

The Eltham Woodworker



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Almoner

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Newsletter Editor

Beryl Watling	0421 086361	editor@elthamwoodworkers.org.au
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 February, 2020 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: - 0480 134 914

President's Report

Another year has begun and already the Hot Cross buns are in the shops. I trust you all enjoyed a great Christmas and that 2020 will be a good year for you and your families.

Quite a lot has happened over the Christmas period. Brian Blethyn won the model truck in our raffle and has generously donated it back to the Club. The Committee decided that it would be a nice gesture if we donated it to a group of needy kids. After a bit of research, I found a small Kindergarten in Doncaster. Nearly all the kids here have difficult home circumstances and very few of them had any English when they started at the Kindergarten. They struggle to get enough funds for their work and were absolutely delighted to receive the truck and other models. Thanks Brian for this generous donation.



Steve Mitchener and I ran a demonstration at Bunnings on 14th December. Steve did the scroll sawing and I pyrographed the kid's names on the little angels that Steve made.

We have now been allocated Easter Sunday for our next Sausage Sizzle as well as receiving a \$100 Bunnings token. Thanks for doing this Steve, it has certainly lifted our profile with the local community as well as with Bunnings management.

The dates for the Eltham Festival and our Exhibition will be 21st -22nd November. This is later than usual due to a couple of factors that are outside our control. However, the Community centre has a long standing booking for the main hall on the Saturday night. John Brownrigg and I have looked at St Margaret's as an alternative but have decided that we will work around the booking at the Community Centre. John will be developing a plan over the next few weeks.

While on the subject of the Exhibition it was remiss of us not to mention the names of the winners of our two awards.

John Mentha won the award for best piece in the exhibition. This was voted on by all the visitors to the Exhibition.

Batoul Barbar won the prize for the best up and coming woodworker.

As we mentioned last year we want to set up a sub-committee to manage the production of this year's raffle prizes. Rado Starec has agreed to lead this group and we would like to see several members support this initiative.

John Winkett

President

Whittlesea Show 2019

Attendees: Sandra Dean, Geoff Oliver, Tony Orbe, Steve Hood, Barry Vaughan, John Winkett, and myself.

The show was held on 2nd and 3rd November, dates usually known as being mid spring; at least they are in most places around the country. In Victoria however, they could be in the middle of any season, and this year they were fairly representative of mid winter. Saturday was a bit of a challenge for just about everybody. While we were fairly well protected, only suffering a little discomfort with water seeping into our work area, it did provide a little comic relief for us watching Tony's anxiety rise as a stream crept closer to the electrical connections at his feet. However, had to feel for the majority of stallholders whose trade was very low, and for some who did not even bother to open due to the persistent rain.

Sunday was a much better day. While cold, the rain held off for most of it and crowds were good. We had a steady stream of interested onlookers, as usual marvelling at Sandra's work, and this year being entertained by Tony's three dimensional scroll sawing. The skill he has developed in a relatively short time, speaks heaps for his application, and no doubt the mentoring he receives at the club. Methinks the shadow of Steve Michener looms large here.

We had an added bonus this year in Steve Hood attending for the first time. Talking of application, Steve did the lion's share of wood turning over the two days, and as was the case with Tony, spent the whole of the next weekend at our exhibition doing exactly the same thing. Steve spent most of his time at Whittlesea studying the aerodynamics of the spinning top, re-engineering the design until he ultimately produced the perfect product; patent pending!

Once again, we have to thank Steve Mitchener for the supply of 200 animal cut outs which contributed to the income we generated over the two days. The attendance of Geoff Oliver and Barry Vaughan

over the two days, and John Winkett on the Saturday, all contributed to supporting and selling items which resulted in approximately \$570 for the club.

Barry McDonald

Instrument Group – Frank Camera

Hello all club members, the Instrument Group will once again take to the benches and tools this year and all club members with an interest in ukuleles or guitars of any type are welcome to join us. The session times will be the same as last year – second Wednesday afternoon and fourth Tuesday evening each month.

