

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

OCTOBER 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
October 12: Club Meeting. Featuring Albert Seath and Seath's
Super Special Secrets into Chopping Board construction
November 5,6: Brighton Beach Demo and Sales
November 9: Club Meeting
December 11: Christmas Picnic BarBQ 9.30 at Sublime Point
December 14: Club Meeting

Positions Mal Stewart volunteered to fill the Secretary's position, following Bill Hopton's move to Mackay. Mal is also running the Routing group. Thanks Mal. Mal's position as a Coordinator is now vacant. Keith Guy is taking some well earned holidays and then having an extended break from being the leader of the Monday toy making group. Thanks a lot, Keith. And a volunteer to fill Keith's position ?

Maintenance at the Club House

More shelving is being installed along the Clubhouse walls. The shelving was thrown out by another organisation. This has led to some rearrangement

of benches and machine tools but the overall effect is an improvement. Some chaps turned up for the cancelled Feast and Watsons morning and were dragooned, er, encouraged, to stay and to help with the shelving. Thanks men !

Two further jobs are on our list, one small, one large.

Two smallish holes in the concrete floor need to be filled, for safety's sake Bruce Keats is looking after this

A much larger job is that the concrete floor on the external brick storage cupboard has sunk ,pulling the brick sides away from the main wall. It seems we will have to cut through the surrounding concrete, dig, then jack up and fill under the cupboard floor, and tie the brick sides to the wall of the clubhouse. Quite a job! More on this later.

Events Saturday at the Bulli Show was wild and wet, with not a lot of people around. Our blackboard was sent flying in the wind, and made a crash landing !

But Sunday was a good day, with plenty of people, good weather, good demos and some good sales. \$457 which brings our bank balance to \$2,181. Thanks men.

Our next Demo and Sales is on the weekend, 5,6 November at the old Courthouse, opposite Brighton Beach. This is a relatively new location for us, so we'll see how things go.

Tentative date for the Club Open Day next year is Saturday May 13

Routing Group This group met under Mal's instruction, with help from other senior club members, Peter and Tony et al. Two sets of children's tables and chairs were completed, with a spare chair, and were sold at the Bulli Show.

For the less experienced club members, including this scribe, making the tables and chairs gave us plenty of practice in routing, in making dowel joints, and in complimenting each other in different tasks. A good job, well done, although Mal had to do some last minute work to make the sets ready for sale. There is still some work to be done to complete another table and chair set or two, and then Tuesday nights will be devoted to individual projects.

Good grief ! T

Why did the tiler have difficulty getting up in the morning ?

- Because he was embedded in mortar !

- How does a large duck price a building ?
- With a bill of quantity !

- T
- Why are brick walls difficult to give directions to ?
 - Because they often need repointing !

Take a Bow There is something special about wood workers. Perhaps it is the discipline that comes from working with an unpredictable, and at times, recalcitrant material that never completely yields to the maker's will. Or maybe it is the humility of knowing that the wood itself is so naturally appealing that human attempts to fashion it into beautiful objects never seem to do justice to the material itself.

Perhaps it is an awareness that each of us is a small thread in a complex tapestry of craft that has been enriched by every culture for as long as there have been people. For as far back as you care to look, woodworking has embraced both the primitive and the sophisticated, the functional and the artistic, the practical and the fantastic, and everything else in between.

Dick Burrows Fine Woodworking's *Design Book Five*

Safety First

- ! Always wear eye protection and head protection.
- 2 Remove adjusting keys and wrenches. Form the habit of checking that all keys and adjusting wrenches are removed before switching on.
- 3. Keep the work area clear. Cluttered areas and benches invite accidents.
- 4. Wear proper apparel. No loose clothing, or rings bracelets etc. Wear non slip boots or shoes. Wear protective covering to contain long hair.
- 5. Use safety glasses or a face shield. Use face or dust masks especially if the cutting operation is dusty.
 - 1. from the Teknatool Safety Rules

The Origin of Dovetail Joints (From a paper that Peter Hansen picked up at The Woodworkers Gallery at Bungendore) Back in the good old days when men were suitably grateful woodworking was a crude and artless business, with nails and poor quality glues adding what little strength there was to woodworking joints. This was not good enough for a young irish visionary, Fergus Murphy, who determined to find a better way. Fergus, believing that the way the wood was cut and joined could alone provide all the strength that was required, was one day sitting idly gazing at his fathers dovecote, when he was suddenly transfixed by an idea that would eventually revolutionise the woodworking scene.



JIM HALL

The exuberant Jim Hall has been Club member for quite a few years, though unfortunately, an erratic blood pressure means that he is not so often at Club meetings. His particular wood interest is in carving, and he took out a couple of prizes at last year's Bulli Show. Jim is an enthusiast. When something captures his interest, he throws his heart and soul into it.

Jim grew up in England, and was about to start as an apprentice in carpentry when War was declared, and he ended up in a factory helping to make Wellington bombers. After the War he was a trainee manager at ICI.

