

2022

Cambium

April



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Meetings & Events 2022

5 April	Guild Meeting : The True nature of Wood
18-24 April	Thistle Hall exhibition
3 May	Guild Meeting: Woodturning. Sharpening
15 May	Central Districts woodworking Expo (Manawatu)
7 June.	Guild Meeting: Carving Group
2 Aug.	Guild Meeting: Experience of Nelson School

EDITORIAL

The "Show and Tell" of our March meeting was a particularly lengthy, interesting and enjoyable one and much of the following space of this Cambium will be dedicated to what was shown and told eg what can be achieved using a scroll saw

in a way few of us had been aware of, how to make a large, very different and striking wooden Wedding Cake base, various jigs and devices to help us create with wood and a lovely wooden bust of a violinist with a fault in the wood that had been so carefully hidden.

The threat and fear of Covid has meant smaller attendance numbers at our monthly meetings but it is obvious that Guild members still find the time to spend a few hours in their workshops to create pieces of considerable interest and merit and I thank those who took the time to share their creations with us.

The “guest” speaker for the meeting was John Spittal, one of our longest serving members who spoke about how and where he finds the inspiration to carve his walking sticks, in particular, and his carving generally. His thoughts and methodology make interesting reading and the pictures of his work that he provided illustrate the high quality of his craft.

Michael’s file this month talks about the problems dealing with Verdigris and I have included a version of an article that Dick Veitch wrote for the NAW magazine describing the need to give a healthy respect to the Bandsaw, the machine he considers to be the most dangerous in our workshops.

HDM

PRESIDENTIAL COMMENTS

Greetings – I hope you are all keeping well and enjoying your woodwork projects. In these restricted times we have managed to carry on with our meetings, maybe with smaller numbers, and still get together in our sub-groups. This has given me the opportunity to see what others are up to and to learn from our well practiced and skilled members. I had a dabble into carving a while ago but as one said...these things take a lot of time. It is surprising that we forget some of the manual dexterity we used to be able to call on; it is perhaps not just like ‘getting back on the bike” but it

does come back – the old adage of “practice, practice, practice and more practice”... is pertinent at these times.

In terms of Guild activities we have Thistle Hall coming up at Easter (18-24 April) with artists from Hutt Art. Please consider manning the desk, it is an illuminating chance to meet visitors, see their interest in wood and get their feedback on the things we do.

Then there is the Central Districts Expo at Palmerston North in May. We have some members presenting demonstrations and involved in judging at the event. Hence we need a couple more to be part of the team to make a wooden artifact in a stipulated time. This is a jamboree of things to see and a chance to buy just a few more widgets.

In November we have a show at Pataka and we are discussing events and demos that we can conduct in the concourse, which is always popular with visitors.

A while ago I made a couple of bowls; they were wedding gifts, using Pohutukawa from a tree outside, with pleasing grain, and with some black and gold trim. These were very well received, and being artistic people, they filled them with sand and plastic flowers – a reminder that at times we just have to let things go. On the other hand, consulting with an owner to build a library stair, was a very rewarding project.

Happy woodworking.

Nick

MICHAEL'S File

The Escher 3D reconstruction of 'Relativity' that was presented at the Christmas WWG meeting has had a problem, something that was not anticipated. Part of the structure included some fencing that was made of posts, made out of chopsticks (just the right dimensions), with brass rod horizontal bars. A jig was made to drill 1.5mm holes in the posts to take the brass rods.

At the WWG meeting all was well. For some reason during January I

decided to have a look at the model and was taken aback by the fact that the posts had significant mould on them, and on checking the remaining chopsticks they were also mouldy.

The five fences were gingerly removed from the model and I decided to immerse them in 'Exit Mould'. If you have a chemistry background you may know what happened next. The next day I checked the fences and was appalled to find that the brass rods had turned green –verdigris.

The fence posts were washed in water, scrubbed and dried, then painted white. The rods had to be individually cleaned with 400G sandpaper, time consuming but not too difficult. A thin coat of polyurethane was applied and the fences replaced in the model, fortunately without incident.