I am hoping that we can all work together on a similar instrument(s) using good quality timber resulting in some great looking instruments. We have discovered a supply of good very affordable luthiers timber nearby if anyone is interested. (Queensland maple and Bunya pine). It doesn't have to be new timber as long as it is not too dry, is easily worked, hopefully quarter sawn with no "knots" or sap lines and looks good. Nice figured timber will look great but will not bend very easily.

I am currently working on a carved back "box" concert ukulele, but will soon be starting on a traditional shaped baritone ukulele so maybe we can all work on either one of these, your choice (not a carved back one though! But any size traditional or "box" ukulele). Both require good timber, side bending and a carved neck.



Left: Baritone ukulele (scale length 52cm) which is not much smaller than a tenor size guitar but you can make a soprano, concert, or tenor size if you wish – I have plans for all sizes.

Right: This three-string guitar was my inspiration for the bent sided "box" guitars and ukuleles.



You could also join Paul Rushton in starting off with a full size acoustic guitar. A great job with a little help from our resident guitar expert Mark Thompson.
Call or email if you need any more information on this group.

Frank Camera, 0427 964 254
Frankc01@tpg.com.au

Carving Group – 29/12/2019 - Steve Mitchener

A quiet productive group as the year draws to a close. Maike was laying out two Kookaburras on a branch for a high relief carving, and then set out two possums for another relief carving. I spoke to her about using a router to “set” the different levels of the background, rather than tediously hand carve them down in the traditional method. I promised to bring the appropriate equipment to the next session to enable this.

Sandra spent her day working on a handle for a walking stick and sanding her Bilby.

Neil spent his day working on the various violin pieces for his current project.

Rod was working on Mary for his hand carved nativity scene.

Dave was carving a small dog. (*And the dog wasn’t happy about it.*)

[*Did that conjure up a funny little picture in your mind? I had to throw that in there to fill out the report, as it’s a pretty uneventful day.*]

And I was carving my little lizard. (*And he gets smaller every time I do it! Funny that.*)

And Raman was here teaching Chris about Festool equipment in the other room for a while.

Box Making - 4/12/2019 - Steve Mitchener

A very small group today. But we managed to get quite a bit of work done.

Maike came in today to work on her Kookaburras. I had brought in my small router all set up for removing the waste in the background. Once Maike saw how easy this was, she decided to take the background even deeper in multiple levels. There was sawdust everywhere, mainly on Maike, but the background was going down with great rapidity. By the end of our day, Maike had taken out two separate levels, and was impressed with how easy it was.

Steve Hood was working on his walnut boxes. Cutting bases and trim for the inserts.

I was doing detail sanding on my little Gecko. (*I had to stop the carving, as he was getting too small to handle.*) The little fella is only a couple of coats of Danish Oil away from being finished now.

Carving Group - 6/12/2019 - Steve Mitchener

Sandra was shaping a block which will turn in to a Pelican over the course of time. There was some discussion on which way to set it out due to “poor areas” within the block itself. Once decided on a course of action, a couple of “chunks” were removed on the bandsaw, and work continued. Sandra also found time to work on a low relief carving of a female face.

And Maike was with us eagerly routing down the third level of the Two Kookaburras relief carving. Once that was done to her satisfaction, we set up the two possums that were marked out previously, and gave them a bit of the same. As this is a “low relief” carving, it didn’t take as long and was soon done. (*I am not sure if I’ll see my router back, as Maike seems to have taken a strong liking to the speed and ease of this “mechanised carving” method.*) Maike then settled down and started to shape the two possums in a more traditional method.

Rod was working on Mary for his hand carved nativity scene.

Neil was working on his current violin project.

And John Leahy was cutting down some timber for boxes in the machine room. Then spent some quiet time with us going through the magazines and tracing out future projects.

And I whittled away at my space robot, as the gecko was finished, and I had to move on. (*And I should mention that Maike did give me my router back, though somewhat reluctantly.*)

And we had David and Janette Green join us for morning tea, which was nice surprise.

Scrollsaw Group – 7/12/2019 – Steve Mitchener.

Roz, Beryl and Maike were all apologies today for this session. With Christmas getting closer by the day, I was not surprised to have some people “bail” on the day. Even I can’t be in two places at once.

