

The Eltham Woodworker



Reg Number A 0025947P

June 2019

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The deadline for inclusion in the newsletter is the Tuesday the week before our meeting. Please email the item in Word or text format.

Next Monthly Club Meeting Wednesday 5th June, 2019 at 8pm

At the CFA Hall, next door to the Clubhouse, War Memorial Park
448 Ironbark Rd Cnr De Fredericks Rd) Yarrambat, Melways map, page 184 G8,
Phone: - 9436 1907

Subs Are Now Past Due.

The fees are the same as last year at \$60 for Concession and \$80 for Normal Subs.

Methods of Payment include.

1. Cash or Cheque paid at a General Meeting or paid to a Committee Member on a workshop day. When paying this way put your money in a SEALED ENVELOPE with your name and the amount noted on the front.
2. Direct into the Club Bendigo Bank Account.
BSB is 633 000 Account No is 158066985
Please make sure you put your name in the description so I know who is paying.
3. By Cheque. NO CASH sent to "Secretary EDWC, P.O. Box 701. Eltham 3095

If you are having problems with payment please contact me. Peter Davey.

Eltham Library Exhibition Alert - Sandra Dean

Our Club has been given the opportunity to exhibit our work at the Eltham Library Gallery from 22nd August to 23rd September this year. We will be sharing the wall space with an Artist, and her colourful paintings will enhance the display.

There are some limitations in the size and quantity of items displayed, but as there is no commission charged on items sold, it is a good way of selling our work.

We also want to have some demonstrations by members, and this is also limited by the space available. We don't expect to man the display full time, and as there is no insurance on items on display, some people may not want to participate. However, we will have some secure glass cases for smaller items, as well as plinths for larger pieces.

The exhibit runs for a month and will draw attention to our Club, and help promote our annual show in November. If members interested in participating could send photos of their work, accompanied by sizing details, we will be able to see what we can accommodate. Alan West is helping to organise our display, so I would like members to email images and information to him at fernyhill25@gmail.com

Hand Tool Workshop - Martin Lawley



What an interesting afternoon with a good turnout, which could have been spent keeping the heater warm at home. The topics, of cabinet scrapers and chisels, seemed to create an interest in a how to use, sharpen and what to do with them in relation fiddle back (cranky grain) timbers. In sharpening, the scrapers, the use of a fine cut file as well as using an oil stone or a diamond plate to polish the edge; before using a burnisher to put the cutting edge on it, I think everyone had a go at it so I have a couple of nice sharp scrapers in my tool kit.



Sharpening of chisels was a good as most members had bought along various sizes of chisels but no one had bought along a mortice chisel so we could see the difference in thickness and weight also how they are used as to how we use firmer and butt chisels. Everyone was able to sharpen their own chisels under some guidance from me and Rod most certainly did as he had a new set with him.



Sandra Dean bought some interesting planes and other wood working tools some of them are over 100 years old, there was a Jack plane which had the original owner's initials and date (1911) stamped on the handle also a gimlet as well as a router which created a lot of interest in what type of plane and what it's used for I'll let the photos speak for themselves. Another tool Sandra bought in was very old rounder more than likely for wagon spokes or heavy chair leg tenons, I think on the size and weight of it, it was for wagon spokes.

The next Hand Tool Workshop is on June the 24th from 1:30pm. To 3:00pm.

Around the workshop – June 2019 - Charles Camera



In the current age of computerised mass production, tools and especially hand tools are relatively cheap but relentless cost cutting often results in OK but not great quality. Second hand tools however may not only be cheaper and but also better and are worth chasing whenever possible. Such an opportunity came our way during April as the club assisted with two garage sales. Both had good timber and one a very extensive range of tools many of which were snapped up by some fortunate members lucky enough to have a home workshop.

Perhaps those who purchased tools might be interested to know that their previous owner was John Cox. John followed both his father and grandfather into wood turning and then also became apprenticed as a pattern maker. He went on to become a factory manager before he started his own business working entirely out of his home garage. He made bespoke furniture as well as repairing and sometimes making entire out of production items for Parker furniture. Pictured opposite is a bent wood chair made by John from a CAD drawing in which he was also proficient. Those that bought the tools might think of their provenance when using them.

