

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

**JULY 2008 NEWSLETTER**

President	David Lipscombe	Oak Flats
Vice-president	Tony Sirotich	Figtree
Secretary	Mal Stewart	Thirroul
Treasurer	William Perry	Cordeaux Heights
Coordinator 1	Ric Funnell	Fairy Meadow
Coordinator 2	Ken Smith	Thirroul
Public Officer	John Parker	Corrimal
Librarian	Kevin Parker	Woonona
Newsletter	John Cashman	Fernhill

**Events Coming Up**

**30 June – 28 July Display cases in Wollongong Library**

**9 July. 5.30pm Committee, 7pm Club Meeting**

Supper Roster: Ken Hutchison, John Parker

**19 July Christmas in July night out See Tony Sirotich**

**13 August 5.30pm Committee, 7pm Club Meeting**

Supper Roster: Milan Oder, Terry Elkins

**5 - 7 September Canberra Wood Show**

**10 September 5.30pm Committee, 7pm Club Meeting**

Denis Hamilton to talk about and show miniatures

Supper Roster: Peter Hanson, Don Gray

**13,14 September Bulli Show**

**Welcome to Michael Groves who has joined the club**

**Grateful thanks to ILLAWARRA ITeC our great sponsor. ITeC provides Training and Development for Small Businesses and for the Unemployed too**

**Workshops** will be held at the club: on alternate Saturday mornings 5<sup>th</sup>, 19th July, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> August, 6<sup>th</sup> September. from 8.30 approx to just after lunch. Some times there will also be workshops on the in between Saturdays. Find out by attending one of the Saturdays listed.

**Show and Tell** (May and June)

**Barry Long** showed a small circular box with a frog on top he had been told that nothing could be made from the hardwood in question, and that was like a red rag to a bull. Barry also showed a bird with electric flashing eyes that will sit in a nest above another jewelery box to be made.

**John Cashman** showed a small turned stand made to hold earings for pierced ears

**Tony Hancox** showed some toy cars and two tumble down ladders he made for our toybox. Thanks Tony. Tony also showed a magnificent lighthouse he turned from some 300 plus sectors of wood. The lighthouse was mounted on a wood burl effectively represented a rocky outcrop.

**Rick Funnell** showed a mortice gauge which used wedges rather than the traditional screws. Rick also showed a wonderful screen carved from camphor laurel, full of birds, branches and flowers: a project he had worked on for a couple of years.

**Denis Hamilton** showed a model of potting shed complete with BBQ, tinnies and a cat which he and his wife had made together

**Ken Smith** showed and donated 32 curved door wedges to the club for the \$2 box. Thanks again Ken!

**Peter Hanson** showed a block of Camphor Laurel which had fiddleback grain. Peter explained how that grain happened

## **Finances**

Thanks to our Sponsorship, membership fees, sales at Thirroul Festival and some sales of items at a recent Seniors Week display our finances are looking much better than a couple of months ago. Bill Perry our Treasurer reported that our Book Balance (Bank balance less unpresented cheques) was \$3,723.31

## **Good Grief**

It was 2am and pouring with rain, when there was a knock on the door. ‘Can you give me a push?’ a bedraggled, wet-through man asked. ‘In this weather? No way,’ the householder replied, and shut the door. As he was getting back into bed his wife asked, ‘Who was it?’ ‘Oh, some bloke wanted me to go out and give his car a push. At this time and in this weather. No way I said.’

‘You’re a hard man,’ his wife said, ‘Get dressed and go out and give the poor man a push.’ The man grumbled, but knowing there would be consequences if he did not, he got dressed and went downstairs again. When he opened the door it was still pouring, and he couldn’t see any car. He called out, ‘Do you still want a push?’ ‘Yes’ a faint voice replied.

‘But where are you? I can’t see you’ the householder called. The faint voice answered, ‘I’m over here, in the park, on the swings!’

