

**Newsletter Editor**

The next newsletter will come out at the end of December. Please forward any articles or information that you would like to go into newsletter to Richard Smith at richardasmith1955@gmail.com by the 20th December.

**General Meeting  
Wednesday, 4th December  
7.30pm at the clubrooms  
Cnr Ironbark and De Fredericks Road, Yarrambat  
ALL ARE WELCOME**

## President's Report

The Exhibition is now run and done! A massive effort went into the preliminary planning, then the setup and all hands-on deck and then pack down. Thank you to all who volunteered over the four days and helped make it a success.

Some of the feedback I have received is that the quality of the pieces being exhibited was of a very high standard, and such a variety! As usual the staff at the reception centre couldn't do enough for us and were more than happy to have us there again.

I don't know about anyone else, but I had to have a nanna nap on Monday afternoon, as I just ran out of steam!

Peter will be presenting the Exhibition figures at the next General Meeting, but we did very well with the raffle ticket sales.

The one concern this year was the lower than usual numbers of children at Wes' Workshop especially. He usually has kids lined up behind the team waiting their turn to build their items. I am sure you are well aware of the 'signage' debacle we had, and I believe this really did impact on numbers attending the Exhibition and Wes' Workshop. This will be fed back to Nillumbik Council.

Peter Gannon and I attended the VMSA (Victorian Men's Shed Association) Network Meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November down at Diamond Creek's Men's Shed, of which Gary Burke is also a member there. It was the first such meeting and will be held twice a year on rotational basis for venues. A lengthy around the room introduction took up the first 1.5 hours before we broke up for a light lunch.

Some of the topics discussed were:

- raising the awareness that the VMSA is a health organisation, but poorly recognised within local councils
- the different ways each shed funded their activities
  - higher registration fees

- some receive funding for their utilities
- communication between VMSA and sheds

It was hoped that discussion would be had on DGR – Deductible Gift Recipient. We touched on it briefly as the meeting towards the very end as we already gone an hour over time.

Those sheds that have already registered have found that it has not necessarily been used by them.

The main outcome from this meeting, for me, was getting to know a bit more about the local Mens' Sheds, and how we can interact with each other in the future, and what each shed offers as this seems to vary greatly between the sheds.

It has been fed back to me that a quite a number of people do not read the Newsletter. As a vehicle of the dissemination of information regarding the club management, session articles and other important pieces of information I think we should investigate options regarding our media presence and means of communication with the membership. We will tackle this next year, but if you have any ideas, please pass them on to me.

Jane

### **From the Secretary's Desk**

Can you believe the year is almost done?

Now the weather is warming and it's light later, we're starting to see the numbers increasing at the Monthly Meeting, but definitely the more the merrier!

This month's meeting was a lively one and we covered a range of topics, including the latest on the shed - it can't go behind the clubrooms due to the septic tanks, so Council is helping us investigate putting it at the front of the building. We covered the Maintenance Day as we had another successful run in October so will do another night session in early December, and the state of the Kapek Drop Saw, which will vanish for a few weeks while it gets repaired. And then lots of discussion on the Exhibition.

If you don't normally come along, please consider coming to the December General Meeting – it'll be a quick run through our normal topics, a debrief on the Exhibition and then into an End of Year Celebration and Christmas Drinks.

Catherine

### **Whippersnipping**

Thanks to Geoff Brown and Evan Gellert who played their part in the whippersnipping program and because of their involvement this year they won't be needed until 2025 or 2026. You'll notice the work they've done when you come to the club next. We are always on the lookout for people who want to be involved in this program. If you're interested, please give me a ring or email me.

Colin Groves

## **Working Bee and a Path to the Container**

Seeing as we have completed the paving path from our front door to the extractor area and the container, at the first working bee in 2025, I would now like to complete a crushed rock path from the parking area to the container. It would make walking to the container and extractor area a much more pleasant experience than at present. I will need a group of about half a dozen willing helpers. If you are interested in helping out, please give a ring or email me.