One of the tasks in cabinet joinery is the mortise and tenon joint that however done traditionally involves a lot of work and some skill, all of which the masters such John above would have had no difficulty in doing. For most of the rest of us however an opportunity to make this task easy would be very welcome indeed. One way of doing excellent joints with great ease and in no time at all is with a hand-held mortising machine such as the Festool domino jointer. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYW_9MgSp6Q The committee is looking into acquiring one



which will be welcomed by many members waiting to see it appear. I have been using domino joints for some years and I am still finding ways to make life easy. I am presently making a ukulele and one of the more finicky steps is attaching the neck to the body. There are several traditional methods with the best being utilising a sliding dovetail joint. I have found using two dominos a complete doddle with the result in my opinion as good as the traditional join and who is to know since it is hidden anyway. Time taken about 5 minutes – time to do in the traditional way in my case, about 5 years! Pictured is the join ready to glue.



Several members in the club work tirelessly to keep the workshop running efficiently and safely. Martin Lawley has installed a new air cleaner for the expanded sanding area which is now operational. Members are asked to check the instruction sheet on the wall and operate it accordingly. It is started and controlled only by a remote control and the wall power switch must be always left on. On another note the carbide cutters on the jointer have been turned to new sides and planning will be noticeably smoother. Those on the thicknesser may also need turning and will be attended to

shortly. During the month the Makita mitre saw was found to have been damaged with a piece of the fence broken off and a tooth chipped on the blade. It must have been obvious when the damage occurred but disappointingly, again, the accident was not reported. The fence has been repaired and the blade has been assessed as still serviceable.

It seems that some members have difficulty operating the platen on this machine. This model of Makita saws is unusual for the manner in which the platen is released and locked into place but when done correctly it is one of the best and most accurate systems. When the mitre angle needs to be changed **the platen should turn extremely easily**. If it is difficult to operate it is because the release mechanism is not fully released. Pictured opposite is the locking lever – The knob must be turned counter clockwise to engage the lock release spring – this will be obvious when it has set as you will feel the spring going into tension. Then press the flap



lever down and the table will turn with great ease. When the pointer is over the angle mark, release the knob by turning clockwise and the platen will snap lock. If set over one of the preset angles with detents it will auto snap lock securely into the preset angle. If you need very accurate cuts always check the angle or squareness with a scrap of timber and a set square or protractor. In the picture opposite the cut is not square even though the lock was in the correct position and in this case the saw required alignment but in other cases it might be because the detent is not securely set.

It is always pleasing to hear what members are up to especially when all you ever see is the raw timber being dressed at the club. Paul Rushton has been busy making a park bench and an Eltham copper butterfly in lacquered plywood where his wife, Barbara, was also involved. The Copper Butterfly was made for the Rotary kids' cubby house at the Eltham Lower Park. In the other picture Joe Van Koeverden has fashioned a very smart coffee table from the slabs he bought at the recent sale.



The annual exhibition is not that far away and it is hoped that everyone is busy crafting items for exhibition. Remember – all items are welcome whether masterpieces or beginners' pieces – the idea is to promote the art not to hold a beauty contest.

At the last general meeting, Matt Stonehouse, who works out of Montsalvat, gave a very interesting talk on his interest in and his methods of constructing frame drums. Matt recounted the very long history of the drum from origins in Anatolia about 8,000 years ago to its spread throughout the Middle East and eventually to Southern Europe in more recent times where it became the Tambourine. A highlight was his virtuoso performance demonstrating the playing technique and the sound. Matt invited members to visit his shop at Montsalvat, to which entry is free (unlike the general grounds). <https://www.montsalvat.com.au/library-studio-artists/2018/8/13/matt-stonehouse>



The speaker at the next GM is Aldo Bilotta who makes wooden dashboards for vintage cars.

Pyrography Group – 28/4/2019 – Steve Mitchener.

Since this group only operates on a Sunday, traffic coming up to the Club is usually pretty light. Today it was exceptionally light, and I had a terrific run coming up to open up and organise things for the group.

I was shortly joined by Maike and Shirley, and we quickly set-up and proceeded to show Shirley some ‘Pyrography tricks’ as she is new to this activity. Whilst we were doing this, Beryl joined us.

Maike spent most of the time working on a 400mm plywood disc which was being decorated with an idyllic country scene. It’s a task set by an art group Maike is a member of, and is for an exhibition later in the year by that group.

(The task is to do a picture on a 400mm disc, others in the group are painting various pictures in different mediums [oils, watercolours, pastels etc], or doing mosaics on it.)

Shirley used some of the new tricks learned this morning to layout a Rosebud picture to burn. Then proceeded to practice her burning and shading skills to bring it to life.

Beryl was decorating a purchased cheeseboard with a detailed basket of flowers. And it turned out very well.

Graham had snuck in, and was doing some more little signs. Some cut on the Scrollsaw and in need of highlighting and shading, others just on flat boards.