I'll finish with a positive tip – I was tidying my work bench and accumulated seven pencils from various hidey-holes, they all needed sharpening. My cordless drill was at hand and I suddenly realised I could use the drill to rotate the pencils in my pencil sharpener. This worked amazingly well, was quick and produced the sharpest of points. I was then given the task of sharpening all the grandchildren's colour pencils. Lesson – time saving strategies usually generate more work.

Michael

“HOW I FIND INSPIRATION FOR WHAT I DO”.

John Spittal was the guest speaker at our last Guild meeting and he began his presentation with the admission that he originally believed that he did not possess the natural ability to draw anything of artistic merit – all he wanted to do was to make beautiful things even if nobody cared or recognised the beauty inherent in his creations – they were beautiful in *his* mind. But over time he found his abilities to accurately see what he was looking at and to make his hands reproduce it, improved considerably and he knows that he will keep on improving for the rest of his life. As he pointed out-“My theory is that the pathways in my brain that



control hand and eye co-ordination were unformed. Continuous practice has developed strong pathways.”

So where does his inspiration come from? John believes that inspiration has many sources. It can come from just seeing what is around us. It can come from a lot of research. It does not always come quickly. Sometimes it takes him months to think up the right form to fit what he wants to do. His inspiration can come from the work of others over the ages. Looking at other artist’s work continues to show what is possible and can spark its own inspiration. And

inspiration can come from other cultures - in this case John particularly admires the knives created in Japan and this admiration and inspiration can be seen in the knives he produces.

But John also had some advice for us – we should not always compare our work with others – we should compare our recent work with our older work and seek to be inspired by the advances or improvements that are usually there to be seen. And we should not be casual or hurried in our work because *really* good work takes far more time to complete. (The walking stick John has at his side has been commissioned but John warned the future owner that a definite completion date could not be given.)

Thankyou John – thanks for the inspiration.

HDM





David Firth's Wedding Cake stand

David created this stunning piece from Tasmanian Blackwood as a base for the cake at his son's wedding. The wood was cut and supplied by Eric Cairns.





BANDSAW SAFETY

In the latest “**Creative Wood,**” the NAW quarterly publication, Dick Veitch lists a number of “Beginners Tips” for the safe use of a bandsaw. He suggests that of all the equipment in our workshops, the bandsaw is the most likely to injure a user. From observations of users in the Naenae MenzShed these warnings apply to those users who do not have their own bandsaws and are not aware of the dangers and also to those trying to do things in a hurry, those who are at risk of being distracted by what is going on around them and to those who simply do not appreciate what dangers need to be resolved when cutting an out-of-round sizeable piece of branch wood.

So below are safety pointers:-

- Check that blade guides are in place and nearly touching the blade.
- Before starting the cut lower the upper guide assembly close to the surface of the wood- leave about 1” clear above the item being cut.

- Keep hands well clear of the cut line.
- Keep the heels of your hand on the table and move the wood with your fingers, No great pressure should be needed.
- Where practical use a push stick.
- Support round or uneven shapes of wood so that they will not roll or twist which may bend or break the blade, throw the wood at the user, or flick a user's hand onto the blade.
- To cut round or uneven wood lengthwise put the wood in a Vee cut trough so it sits firmly without wobble or wriggle.
- Concentrate on what you are doing – take the time to consider possible outcomes of any movements you make.
- Take particular care about the position of your hands just before the cut breaks through – the sudden release of pressure allows the hands to move forward towards the blade a sometimes surprising distance. (I have a scar to prove that is so.)

Used with care, and well looked after, the bandsaw is a machine we come to depend on.

HDM

More “Show and Tell”



Archie Kerr's violinist was an interesting piece- the relative simplicity of the violinist and to my eye the difficulties that would have to be overcome when carving the violin. Archie challenged us to find the fault that he had had to hide- the violinist had a broken arm. I failed the challenge as did those around me.

Below is a little reindeer that Alan Berry had created using a scroll saw. My recollection of how he did that is not clear. Somehow the wood is wrapped, the pattern is cut, and then the wood is unwrapped and wood is removed leaving the reindeer intact. We need Alan to explain how that is done.



