

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

**SEPTEMBER 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**

**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**

**18 September Evening at Bunnings**

**8 October 5.30pm Committee, 7pm Club Meeting/**

Supper Roster: John David, Barry Young

**1, 2 November Belmore Basin Display**

**12 November 5.30pm Committee, 7pm Club Meeting**

Supper Roster: Tony Hancox, Kieth Guy

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

Tony O'Connor of Illawarra ITeC to speak

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

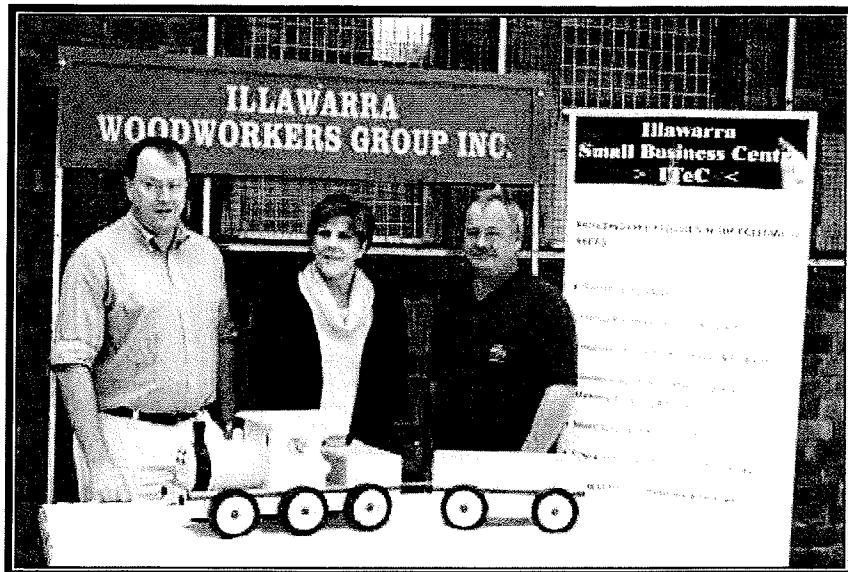
**Workshops** will be held at the club: on Saturday mornings from 8.30 approx to just after lunch.. If there are any variations contact our Secretary

### **Illawarra Woodworkers Donate 'Thomas' to Wollongong Hospital Childrens' Ward**

Last July, a Thomas Tank Engine toy train made by members of the Illawarra Woodworkers Group was donated to Wollongong Hospital Children's ward. The train was presented to Robyn, a Hospital representative by the Woodworkers President David Lipscombe and Tony O'Connor, CEO of Illawarra ITeC. Illawarra. ITeC is the major sponsor of the Illawarra Woodworkers Group.

Illawarra Woodworkers Group is a non profit organisation of woodworkers. Our aim is to promote fine craftsmanship and maintain traditional skills of working with timber. Among our members are cabinet makers, carvers, wood turners, patternmakers, toymakers and modellers. Some of our members are actively involved in woodworking trades, there are others whose daily occupation has nothing to do with wood but feel the need to create shavings to maintain some stability in life.

*Part of a News Release on the Thomas the Tank Engine handover. Written by Bill Perry*



**'Thomas'** at the handover, with ITeC's Tony O'Connor, Robyn from the Hospital and our David Lipscombe

**Thanks** to Vice President Tony Sirotich for organizing a Christmas in July dinner. Some 20 -22 members and spouses went along to the occasion which was held in the Pacino Italian Restaurant, and from all reports a good time was had by all.

**Thanks** also to Charlie Formosa, a local, who has donated a small drill-press and hand-held circular saw, planner, sander, cordless drill and battery charger. Much appreciated Charlie.

**Preliminary negotiations** have been held with the Fairy Meadow Demonstration School and Illawarra ITeC about possible extensions to the club's work-area and storage space, and about some possible training courses. It is still very much early days but initial signs are positive.

## ROY THOMAS



Roy Thomas' workshop is an extension of the garage under the house. It has his car and trailer in it, along with numerous metalworking and wood working machines that Roy has collected or inherited over the years. These include a large metal working lathe that must weigh a ton, a mechanical saw, a drill press, a huge milling machine, a

second smaller milling machine, a Woodfast lathe and numerous other bits and pieces, quite apart from all his hand tools. *How did you get them all in?* Easy with the chain cranes that hang from the RSJs supporting the garage roof and the house above. Roy has had enough experience in a variety of conditions not to be fazed by the challenge of moving a large milling machine !

Roy's father was a dairy farmer at Marshall Mount. (Yes. Roy and Olive have sometimes kicked up their heels at the Marshall Mount old time dance!) His father was a great axeman who cut and built numerous farm sheds and barns in the district, as well as building two houses in Wollongong. He was a Methodist lay preacher and a public spirited leader. Roy was the 9<sup>th</sup> child of his parents' 10 children. Five of the 10 are still alive, with his oldest sister now 97.

Roy left school at 14 and went to the North Coast where two of his brothers had a dairy farm, then it was back to Wollongong when his father died. He had jobs building radios and then in refrigeration in the Gong's old ambulance station. There were no courses in refrigeration so he started Fitting and Turning. At 19

he joined the army and was doing Basic training when the war finished. But he was soon shipped overseas to Japan with the Occupation Forces.

