items for sale (such as tools, timber, or tall tales).



Paul Nicholson Woodwork

Classes in traditional
woodwork using hand tools.

[Visit website](#)



Richard Crosland School of Fine Woodwork

All tools are provided and work
in progress can be stored at
the Alexandria workshop.

[Visit website](#)



Before



After

Nikolaus Teply Restorations

Take the mystery out of
finishing furniture. Learn how
to prepare and finish a
wooden surface. Increase your
knowledge of different
materials and tools used.

[Visit website](#)

Canada Bay Club

[Canada Bay Club membership is just \\$3.30 for one year or \\$11 for five years.](#)

Benefits of membership include: reward points when you purchase food, drinks and other services, discounts on food and drink, free parking, birthday rewards, health and fitness classes, and discounted holiday accommodation. Join at reception next time you visit the Club. More details at: canadabayclub.com.au/membership

Member classifieds

Machinery for sale - Dundas

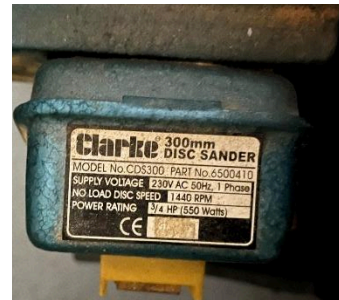
All machinery in perfect working condition when last used. If all four bought will negotiate price.

Feel free to contact me to ask any questions. Please contact Sandra 0411286088 (text preferred)

Very heavy and large equipment (will need truck or trailer and two people to carry).

Clarke 300mm disc sander

\$150



Kity 439 Thicknesser

\$580



Hafco Woodmaster Wood Lathe

\$490



Carbatec Bandsaw

\$780



COMBINATION MACHINE

(3 phase. Can be converted)

Saw, Thicknesser, Planer, Mortiser, Spindle. SAMCO. Made in Italy.

With dozens of cutters, bits, guides, jigs, blades and misc.

Used minimally by my father, a cabinet maker & French polisher. Recently tested and it runs beautifully.

However with an imminent move I must sell this urgently and have HALVED the previously listed price (on Machines4U.com) from \$3,000 to \$1500 ONO for members.

Call Michael for more photos/details 0417 226 656