Colin Groves

## **MENTORING MONDAYS**

It was great to see so many works from the Monday sessions on show at the exhibition, and Charlie and I were pleased to be able to give the award for the most improved mentee to Val who is starting to work wonders with the hand tools.

Next year I am planning to change the Skills, Techniques and Safety session to the second Monday of the month, which I hope will work as well as it has this year. We are also planning to introduce those interested to the challenge of making a Library Chair, photos of some I have made in the past will appear on Facebook as soon as I can get my scanner to work. If you are interested, I am keen to see you have a go at a model to get you started.

Hamish

## **Pyrography Group** Sunday 27/10/2024

Apologies from Maiké this month, and Beryl is recuperating from her knee replacement and is unable to attend. The only one who actually did any work this month was Jess. She came in and burnt some Christmas decorations.

Rowena spent quite a bit of time working out dimensions and sizes for a box to be made from the wood she had brought along. And Kerrie had made and pyrographed a lid and wanted a box to fit it too. So, I coordinated with both these ladies to bring their ideas to fruition, and assisted them in cutting their timber to the correct sizes suitable to their requirements.

So between cutting, gluing and clamping, we (the three of us) got two boxes made and no Pyrography done. My kit had a free trip to the Club and never even got warmed up! Well, we'll see if I have more luck in November.

Steve Mitchener.

## Carving Group Friday 1/11/2024

Standing room only today, eleven people in attendance. A couple of absentees, which meant there was a little manoeuvring room amidst all the bodies. But it was a productive day for all.

Rowena made a lid for her box (see earlier Pyro report), and then started shaping and carving a spoon. And Chris Boylen was shaping and carving a spoon as well, and Kerrie got into the act by working on some American Cherry converting it into a spoon also.

Hank as usual was sanding his hand-held objects. Wes sat quietly in the corner working on his lizard, while Maike was shaping her driftwood snake.

David Green was in the hall Dremeling (is that a word?) his possum into the end-grain of his log section. Some progress was made, but only due to the mechanisation of the process.

Kevin was working on an intaglio lion in Huon Pine which is 200 mm in diameter.

Peter Gannon was working carefully on the pieces for the Kumiko Box lid which is his current obsession.

And Rod was sat near me working on a “smallish” Gnome in Jelutong. Which was appropriate, as I was working on a “very smallish” Gnome in the same wood. (A different piece of course.) So, we were all busy and had a productive day.

Steve Mitchener.

## Carving Group Friday 15/11/2024

Again a couple of absentees today, but twelve active Carvers in the group. We had Alwyn starting on a Gargoyle handle to be fitted to a walking stick. A repeat project for Alwyn, as he had tackled this before successfully.

Hank was making a “matched pair of spoons in Walnut.” (Doing one was too damned easy!) Chris Boylen was spoke shaving some legs to fit into a plank stool. Seems to have caught this “rustic woodwork bug” from somewhere.

Rowena used a trim router to level up the edges of her box, then moved on to smoothing out a handheld object in the “Hank Tyler school of carving” style. Meanwhile Maike was shaping up a lizard commission in Radiata Pine from the recent Exhibition and was obviously not enthused about the project.

Peter Gannon was back onto his Kumiko box lid, while Bernie was knocking out some Celtic lettering on some small signs. These were in Jelutong, and Bernie’s carving prowess was

apparent as he churned these out in quick succession. (But I am still a big believer in routed signs as opposed to hand-carved.)

And Kerrie was alternating between working on a small hand carved bird, which involved a bit of 'blood-letting', and shaping a spoon which was work intensive but 'blood-free'.

Wes was quietly working on his little lizard, and David Green was "mechanical carving" with his Dremel on his possum face in the hallway. While Rod worked on his small Gnome I also worked on my smaller Gnome. Then later I switched to a bigger "free-form" piece in Jelutong as I felt I wasn't making enough mess to be a true carver.

Steve Mitchener.