Maike tired of working on the disc, so turned her hand to doing some more low relief carving to fill the time. This was a prudent thing to do, as I was on hand to offer advice and suggestions.

Between helping the others, I worked on the Owl I had started last time, and added comprehensive shading to bring it to life. Now I just need to add a ‘wise saying’ to complete the piece.

Box Making Group – 1/5/2019 – Steve Mitchener

It’s a small group again today, but at least I have some company.

Sandra brought some ply in and utilised my technical expertise in making some support stands to be used to hold carvings or painting above a bench surface to allow them to be worked on. Being made from ply, they were constructed using half-lap joins, so they could be disassembled and flat packed

for transport and storage. Once the first one was made, and was successful, (*and I never doubted that!*), Sandra made another exactly the same, and then made a third one that was bigger and higher using the same principle.

Sandra then turned to making a small shallow box in Silky Oak.

Steve Hood worked on fitting the Red Gum frame around his laminated lid to go on his giant dovetail ended box. As he is going to use pins to hinge the lid, he wanted some of the lid sides thicker than others to facilitate this. So, cutting the corners at the correct and different angles was a critical step. We quickly covered the technical requirements of this, and the job was done in quick time with great success.

I spent my spare time (*what there was of it*) carving a low relief platypus in MDF to use on something (*as yet unmade*) as a decoration. That's the thing with woodwork. You do one step at a time, and it all comes together at the end. [*It's just that sometimes the start of something, and the finish of it, are separated by a large chunk of time.*]

Carving Group – 3/5/2019 - Steve Mitchener

While I write about this group each month, Sandra Dean is actually the lead figure. But this month I am the substitute leader, as Sandra is away for the weekend. Sandra and Maike are going down to Bacchus Marsh for what is known as 'the Bacchus Marsh Carve-in'.

This is where a large group of carvers get together for the weekend, and in small groups carve a specific item with a view to enhancing their skillset under the tutelage of another experienced carver. [*Gee, I have come across that scenario somewhere before!*] It is worthy to note that this gathering started in 1997, and has been a regular thing from then onwards. But the important thing to note is, Eltham & District Woodworkers were represented by several members at the inaugural gathering, and have had a couple of members at each one ever since.

But in Yarrambat today, we have Rod working on his Koala. Batoul working on her low relief Wombat in MDF. John Leahy making replacement parts for his patio, and then working on a small Santa Claus face carving.

Sue Bowles joined us to continue to work on a wooden tractor seat. Sue is well along on this piece, and is into the final stages of shaping the turnover. I managed to do some work on my large Gnome in Huon Pine, and spent some time on my smaller Gnome in Kauri Pine as well.

And Maike popped in to get a pyrographed picture trimmed down to fit into an existing frame. I quickly handled this task, as Maike had to rush back home and get ready to head off to the wilds of Bacchus Marsh for the Carve-in with Sandra.

Scrollsaw Group – 4/5/2019 - Steve Mitchener

Caryl, Roz and Graham are apologies for this group today. But even so, we had enough members here to make it an interesting day. We had Beryl cutting a compound cut reindeer in Radiata Pine. Due to the cuts being made on two different sides, in different thicknesses of wood, this is a slow process.

And Jennifer made more little Viking men in Kauri Pine for her game. These are cut in the traditional fashion, from one side in a specific thickness of wood. But as they are tiny little buggers, they require their own set of skills to produce them accurately. Then Jennifer spent some time laying out an 'Africa Puzzle' to cut out.

Tony Orbe and I spent some time discussing the technical issues of compound cutting. The placing of patterns, and the amount of allowable waste, are critical considerations when planning items for this style of scrollsawing. Then Tony spent the rest of his day machining some Cyprus Pine posts down to appropriate sizes to convert into compound cut pieces. Unfortunately, this consumed so much time, he didn't actually cut any wood on his Scrollsaw today. [*Damn! I know how that feels.*] But he has that much wood cut now, he can practise at home.

And as it was a small group, I did manage to get some time plying my craft on my own machine. In the time available to me, I cut all the required pieces for one of the smaller raffle prizes to be manufactured for this year's Club Raffle. So, it has been a great outcome for all participants today.

An extra note to Steve's report: The Australian Scrollsaw Network, is coordinated by Bob Calhoun. Here is the website -

<https://www.scrollsawaustralia.com/calendar-of-events.html>

Carving Group – 17/5/2019 - Steve Mitchener

Maike was the first one in after my arrival today. And I was pleased to learn of her great experience at the Bacchus Marsh Carve-in two weeks ago with Sandra. Maike proudly showed me the Dragon she had started to carve whilst down there, and was quick to point out that much more work had been done at home since. It is looking tremendous, and Maike did a lot more work on it today.