*From Mal Stewart*

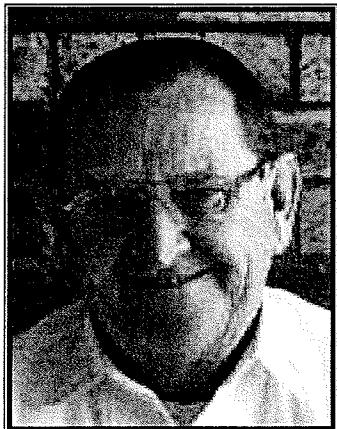
## **Good Grief Again**

A Policeman chased a car racing down the highway. Catching up with the car he was amazed to see a Blond behind the wheel who was, of all things, knitting! He cranked down his car window and called out, ‘Pull Over!’

‘No,’ the Blond called back, ‘Scarf !’

*From Kiama Woodcraft Group*

## DENNIS HAMILTON



'Where do you want to start?' Dennis asked, as we settled down, but at the end I didn't know where to finish. Dennis, as well as being a woodworker, is a model live steam train builder and operator, gardener, Mason, miniaturist, Prostate Cancer Support organiser and several other things beside. I'm continually surprised at the achievements and energy of the young and the not so young blokes at the club.

Dennis was born in Brownsville. His mother died when he was 6 years old. His father remarried and there were ups and downs in the new blended family. When he was near 15 an uncle took him to western Queensland where he worked in shearing sheds as a rouse-about for a year or so. Shearing shed work was a real eye opener for young Dennis. He then came to the South Coast and became a Wheeler and Clipper at the South Bulli Mine. They were still using horses and one time a cranky horse lashed out and caught Dennis on the shoulder and sent him flying.

About that time he met Roslyn, the start of a 52 year love match. Her Dad got him a job with John Lysaght, as a tractor boy and then time keeper clerk. Later he worked with them as a Pay clerk, and then in the Off-set Print section. The Print section grew and grew, as they did Lysaght's work for all of Australia. They learnt to look after the machines themselves: much quicker than getting a mechanic from Sydney. At the end when Dennis was in charge he had 16 workers under him. But computers made a difference, and eventually the Print shop was sold off a couple of times. The second owner ran the shop into the ground

Dennis didn't like what was happening and said so. But his advice wasn't taken and at 58, they closed the Port Kembla branch down, and his job became redundant.

This was a shock after putting so many years into the business and he was depressed for some months. But a Financial Advisor gave him good advice and eventually Dennis got a new lease of life. And he soon found more than enough things to do

He and Roslyn have two sons. Michael, a club member too, is a Boiler Maker, and teaching part-time at TAFE. He is a natural teacher and will move to teach full time in a couple of years. He has also taken easily to computers and writes courses for TAFE and eventually these courses will be used all round Australia. Stephen is a metallurgist. He was with BHP and did a certificate course and then a University Degree. He was in the in-late Tin Mill, and his specialty was hunting down and solving production problems in the mill. When the mill closed Stephen moved to Lysaghts CPCM doing a similar job, and it is now known as BlueScope Steel. Both boys live within a couple of blocks of Dennis and Roslyn, who now have five grandchildren with whom they enjoy frequent visits.

Dennis has always been interested in steam trains. When he moved back to the South Coast, the railway line was less than half a stone's throw away, with a signal right near his bedroom window. He joined the Illawarra Live Steamers. He has two 5" gauge Tank engines and an electric one, one of the steam engines and the electric he built himself. He is also building a 3801 engine, without the streamlining. Finding time is the difficulty, and so far he has spent 8 years or so on it. Dennis is a regular at the Live Steamers open days. While going to their meetings in the old Uniting Church hall he met the woodworkers and was soon asked to join. He does some turning, some building, some

this and some that, without having a particular specialty. He is self-taught and multi-skilled.