Tony was cutting some Christmas trees in 3D mode, and then moved on to cutting some more compound cut figures.

Graham was cutting more rings for another coffee mug container. Then he also started to compound cut some pieces. These were “bud vase holders” in a small size.

I started to cut some of the six hundred odd alphabet letters I need to replenish the stock sold at the Exhibition. There are quite a few hours of work involved in doing this, and I don’t want to leave it to the last minute. (*And I also know I will get ‘side-tracked’ along the way by something. It’s as inevitable as rain at winter time.*)

And we had the company of John Mentha cutting timber for a TV unit with three drawers along the bottom. A nice simple and elegant design. I quite liked it, but I don’t need one. I’m still happy with the tall, four cupboard design I made twelve years or so ago. (*And if it still works, then there’s no need to replace it. That’s my story, and I am sticking to it!*)

Carving Group – 20/12/2019 - Steve Mitchener

The last official Carving Group for 2019. Maike and Rod were apologies for this session. Either they were busy, or they both baulked at the prediction of 44 degree heat today. But I was not worried. I just turned on the AC as soon as I got here.

Sandra was shaping a small bird from a piece of Brush Box. And later spent some time working on the low relief female face carving.

Alwyn was decorating the edge of a serving board with indentations from a Dremel. Getting the same depth and spacing was a bit tricky, but he pulled it off quite successfully.

John Leahy spent most of the day copying patterns for walking stick handles from Sandra’s book and our stock of magazines. (*I think he plans to corner the walking stick handle market in 2020!*)

I had a quiet day finishing off my small pair of boots, they just need a tickle up with a Dremel when I get them home to finish under the tongue. (*Sometimes there are difficulties to doing small things.*) That will then be another job done, except for some Danish Oil. I then spent some time working on my robot. This is now my “go-to” fill-in job. It’s a lot trickier to carve than the plans showed. (*And hard wood is not helping the cause any!*) But I don’t know how to quit, so I will get there in the finish.

Box Making Group – 21/12/2019 - Steve Mitchener

The last Box Making group for 2019. Jennifer is an apology. And on that note of apologies, I would like to thank all those people that through the year have rang or texted me when they are unable to come along to any of the groups. I appreciate the courtesy immensely.

Sandra was here measuring and cutting pieces for another Silky Oak box. Steve Hood was working on his Walnut boxes. I was working on my “go-to” piece the robot.

And we had Aurora here sanding serving trays and chopping boards in the rush to Christmas. (*Some were apparently last year's efforts that will be this year's gifts. Works for me.*). Frank and Charlie were here machining up some Redgum for a project and we had a fleeting visit from Adrian, who wanted to organise some gear with me for the first session of the 2020 box making. It's been duly noted.

That concludes the effort for 2019. Now I can go home and have a little rest before I start again for 2020.

Scrollsaw Group – 4/1/2020 - Steve Mitchener

As it is very early in the New Year, I didn't expect this to be a big group. We received an apology from Maike, and had a couple of our regulars turn up. And we were also joined by a couple of “extras” who managed to slot in with the Scrolling group.

The big plus for me today was Steve Hood coming along to learn how to Scrollsaw, so he could cut rings to make an outer for a cup insert. That part of it is actually a turning project, but it starts a lot easier if you can cut the rings first on the versatile Scroll saw. I had soon explained the do's and don'ts and set Steve to cutting training patterns, and after lunch he moved to internal cuts. Then he was creating his own test patterns and trying different cuts. So, cutting a few rings won't be a problem for him.

I also had Beryl, who after machining some timber, wanted to learn how free-hand rout for a couple of small projects she had in mind. As Beryl had provided her own small router and suitable bits, I quickly had her set up and safely routing away without any problems. Beryl soon came to the realisation that free-hand routing doesn't come with in-built dust extraction, and was soon wearing a lot of waste timber from head to foot. And as Beryl seemed to be enjoying it, I think she has also found another new direction to take her woodworking.

Tony Orbe was cutting more compound figures. And Graham was cutting some small daffodil heads for future turning demonstrations. We had John Mentha working on his TV unit as mentioned late last year and Alwyn was here working on a small side table for a friend.