Sandra was working on a large low relief piece depicting a wombat, bird and mice in a country scene. Then spent time fiddling with a new beak for another bird form, and we both spent some considerable time working on how to get it to stand and stoop on the flimsy branch chosen for a perch. (*How do I get involved with these things?*)

Batoul was working on a Flamingo body, based on a model she has and some reference photos which are of Greater and Lesser Flamingos'. [*They are related, but definitely NOT the same thing!*] Rod was working on final shaping and contouring of his Koala. Next stage is sanding and finishing.

Alwyn was working on his Green Man Door Knocker. He had soaked half of it last night thinking it might make it easier to carve. Not so it seems, even with a gouge and mallet it is still proving to be hard going. Bruce dropped in and did a couple of quick jobs in the machine room.

I was working on another figure in Kauri Pine. Don't know how to describe it yet. I just free-handed an outline yesterday on a scrap in the shed, trimmed it roughly to shape on the Scrollsaw, and now I am whittling away at it to see what comes out. It's shaping up to have a head, two arms and two legs. Apart from that there are no other details. [*That's a carving joke right there folks, in case you missed it...!!*]

Box Making Group – 18/5/2019 - Steve Mitchener

It's been a great day today. No, not because we had elections!! But because box making was busier than usual.

John Mentha was first in, and machined and glued up some Jarrah for the top of a small wine cabinet. Steve Hood was preparing and gluing up timber for some pen boxes. He has turned up some pretty flashy looking pens, so these boxes will need to look pretty damn smart to match.

And John Kinrade, after a long absence from the workshop, is here machining timber to make some boxes. John is recycling some hardwood flooring (*a Eucalypt of some description*), to make the first of a series of six boxes. Each one is to be slightly different from the others, and each one is for a special person in his life. We discussed alternatives, and this one is to have a hinged lid with a

contrasting frame, rebated base, and wrap-around grain pattern on the body. A very good challenge for the first one off the drawing board.

And Andy was here making a Kookaburra Nesting Box. Simple in design and construction, made from heavy ply with a hinged section to facilitate cleaning after the nesting season. I think it's a great idea. Everyone seems to make boxes for little tiny birds, so it's about time the bigger birds had a crack at a man-made home. *(And please note that is 'bigger birds', not 'fat birds' as usually reported on in my writings.)*

And Sandra came in late and did some more to her rocking horse stand. Then we 'adjusted' the bird to suit its stand *(as per yesterday's discussions.)* This actually involved reshaping the stand a little, but it works now, so I am done with this bird too!

And Sandra trimmed pieces of Silky Oak to make another small lidded box of the drop-in lid variety.

And as I was in "advise and oversee" mode, I did nothing else. But it's OK folks, I had already made two boxes at home this week, so I have had my required 'box-making fix' for the week. So, I'm good!

Box Making Group – 26/5/2019 - Steve Mitchener

There are a lot of different things happening here at the Club through any given month, with many of the different pursuits in woodwork being represented. Today is a milestone for the Pyrography Group, as today is our eighth anniversary. That's right, eight years old already. We started in May 2011, and have had a few people shuffle through the group, but continue to improve the quality and variety of our work.

It was only a small gathering today, as Maïke and Graham were apologies due to other commitments. I was however, joined by Beryl and Shirley, and I apologised for not buying a cake to celebrate with. *(But with the reduced numbers, I would have been required to consume more portions so as NOT to contribute to wastage. So, under those circumstances, not buying a cake was a prudent choice. But, on the other hand, I would have been prepared to step up and do my bit.....)*

Shirley was doing a piece of thin ply with a collection of Oriental Lily's. They are coming along very nicely. Shirley advised us that she is heading north for a long holiday in the sun *(can't blame her for that)*, but will be continuing her Pyrography whilst in these warmer climes. I am looking forward to catching up with her efforts on her return.

Beryl was doing another purchased cheeseboard by adding a vine with flowers around the edges. This too was coming along quite well. I was just doing a small picture of a Brown Bear and Cub. I am still practising Maïke's dot technique, and I think the effort is paying off.

Events Calendar

- 14th – 16th June - The Australian Woodturning Exhibition. Kingston Town Hall.
- 23rd -25th August - Timber, Tools & Artisan Show. At Melbourne Show Grounds, Ascot Vale.
- 21st – 22nd September - Ballarat Woodworkers show.
- 26th – 27th October - Goulburn Valley woodworkers show. This year will be held at the Macintosh Pavilion, Shepparton Showgrounds.
- 9th, 10th November - Eltham Woodworkers Exhibition