*(Apologies for the quality of the photo.
I should have found a better background)*

SCROLLSAW COMPOUND CUTTING

At the last Guild meeting, I presented a couple of examples of Scroll saw Compound Cutting. Compound cutting is where the pattern to be cut is adhered to adjacent sides of the block of wood you are using. The patterns do not necessarily need to be the same, in fact that is the interesting part of the exercise.

For the last few years I have made a Xmas decoration for our tree and a few spares. This year I decided to adventure into something made on the scroll saw, the result being a small reindeer and a bauble.

The secret to a successful project is to try and keep the block in its original shape. This is achieved by taping the cut pieces together with Sellotape as you cut. Interestingly the tape has two purposes, keeping the block together and lubricating the saw blade. The process is to cut one side, taped together, then cut the second side. This is best shown in the photo of the blocks held together with rubber bands.

The excitement starts when you have finished cutting and remove the waste to reveal the decoration inside. The other photos show the resulting decoration and the waste.



This is a fun, frustrating and enjoyable use of the scroll saw. Of course there are many obstacles to overcome. My suggestion is that you try Hans Meier to start.

AB

Coming Events.

1. Thistle Hall 18-24 April.

Thistle Hall is a Gallery at the southern end of Cuba Street in Wellington. Our Exhibition last year was quite successful and this was because of the visits by a significant number of the passing foot traffic, many of whom stated that they are always interested in whatever was “showing in the Thistle”.

Setting up of the Exhibition will be on the Sunday evening (17 April) and the morning of 18 April (Easter Monday) and the opening is planned for the evening of Tues 19 April at 6pm.

There will also be an opportunity for members to demonstrate their skill in turning, carving etc. This worked well last year despite early difficulties with one of the mini-lathes that were taken to the

Hall. General information regarding your involvement requirements and need for volunteers to man the Gallery is now available on-line

2. Manawatu Expo. Sunday 15 May

This is a very popular annual event involving 8-9 Guilds from the central North Island (and is now also advertised as the “central District Expo.”) Each Guild has a team to enter the annual competition whatever form that competition may take. As well each Guild has a display table which shows 20 items (no more than 2 per member). This Table competition is one of the highlights of the day and our Guild has acquitted itself well over the years. This year each Guild can also have a “sales” table which will be an interesting addition. (We need to have volunteers to “man” the table and look after sales during the day). Another attraction of the day is the ability to spend a lot of money on tools and wood-the main sellers of both will be there.

3.Pataka. November. (Dates to be confirmed but likely to be for month of November).

I find it heartening that this venue is again on our agenda. It is one of the leading cultural centres in New Zealand and for us to have an opportunity to exhibit our wares and skills over there is a bonus. Obviously more information will come later but you have been forewarned – keep your creativity to the fore.

4. ODLINS Gallery 26 April-8 May

There will be another opportunity for some Guild members to sell their creations in the Odlins Gallery from 26 April to 8 May. Ostensibly this is a Naenae MenzShed activity but obviously there are Guild members who belong to both groups and it will be primarily a Woodturning event. Set up will be from 1pm on Monday 25 April (Anzac Day) and the opening is scheduled for 6pm on Tuesday 26 April at 6pm.

SUB-GROUPS

TURNERS – Coordinator Hugh Mill 5692236
CARVERS -- Coordinator: Sam Hillis 5297105
Meeting at Naenae Menz Shed - (3rd Tuesday 7-9 pm)
GREEN WOODWORKERS - Coordinator: Eric Cairns 5267929
FURNITURE GROUP - Coordinator: Mark Wilkins (2nd Tues)

These groups provide us with an opportunity for more a like-minded fellowship; and a chance to further develop those skills that you have so far experienced.

Guild Committee

President	Nick Crocker	4790404
Vice President	David Feind	027545787
Secretary	Phil King	0212506467
Treasurer	David Firth	021398241
Membership Sec	Warwick Smith	0274853770
Webmaster	Paul Dudding	0211882656
	Dave Winthrop	0274420167
	Brian Cropp	9388020
Library	Gordon Crichton	02102475290
	John Piper	0274538950

Cambium Editor Hugh Mill 5692236
Life Members : Denis Newton, Neil Gandy, Ken Cox, John Spittal,
Hugh Mill, Archie Kerr, Jack Fry, Eric Cairns, Sam Hillis

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