So, between helping Tony with some minor compound cutting issues he had, guiding Steve through the art of scrollsawing techniques, and keeping an eye on Beryl with the router, I managed to cut out some alphabet letters ready for this year's Exhibition. By the time this goes to press, this task will be finished and I'll be working on projects for the Exhibition.

Carving Group – 17/1/2020 - Steve Mitchener

This was the first Carving Group for the new year, and I wasn't sure how many would turn up. I was not made aware of any apologies, and felt that family interactions could affect the numbers.

First there was Alwyn, laying out his next project, and discussing with Sandra and I the best way to go about it. Having reached an impasse as some more timber, and some major size considerations

needed to be made before continuing, Alwyn spent some time going through the magazines doing some ‘research.’

Sandra was again laying out her Pelican on the Cypress block. Skirting dodgy areas, it had to be reversed and reduced to make it fit the good wood area. Having committed to a plan, Sandra cut off the excess wood on the bandsaw, and put it aside to work on a small bird started last year.

Maike was working on her low relief possums started last year and worked on through the holiday break. Aided by some ‘constructive criticism’, Maike reshaped certain areas and enhanced the project. Finally satisfied with the outcome, final sanding was commenced with great enthusiasm and this project edged even closer to completion.

Batoul cut some small stylised birds from some Mahogany and started to shape them with the rasps under Sandra’s tuition. Saying there was a lot of “back and forth discussion” would be a major understatement.

Rod showed us the completed Mary from his nativity scene. The muted colours really brought this piece to life. [*It now looks like the finished Joseph will get a “remake” to bring him into line with Mary as he is a bit vivid as far as colour goes.*] Rod then started to carve the manger holding baby Jesus, and put remarkable detail into the outside of the piece. I highlighted the difficulties in carving the focus of this piece, and suggested an easier way should this piece not work out as anticipated. Thus, armed with a ‘plan B’, Rod continued his good works.

Neil had obtained new more comprehensive plans for a violin over the break, and decided to restart his current project. Still in come lovely tight-grained Cedar, it will involve some new steps and processes he hadn’t been aware of. Since his past creations have been awesome instruments, I have no idea what level he will now take this one too.

I practised some chip carving on some scrap wood. Something I have always wanted to try.

John Leahy and the Nomad were absentees today, which is OK. Attendance is not compulsory. But we did get a visit from Bruce Jackson who happened to be passing. Bruce assures us he is fully recovered from his latest medical issues, and will be rejoining the Club activities very soon. He has greatly missed his ‘hands-on’ woodworking.

Box Making Group – 18/1/2020 - Steve Mitchener

I got a call yesterday from a member under pressure to complete a project that had unfortunately ‘come off the rails. As I wasn’t expecting a big group today, I invited him to come along and join us. Paul La Motte was making a ‘coin storage chest’ for his grandson, containing coins from his year of birth till his 21st. And this event was fast approaching. (*They’re only little for so long, aren’t they? Kids seem to grow so damn fast...*)

Paul showed me photos of one he had finished earlier, and it was a beautiful piece. Obviously, Paul knew what he was doing, and didn’t need any input from me, so I just watched him going for it through the day. Easy job!

Steve Hood was working on his Walnut boxes, and the three of them are edging towards completion. We had a chat about doing some work on them at home, not just twice a month at the Club. {*I just want to see them finished! It’s taking too damn long. I am eager for him to start the NEXT project.*}

And Lorraine joined us to work on another cupboard like she made last year. (*A cupboard is a big box that sits on one end, so it fits in with this groups' line of activity.*) It's just a carcass at the moment, but this won't take too long. And David Green turned up and wanted to machine some Radiata Pine for Beehive bases. (*Which are also box-like in nature, so it wasn't a problem.*)

Between checking on everyone's progress, and watching out for inappropriate practices, I managed to carve several different chip carving patterns. (*A skill I have wanted to develop for many years, and not as easy as it looks.*) But I am actually planning to make a box like no other. (*Which is the first step of any box in the Steve Mitchener scheme of things.*)

But 2020 is the year I want to concentrate on segmentation and intarsia on the Scroll saw. And towards this end I have already finished a couple of pieces in this type of woodwork. (*Which gives me 8 pieces finished already for the Exhibition. How are you going?*) But in planning my projects I have come across a couple of nice patterns I could use as door fronts to a box. That's what kicked off the planning. I will reveal no more at this stage, but watch this space! No, don't bother. I will reveal more as the year goes along. I can't help myself.