There he was stationed not far from Hiroshima on what was to become a farm to grow food for the Occupation Forces. Roy and 5 other soldiers supervised the farm work and sent truckloads of fresh vegetables to be distributed to the troops. His farming experience certainly came in handy. Roy says he got on well with the Japanese, though he felt the devastation at Hiroshima was terrible. He says he knew of only one incident when a Jap protested against an Allied soldier, and the man had had too much sake!

As well as the farm work Roy and his mates built a saw mill, a large recreation hut, and then built a 140' span suspension bridge over a creek on the farm. They used the vegetable truck to haul a small steel cable over the creek, and in turn attached that to the large cables, four of them, that carried the weight of the bridge. They cut and milled all the wood planks to walk on. Quite an achievement!

He was demobilized after three years in Japan, and resumed the tech course and the refrigeration work. One of the hard jobs he did was installing beer taps and refrigeration in pubs. Roy said that to make sure everything was all right he always had to pull and drink the first beer from each tap !! In the meantime he had met Olive, a local young lady. He went to Bega for two years with the refrigeration work, and married and took Olive down there for the second year.

Then back to Wollongong, where he worked with Olive's father. Coombs and Sassall had two divisions: Shop fitting and Joinery and general engineering involved in a wide variety of projects.

The men who worked there had a vast amount of experience which they put to good use. Roy eventually took over the engineering side of the firm. Later he specialized in roller shutters, large and small, and later again, he built up and ran a company that specialized in automatic closing doors.

Retiring early he met Peter Hansen at a woodworking exhibition and was told of the Club and joined some 20 plus years ago. He enjoys wood turning but I think he is really at home in steel and metal.

Roy and Olive have three children, Sharon, Wayne and Leanne, and six grandchildren. Alexandria is their eldest grandchild. She recently completed a Uni Course in Aviation Management, as well as gaining her pilot's license. Roy volunteered to be her passenger on her first licensed flight. Alex asked Olive too. She went, but was a little nervous. But the flight went well: great views and they all landed safely.

Roy and Olive bought a small place at St George's Basin where they often slip down to spend quiet days by the water. Roy enjoys fishing. His son and sons-in law had fast speedboats to zoom around the bay. Great fun, but it's hard to beat a quiet hour or two fishing, especially when they are biting!

**Best Wishes** to our President, Dave Lipscombe, who was recently rushed to Wollongong Hospital with a heart attack. Dave and his wife were due to go on holidays to the Barrier Reef the next day. Dave tried to negotiate to save the holidays, but the Doctor interrupted him, 'I'm the Doctor, and you're staying right here, fullstop!' Dave was operated on the next day, and had a stent put in an artery. He has had to change his eating habits, and drastically reduce smoking. Dave said, 'They watch me like hawks. Yesterday, even a neighbour called out over the fence, "I can smell cigarettes. That's not you is it Dave ?" Dave is still recuperating and hasn't regained his former energy, but our best wishes to him, and especially so to Mrs Lipscombe.

## **Show and Tell** (July and August)

**Ken Hutchison** showed a triple Clock made for a friend, which was mounted in a nice piece of cedar. The clock faces showed Eastern Australian, English and Dutch times.

**Albert Seath**, never one to miss a challenge, showed a couple of 'Impossible Dovetails.' He had made these from quarter-sawn Jacananda, Cedar and She-oak. The trick Albert said, is that you must have quarter-sawn wood to squeeze it without breaking, and then mallet the dovetail into position fast.

**Milan Oder** showed a beautiful lidded box made from a Redgum burl he had been saving up for years.

**Mal Stewart** showed a large long-haul truck and trailer made for one of his grandsons. Mal suggested this could be a possible project for the club to donate to charity groups

**Ken Smith** reported that he had bought some Mirrotone from the Illawarra Industrial Supplies and was very pleased with the finish that it gave. Ken also showed a nice bowl he had turned from Celery Top Pine.

**Milan Oder** showed a fabulous set of a dozen drawers of varying sizes which slid into a large cedar nautilus shell shape. Milan finished it with Danish Oil. Quite a fabulous piece.

## **Library Display**

Several Club members contributed a whole variety of pieces which were shown in a Display Cabinet in Wollongong Library throughout the month of July. It is reported that the display brought quite a number of favorable comments. Thanks to Tony Hancox, Peter Hansen, Bill Headley, John Scott and John Parker for contributing.

**Finance** At 11 August our Bank Balance was \$3440.89, down a little from the previous when it was \$3519.39. Expenditure for the month was \$288.80 and Income \$210.30



Rogues Gallery with Mal's long-haul truck: Ken H, John McM,  
John S, Rolf K, John P, Rick F, David L, Mal S, Colin S, Bill P.

### The Wood.

I wandered in the Wood all the day, tacking back and forth, following rides, moving through its dozens of covert worlds: its dense and almost lightless thickets, its corridors and passageways, its sudden glades and clearings. I leapt streams, passed over sponge-bogs of sodden peat, soft cushions of haircap mosses. There were big standing groves of green juniper, alders, rowans and the odd dark cherry. The pines, with their reptilian bark, gave off a spicy resinous smell, and their branches wore green and silver lichens of fantastical shapes: antlers, shells, seaweeds, bones, rags. Between the trees grew heather and bracken. I climbed a whippy rowan, scattering its orange berries in all directions, and a tall birch that shivered under my weight near its summit.

Robert MacFarlane *The Wild Places*