## Turning Group (Thursday PMs) Report for Nov. 2024

The Turning Group has had a productive month, We welcomed back Rod G after recovering from a surgery who returned to one of his favourite projects using banksia nuts (sourced from Pop's Shed). Last session he also completed a salad bowl out of camphor laurel. Eric busied himself with a lovely pot-pouri bowl out of Aust cedar and another project turning a 'hollow form' out of yellow box . Meanwhile, Tom turned a very fine walled bowl out of camphor laurel before getting stuck into a chess piece design for a pepper grinder using oak wood. Meanwhile Graham has been very industrious, turning some more chess pieces before crafting a yarn bowl out of sycamore, a tricky piece indeed.



Eric's latest 'Hollow Form' project



Graham's Chess Pieces in various stages



Eric's Pot Pourri Bowl



Tom's chess themed pepper shaker



Rod's salad bowl

regards

Rod on behalf of the turners.

## OREGON 10 to 1

1. We are all familiar with **oregon**, it is an ubiquitous and easily recognisable timber. But Australia seems to be the only country that uses the term 'oregon'. The most used common name for the timber is **Douglas fir** but it is also known as Douglas spruce, Douglas pine, Blue Douglas fir, Green Douglas fir, Common Douglas, Coast Douglas fir, Oregon pine, Oregon fir and Columbian pine.

Oregon, a state in the northwest of the USA, is central to the range of the Douglas fir.

2. Douglas fir is an evergreen conifer species in the pine family, *Pinaceae*, and so a softwood. The genus name is *Pseudotsuga* and it grows around the northern Pacific. There is some disagreement about the exact number of species - two in western North America and 2,3 or 4 in eastern Asia is generally accepted.

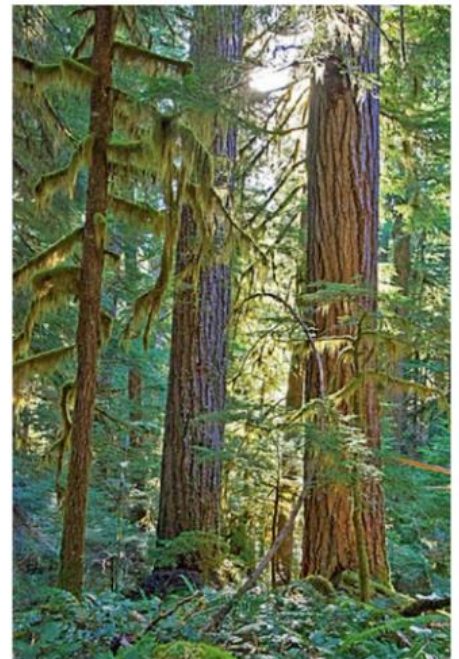
By far the best-known Douglas fir is *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. It is very widespread and abundant in western North America and of huge commercial importance. There are two major varieties: coast Douglas fir (*P. menziesii* var. *menziesii*) on the Pacific coast and Rocky Mountain Douglas fir (*P. menziesii* var. *glauca*) in the interior west of the continent.

3. Of the three tallest tree species in the world, two occur on the northwest coast of North America – coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and coast Douglas fir. Based on current knowledge of living trees the tallest redwood is 116m tall and the tallest Douglas fir is 99.4m. Australia's mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*) is the other member of this high achieving group with the tallest living specimen at 101m. There are records of former coast Douglas firs reaching 120m. The largest coast Douglas firs regularly live over 500 years with the oldest specimens living for over 1 300 years. Rocky Mountain Douglas firs, found further to the east, are less long-lived, 400 years sees them out.

4. Douglas fir is another of those timbers whose common name differs from its botanical classification. It is not a 'fir' at all but belongs to a separate genus, *Pseudotsuga*.

Nineteenth-century botanists had problems classifying Douglas firs due to the species' similarity to various other conifers better known at the time. At times it has been classified as a *Pinus* (pine), *Picea* (spruce), *Abies* (fir), *Tsuga* (hemlock) and even a *Sequoia*. Because of their distinctive cones, Douglas firs were finally placed in the new genus *Pseudotsuga* (meaning "false hemlock") by the French botanist Carriere in 1867.