He met Marjorie, who became his wife, at a church social: games and dances. Interestingly, in his retirement, Jim and Marjorie have once again enjoyed 'tripping the light fantastic.'

At church, they heard and answered a call, and crossed the Irish Sea to work for the Irish Mission. A Board member recognised Jim's potential, and helped to put him through Trinity College, Dublin. During this time Jim also worked every holiday in a bakery, the midnight to 7am shift. A Policeman used to turn up as they were knocking off. 'Would you like a small loaf?' 'I don't mind if I do.' So they would give him a small brown loaf, and he would put it on his head, and then put his Bobby's helmet on top again !

Jim and Marjorie worked in several parishes in Ireland and England, where their children, Heather, Christine and Tim were born. Then they were then invited to minister in Australia. 'I was often given small parishes on their last legs, but with the grace of God, and lots of hard work, we were able to build up the congregations, and help them to become financially viable.'

Jim was also often on TV in the early years. Each night's showing used to end with a 5 minute Epilogue, taken by a minister. It fitted Jim's natural story telling ability. Initially, the Epilogues were recorded live. One night Jim turned up at 11.15pm only to find that the station had put on an extra 'horror' movie. He waited until it finished about 1am, then began, 'Good morning,' and he pulled a face, 'and this is not a continuation of the 'horror' movie.' The Producer really cracked up at that one.



Jim found that congregations often had both the divine and the demonic in them. The latter, sometimes made the minister into a scapegoat for all their complaints. Jim had one instance of this that really stretched his good humour. He put up with it for a long time, but then had had enough. He took a break, and worked for the Corrections Department for a few years. But he is a natural pastor and was still visiting and taking funerals and doing TV work. Now, even in official retirement Jim still takes two services a month at the Miner's Memorial church at Mt Kembla, and visits and broadcasts over FM local radio every Friday.

When he officially retired, Marjorie said, 'You have always been looking after others. It's time you did some things that you really like! They went dancing. They still do. What about Tapestry? No. Woodturning? Hmm. Carving? Ahh! Jim made friends with Enn Muller, a Club member. Enn, an Estonian, is an enthusiastic wood carver, and Jim caught the bug.'

Enn, at that time, looked after the supper at club meetings. He asked Jim to help out. Jim did, and took over the position when Enn moved to Kiama. So Jim served for several years looking after the supper at the club, until it was made a rotating roster.

Enn had a second set of carving tools for beginners to use. Jim used them but eventually thought he would like a set of his own. His daughter Heather, a nursing sisiter, went overseas for three months (She stayed for 12 years!) and was working in Bavaria: a wood carving area. Jim wrote and asked that if she heard that any woodcarver had died, she might be able to buy his carving tools cheaply. Six months passed and no wood carvers died. (they loved life too much!) So Heather gave up waiting and bought her dad a good set of German and Swiss knives and chisels, much to Jim's delight. With some guidance from Enn he has used these tools to great effect and they have brought him much pleasure. Jim, thanks for looking after all those suppers, and your quick and merry wit, and keep carving!

- Good Grief Again** A truck drove into a timber yard and a chap from it went to the office and said 'We want some four by twos!'
- The salesman asked, 'How long do you want them?'
 - The chap said, 'I'll go and check.' He went back to the truck, and later returned and said, 'We want them for a long time, because we're gunna build a house.'

Unfortunatly for Fergus, none of his father's birds had ever returned once set loose, giving him entirely the wrong perspective on the problem. His resulting **Shovetails** were admirably strong under compression, but when used on a chest of drawers, without the advantage of today's high strength glues. All the fronts fell off.

Undeterred, Fergus refined his idea, capitalising on its strengths: hardwood inserts gave **Wedged Shovetails** increased resistance to lateral compression, but still left the main problem unsolved.

On the brink of revelation, Fergus cast caution aside and boldly experimented with the subtleties of grain direction and proportion. While he achieved a remarkable degree of success, but he chose to continue more or less in the manner of his earlier attempts. Moving swiftly on, he finally grasped the underlying concept and produced the true **Dovetail Joint** as we know it today (if we look in the antique shops)

Going somewhat overboard on the level of detail, however, he immediately undertook a commission for a military chest containing 36 map drawers, and two years later was declared bankrupt !

Struggling back from the depths of the debtor's prison, and never once doubting his vision, Fergus produced his final offering to the woodcraft world; the **Tenoned Dovetail**.

Several of Dublin's leading cabinet makers vied for the rights to this revolutionary concept, and the winner, discovering too late the immense problems of assembly, ended up in the cell next to Fergus.

Fergus' son, Fingal, determined to clear his father's name. Having all the advantages of a proper education, he first concealed half the joint from view with the **Lapped dovetail**...then concealed the remainder with the **Secret mitre Dovetail**. Since the joint was now completely hidden, he provided a brass plate with each pi guaranteeing its authenticity, and retired in luxury aged 27..leaving a legacy of craftsmanship that has survived to this day.

Footnote : Only many years later did an English furniture importer think to translate the guarantee from the original Gaelic
Ta 'Tu' Magadh Fuaim – You must be joking !