In 2001 Dennis was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer and had a big operation to remove it. It threw him into some months of depression. He found he had to get moving again. The doctors were good at operating but then they left you to cope on your own. It was only by chance that he found that there was a small support group, which he joined and soon was elected its President. He has been so for the last 6 years. The support group meets at St Marks Anglican Church hall, West Wollongong. It caters for men and their wives, as the cancer certainly affects them both. There is a core group of regular attendees and others come and go. Dennis is philosophical about that. ‘They all come to get good information at the meetings, and they know if they need help it is at hand.’

Dennis and Roslyn are both gardeners, and it shows: flowers and fresh vegetables. They have a cage full of pet cockatiels and finches. They also get away caravanning, at least once a year. But their real shared interest is miniatures.

Dennis showed me a dolls house he made: three storey plus an attic with a dozen rooms or so each full of appropriate furniture and with figures, animals and toys to match. Some of the tiny furnishing and figures were bought and others they made. Pet cats can be made by pressing clay into a mould and when dry, painting them. The whole house is quite extraordinary! Nor is there just this magnificent doll’s house, there are numerous other miniature scenes and objects dotted around in the lounge room. Last month Dennis showed a model of a Potting Shed he and Roslyn had made, and in a couple of months he will be talking at the club and showing more items.

I was overwhelmed with the steam engines and more than overwhelmed with their miniatures ! - blown away!

## **Huon Pine**

The timber is a mellow fine textured wood with a characteristic, pleasant fragrance. It seasons readily, has a low shrinkage, is soft and easily worked, is light in weight, and has good nail holding properties. These together with its stability and high resistance to attack by rot and marine organisms has earned Huon pine a high regard as a shipbuilding material. It is also highly prized for furniture making, joinery, turning and the craftwood industry.

The durability of the wood is due to the presence of an essential oil which gives Huon pine its unique odour. The oil can represent as much as 7% by weight of the wood and can be extracted by steam distillation. Many medicinal qualities have been ascribed to this oil, including use as a dressing for wounds and a cure for toothache. It has also been used as an insecticide and as a source of vanillin.

Production of Huon pine has never been prolific. It grows in hard to reach places, and there has been a limited supply for many years, as more accessible areas have been depleted. One of the Forestry Commissions management policies allows a small annual sawlog of 500 cubic metres per year, from areas previously flooded by hydro electric schemes.

At the prescribed cutting rate such sources will supply Huon pine sawlog requirements for more than a century. Regretfully the species grows so slowly that it cannot be grown commercially. But there is no shortage of natural regeneration along the river banks and cut-over areas. This will grow into larger trees over many centuries.

*Forestry Commission Tasmania*

## **SOLAR POWERED SEASONING**

A solar powered wood seasoning plant won it's heat on the ABC's New Inventor's program recently. The two inventors come from the North Coast. Solar power heats water circulating on the plant roof. In turn the hot water goes through a heat exchanger inside the plant converting to warm to hot air for the timber seasoning. A gas fired plant is kept on standby for rainy weather. The inventors say that they have reduced the heating bill of traditional seasoning plants by 70-80 % and there is a reduction in the seasoning plant's outflow of green house gases.

## **STOP SAW**

At our May meeting club members were treated to a dramatic demonstration of the 'Stop saw' table saw. An American invention, the saw blade will stop absolutely in 5 micro-seconds, 1/200<sup>th</sup> of a second, if any part of the human body comes in contact with it. In the demonstration, a sausage was used to represent a finger and **slam bang** the saw stopped. An electronic sensor activates an aluminium arc piece which jams so hard on to the saw blade that it both stops virtually instantaneously, and drops from sight below the saw table. The nick in the sausage, where it had touched the saw, was less than 1mm deep. Most impressive. After each emergency stop, the sensor and saw blade have to be replaced. The saw has other innovations and retails between \$5,000 and \$5,500

### **About your Safety.**

Working with wood is inherently dangerous. Using hand or power tools improperly or ignoring standard safety practices can lead to permanent injury or worse. Always have guards in place: switch off and disconnect power before changing blades or machine settings. Always wear the appropriate safety equipment. We want you to enjoy the craft, so please keep safety foremost in your mind when working. We want to see you back