It is named *Pseudotsuga menziesii* in honour of Archibald Menzies, a Scottish physician and naturalist, who first documented the tree on Vancouver Island in 1791. The common name 'Douglas fir' honours David Douglas, another Scottish botanist and collector who first





reported the extraordinary nature and potential of the species and sent samples back to Britain in the 1820s.

5. Douglas fir is a large tree and yields a large amount of usable lumber and veneer for plywood. It is an incredibly valuable commercial timber, widely used in construction and building. The wood is very stiff and strong for its weight and is also among the hardest and heaviest softwoods commercially available in North America.



Old growth timber shipped to Australia from the 1800s to the 1980s was an excellent structural timber and was used extensively for construction. Old growth logging has ceased, and plantation grown wood does not have the same structural properties.

6. Broken Hill, rich in silver, lead and zinc, was one of the greatest mineral deposits in the world. But early mining endeavours were beset with cave-ins because the underground chambers were not backfilled with rock and as there were few trees in that part of the world, timber couldn't be used to build strong scaffolding to support the roof of each stope (the open space left behind when ore has been removed). Enter American mining engineer William Patton, who took over management of BHP in 1887. He decided to use oregon to resolve the timber shortage and vast quantities were shipped from North America to Broken Hill via Adelaide, the nearest port. Oregon was a good choice – the wood is exceptionally strong but was known to creak and splinter, giving advance warning to miners of significant ground movement.

Adelaide was such a good market for oregon that special boats, six masted schooners (all made of oregon) were built in the early 1900s to ship the timber direct to Port Adelaide. One of these boats, originally called the Oregon Pine, was abandoned in Port Adelaide harbour in 1930 after delivering a cargo of lumber. It is still officially listed on the Australian National Shipwreck Database as the Dorothy H. Sterling.

7. There has been so much logging of the forests in the Pacific northwest of the USA and Canada that very little old growth forest remains. A familiar story. Significant efforts are being made to preserve the last remaining old growth Douglas fir forests, including the establishment of a **Douglas-Fir National Monument** on public lands in the state of Oregon. 'Monument' in this case refers to conserving and restoring a fully functioning landscape dominated by old growth forests.

The story of the forests of North America and the people who logged them is epically recounted by Annie Proulx in **Barkskins**. Another book worth reading is **The Overstory** by Richard Powers, an impassioned work of activism and resistance that include the late twentieth-century Timber Wars of the Pacific Northwest.

**8.** Oregon can vary in colour based upon age and location of the tree. It is usually a light brown colour with a hint of red and/or yellow, with darker growth rings. In quarter sawn pieces the grain is typically straight and plain. In flat sawn pieces the wood can exhibit wild grain patterns.



**9.** It is sometimes difficult to sand Douglas fir and achieve a level surface due to the great difference in hardness of the early and late wood, resulting in slight undulations. The Japanese technique of wood charring (**shou sugi ban**) is traditionally used on cedar but when done with Douglas fir it turns this 'problem' into a feature. Charring and



then scrubbing with a wire brush accentuates the difference between the early and late wood, creating a pleasing 'ridge and swale' effect. Great for bowls, boxes and other small items.

**10.** Douglas fir has become naturalised throughout Europe, Argentina and Chile. In New Zealand it is an invasive species, called a wilding conifer, and is subject to control measures.

Sources:

Websites: Wikipedia, The Wood Database, Wood Solutions, Friends of Douglas Fir National Monument

Douglas Fir, Oregon timber, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. School of Natural Sciences, Macquarie University

Ted Riddle, 'Oregon: Where has it gone?'. Building Connections, March 28, 2014

Peter Goddard

## **Sustainable Timber Milling in Apollo Bay**

I recently did an online search for sustainable timber mills in the Apollo Bay region in the hope that I could purchase some timber for a small project when I planned to soon visit the area. I came across Southwest Timber and Milling – a small (one person) operation that works with local arborists.