And for future box making groups, I fully expect some of the earlier group members to make a re-appearance. (*A little bird has told me this!*) So, 2020 could be a busy year....

Pyrography Group – 26/1/2020 - Steve Mitchener

When we discussed re-starting this group for the 2020 year, there was considerable support for having it on Australia Day anyway. And we always finish before dark, so there was no conflict or problems amongst the members of the group. But Shirley rang me mid-week and advised she would not be able to attend, because she was going in for a knee replacement. [*Personally, I think that's a pretty drastic way to get out of coming along, but each to their own.*]

And I heard on the grapevine that Graham was away for the week, but would be back for the February Scroll saw group. That leaves just a couple of others 'in the wind', so to speak. So, I was very relieved when Maike walked in the door carting her gear.

We had a little 'show and tell' session just for the two of us. Maike had a couple of artworks with her, and I had brought in my latest creation. Maike had created and framed a couple of nice scenic views, which were much more appealing than what I had made.

So, we settled down to work. There was plenty of room to spread ourselves out. Maike had laid out a picture of an English gate-house for a Manor in Gollingham, England. This was the very house where Maike had stayed last year in her European tour, and Maike is making this picture as a "thank you" gift for her host. What a lovely gesture. Maike is even going to add a couple of squirrels into the mix, as apparently, they were plentiful at this location.

I worked on a gourd I had started in November last year. I was given it a couple of years back, and decided I needed to do something to it. I had started burning Kangaroos onto it, but couldn't decide how to finish the top of the gourd where the stem came out. So, I set it aside until I resolved this dilemma. Through the week I had an inspiration, and decided to have some gum leaves hanging down from the base of the stem. What could be more Australian in an Australian scene featuring native Australian animals, being pyrographed on Australia Day? (*That's a rhetorical question. There is no prize for getting the answer right.*)

And I will add this: It is not easy doing animals or gum leaves around a small rotund object. But I got the sucker done!

My Project – John Menthe

I'm always interested to find out what other members of the club are making. Most of the time it's not until we get to the end of the year (Eltham Festival Exhibition) that we get to see and check out the completed work by other members. I would therefore like to introduce a new segment in our newsletter called "My Project". This is for members to post a picture(s) of their work, together with a short description (eg material used) and/or any other interesting facts about their project.

I will start the ball rolling.

Rummaging through my timber pile, I came across a nice piece of natural edge Huon pine (250mm W x 750mm L x 14mm thick), almost worthy of hanging on the wall in its present form. My immediate thought was that this would make a nice grazing board. What do you think? The handles are turned Huon pine which have been glued and dowelled into place. A little food-safe oil brings it up a treat!

John Menthe



Things One Sees in a Hardware Store – Martin Lawley



the door. (see photos) Yes it was a horse or it was meant to be, but it was made out of everything that was available in the shop. How many items can you recognise? How would this go as a raffle prize?

Market Place.

Having joined the club and undertaking the woodturning group on Thursday's and totally enjoying myself. I went out and bought a Nova II Mini Lathe. I now find myself wanting to grow and feel the Nova is too small for me.

The lathe is only a few months old, I am looking for \$800 so I can take the next step.

Regards. Ron Rowe 0417 538 387

On a recent urgent trip to New Zealand, for a family funeral, I noticed a Mitre 10 Mega Store over the road from our Motel in Rangiora (about 23km. From Christchurch) I decided it was time to explore what the Kiwis had for sale. After a bit of a wander through the shop there were some brands that I remembered from many, many years ago and quite a few that were not familiar to me. I then walk out to the timber yard, well it was like here all under cover, that I meet this chap who was just standing there by