I visited Nigel at his property out the back of Apollo Bay. He's a builder – but his real passion is timber, and he is aiming for it to be his full-time focus from mid-2025. He had logs of elm, golden cypress and blackwood drying outside, whilst inside was a three-metre-high stickered pile of blackwood and some messmate. He'd already identified a couple of bits of straight-grained blackwood offcuts for me based on our earlier conversation which I bought at a very reasonable price. He was kind enough to also throw some offcuts of golden cypress, blackwood, desert ash, Californian redwood and messmate my way. All are beautifully wide and thick – perfect for resawing for cheeseboards or boxes.

He dries his logs for a minimum of two years before milling and is confident that none of his timber is above 10% moisture level. Next year, he is planning to install a kiln.



Nigel with some delightful slabs of messmate dressed for a client.



A few of the offcuts which were lying around

I was delighted to find a supplier who deals in sustainably harvested timber and who can provide reasonably priced timber for the larger projects taking shape in my mind. I told

Nigel that I was a member of the Eltham & District Woodworkers Inc and that there would other members interested in his wares. If you do plan to visit, then be sure to call ahead to arrange a mutually convenient day/time and let him know you're from the EDW. I, for one, can't wait to return!

Paul Waite

## Cooroora Woodworkers Club, QLD

During a recent trip to Noosa, I did an online search to find out if there were any woodworking clubs nearby. I hit the jackpot with Cooroora Woodworkers Club. After reaching out via their website to see if I could pay them a visit, I received a number of very prompt and helpful responses from the club Secretary, Jim Stevenson (despite him being in Coffin Bay enroute to Perth).

The club is a leisurely 20-minute drive from Noosa, in the town of Cooroy. I arrived at the club, only to find the building was just the showroom and office. The showroom is effectively a year-round exhibition of member creations and small pieces of timber for sale.



*The showroom and office*



*Some of the member creations for sale.*

The workshop is located next door in the old sawmill kiln. Bill Kearney had offered to show me around the workshop, but then had to retract the offer after realising I was wearing open footwear (safety is taken very seriously at the club). Consequently, I had to admire the workshop from the exterior – however the structure of the kiln made it fairly easy to get a sense of the workshop set up. It appears very well equipped with a number of large lathes – including an accessible lathe suitable for a person in a wheelchair. Of particular note was the router bed used to plane slabs and a new thicknesser (\$20K!).



*The workshop*

*Lathe alley**Flatbed router*

Of great interest to me was the club's milling operation. They have their own log trailer (with electric winch/crane) and sawmill which they use to retrieve, dry and mill lumber. The lumber is then available to members to buy at a very reasonable price. Bill drove me to the mill to have a look around, despite it being closed (the mill is only open one morning a week). The sizeable yard included milled camphor laurel, blue gum, pine and jacaranda among other timber. I wonder – is this something our club might be interested in exploring?



*Bill at the mill. He used to be a recruiter for the defence force based in Victoria - and Eltham High School was in his catchment!*



*Milled timber*

I was lucky able to pick up a few small bits of timber to bring home on the plane: a piece of silky oak and camphor laurel, along with two rounds of camphor laurel. Steve in the office was kind enough to give me the timber either for free or at a discount. All he wanted was a few slabs of redgum in return!

The Cooroora Woodworkers Club has around 200 members and is open most days of the week. Each morning from 9am to 12 noon is open workshop, with dedicated sessions occurring each afternoon.



The club generates a significant proportion of its revenue (around \$50K) from managing the parking arrangements for a weekly market in Noosa. The club responded to a request from Rotary a few years ago to assist with managing the parking as they no longer had the capacity to do it alone.

Cooroy Woodworking Club struck me as a very active club which is highly engaged in the local community. It's well worth a visit if you're up that way.

Paul Waite

### **HOUSEKEEPING**

**Please return equipment to neutral:**

**Remove drill bits and remove wood plastic etc from the bit, set the Kapex back to 90°**

**Remove router bits and attachments.**

**And don't forget to clean up after yourself, not leaving it to others.**

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

## WORKSHOP SCHEDULE:

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY  | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY  |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| Second Sunday<br><b>Scrollsaw</b><br>9.00 – 4.00pm<br>Steve Mitchener<br>0409 003 487 | Every Monday<br><b>Mentoring</b><br>9.30am-11.30pm<br>Charlie Camera<br>0413481699<br><br>Hamish Hill<br>0428 577 878 | Every Tuesday<br><b>Open Workshop</b><br>9.00am-12.30pm<br>Geoff Oliver<br>0417375782<br><br>Second & Fourth<br>Tuesday<br><b>Instrument Group</b><br>1.00pm – 4.00pm<br>Frank Camera<br>0427 964 254 | Every Wednesday<br><b>Wes' Exhibition</b><br><b>Toy Making</b><br>9.30am – 12.00pm<br>Wes Weight<br><br>0478 021 269<br><br>First Wednesday<br><b>General Meeting</b><br>7.30pm @ the club<br>rooms<br><br>Third Wednesday<br><b>Committee</b><br><b>Meeting</b> 7.30pm @<br>the club rooms | Every Thursday<br><b>Open Workshop</b><br>9.00am-1.00pm<br>Paul Rushton<br>0417 017 347<br><br>Every Thursday<br><b>Wood Turning</b><br>1.00pm – 4.00pm<br>Tom Laber<br>0429 439 833 | First & Third<br>Friday<br><b>Wood Carving</b><br>9.00am-3.00pm<br>Steve Mitchener<br>0409 003 487 | First & Third<br>Saturday<br><b>Open Workshop</b><br>9.30am-12.00pm<br>Aurora Messina<br>0401 866 859<br><br>Second & Fourth<br>Saturday<br><b>Open Workshop</b><br>9.00am – 12.00pm<br>Toby Grant<br>0488 994 741<br><br>Fifth Saturday<br><b>Open Workshop</b><br>9.00am – 12.00pm<br>Will advise |

**Committee Members for Eltham and District Woodworks Club Inc.**

|                |                  |              |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| President      | Jane Hammett     | 0408 195 965 |
| Vice President | Raman Rao        | 0433 741 753 |
| Secretary      | Catherine Watson | 0449 294 814 |
| Treasurer      | Peter Gannon     | 0419 136 235 |

**Committee**

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Shane Watson | 0410 850 074 |
| Rado Starec  | 0409 997 948 |

**DATES FOR THE CALENDAR:**

General meeting                      Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December

**Session times over Christmas and the New Year****Monday mentoring**

Finishing up for the year we go to Monday the 16th Dec and then restart on Monday the 27th January.

**Tuesday Open workshop**

Last session 17<sup>th</sup> December, resume on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025

**Tuesday Instrument group**

Finished for 2024 may restart February 2025

**Thursday open workshop**

The last Thursday session this year will be on the 19th Dec. The first Thursday session for 2025 will be the 9th Jan.

**Thursday Turning Group**

Closed from 12/12/24 TO 16/1/25

**Saturday Open workshops****First and Third – Aurora**

Sessions running as per normal

**Second and Fourth – Toby**

Sessions running for as per normal

**Steve's groups**

Sunday 24/11/2024. Pyrography Group. Operating as usual.

Friday 6/12/2024. Carving Group. Operating as usual.

Sunday 8/12/2024. Scrollsaw Group. Operating as usual.

Friday. 20/12/2024. Carving Group. CANCELLED

Sunday. 22/12/2024. Pyrography Group. CANCELLED  
Friday. 3/1/2025. Carving Group. CANCELLED  
Sunday. 12/1/2025. Scrollsaw Group. Operating as usual.  
Friday. 17/1/2025. Carving Group. Operating as usual.  
Sunday. 26/1/2025. Pyrography Group. Operating as usual.

Groups will run as normal from February 2025.

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>  
December  
Last General Meeting for  
2024  
7.30pm @ the club  
rooms  
A short meeting then  
End of Year Celebrations**