

Marquetry Matters



The Quarterly Newsletter of

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No. 248

2019

Editorial

Well there's another quarter (well part-quarter) gone by – in a flash! This September issue will now bring us back on 'schedule'.

Just a lot of bits and pieces of news and information this issue, hope you enjoy! I feel that I have been operating at half-speed again in its preparation; please, therefore, forgive any errors and omissions!

I did, however, just experience a major side-track to my train of thought. I wanted to get a bit more up to date with the American Marquetarian as I mentioned in the last issue. I went to the folder where I had saved the email from Irena in the USA together, as I thought, with some issues of their magazine only to find that only my reply was saved in the folder not the one containing the issues! It may be a problem only with my computer but I felt it is worth highlighting to you all. I now have to go cap-in-hand to Irena and request a repeat of the whole exercise. Ugh!

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Member News

Marjorie Tearle made an appearance at a recent meeting after a long spell away. Good to see you again Marjorie!

Got a Minute or Two (Designed to keep the members informed who are unable to get to the meetings)

Very little to report over the past three months, especially as the August meeting had to be cancelled due to it clashing with the new Timber Tools and Artisan Show. Nevertheless our Hon. Sec. was kept quite busy with admin type business.

Date for Your Diaries

The Hand Tool Preservation Association of Australia Inc. hosts the:

Antique & Collectable HANDTOOL MARKET, SUNDAY October 6th 2019 9.00 am to 12.30 pm.
Fifty + Tables of Collectable & User Hand Tools.

Venue – St. Anthony’s School Hall, 164-168 Neerim Rd (corner Neerim & Grange Rds.), Caulfield East Melway Ref. 68 F4. Enquiries: George 0406 687 980, email – toolsales@htpaa.org.au
H.T.P.A.A.Inc. www.htpaa.org.au; www.facebook.com/Hand.Tool.Preservation

Happenings / Shows

Lilydale Valley Views RV

We held a Spring Fair at the retirement village where I live and yours truly put on a display of marquetry and how it’s done (!) together with a trestle table full of the sorts of things that can be made in our workshop. Despite a lot of villagers and others coming through there were no takers for marquetry and maybe only one for the workshop. Very disappointing and it makes one wonder whether it’s all worthwhile!

In a situation like that it is interesting to see how people react. Many would, I believe, have just walked past without really seeing what was there. I seemed to disturb their train of thought when I loudly said “Have you seen marquetry before?” Invariably the response was “Ugh?!” An admission that they hadn’t follows then showing some interest – if only ‘passing interest’.

Par for the course with me currently is that I took a couple of photographs of the display for inclusion in this item and can’t find where they are located in my system; the camera is empty so they must be somewhere! Don’t watch this space!

Timber Tools & Artisan Show

This show is the successor to the Working With Wood Shows that have been going for years and years. For the very first time, again for years and years, we had to pull out of the show at the last minute. We just did not have the ‘person-power- to mount it. I was feeling way below par and our Hon Sec Chas had an eye problem that curtailed his driving temporarily. Both Chas and I fronted up at the show to apologize and once the organiser, Candice Tocknell-Gray, realised the situation all was forgiven!

Whilst the show included more artisan types of activities such as metalwork it was a little disappointing to see some of the past regulars not being present. Maybe the next show being at the Showgrounds and probably with a bit bigger venue more will be encouraged to return (including us!). It was good to see Graeme Briton there with his veneers and books but whether it was his last appearance remains to be seen – see later report herein.

The Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Annual Show

Although the Show is currently under way the results have been published as under:

1st: Marquetry Picture by Jan Slagter

2nd: Barber Shop Quartet by John Higgins

3rd: Cockatiels by Charles Watt

VHC: Burano by Greg Craig

HC: WAFL by Charles Watt (WAFL = Women’s’ Australian Football League)

There was a total of 9 entries all from members of the Society. Once upon a time there would be the odd one from ‘outside’ the Society but maybe it’s a sign of the times that there is no apparent other interest from the art and craft environment. Good on you guys for keeping the flag flying!

I have no photos of the show to date. Hopefully someone will have taken some and I can publish them next issue.

News from other Societies

The Marquetry Society

It is so good to 'read between the lines' to realise just how vibrant and alive the Marquetry Society is currently.

Spring 2019 Edition, No.266 (following on from the last edition of MM just showing a TOC)

There's a most interesting article on one prestigious golfer Tony Jacklin who, in his playing days in 1969, became the first British player to win The Open Championship in 18 years. The following season he won his second major title, the U.S Open. At the time he was the only European player to win the US Open in 84 years. The article describes an interview with him when it turns out that he has been doing marquetry on and off since the 1950s! I love his 'sales pitch' on being questioned what needs to be said:

"Try to convince them how absorbing and satisfying it can be. Encourage them to give it a go, suggest that they may be surprised how interesting the hobby is, and so far removed from the instant gratification of some of the more modern crafts. Take pleasure from the slow build-up of the project, and maybe see that this is much more rewarding than the production of some bland item in a short time. The satisfaction from producing a good marquetry picture is inspirational. Each picture is a unique piece of art. It is a wonderful pastime".

What more can be said? Except that his work on mainly portraits of well-known people appears phenomenal! In more recent years he has taken to laser-cutting production in quite a commercial sense. The interviewer concludes with: "He put over the strengths, benefits and sheer pleasure of practising marquetry in a very convincing manner. His take on marquetry is truly inspirational, he is a great ambassador for our hobby and his persuasive arguments for its merits would certainly have convinced me to give it a try, had I not already known of its attractions".

It's a fascinating read!

There is then the start of a series written by David Walker aimed at beginners and independents who would like guidance on how the essential tasks of applying stringers, borders and cutting mitres are done with a good degree of success. A couple of pages of great information.

I love the idea of a 'ShedFest'. This one is by the Cotswold Group and I just wonder whether the concept would be worth exploring here 'down under'!

Under the heading of Marquetry Tools another little article on the subject of an historical marquetry kit got me off on yet another tangent! (I know, I can't help myself!) Reference is made to "The Cove Workshop" which, of course I Googled immediately and was blown away (to use the modern vernacular) by its content. I really will have to make this the subject of an article all on its own in a future issue of MM. Amazing stuff! Do take a look at this website in the meantime: <https://www.marquetrykit.co.uk/> Even clicking on a particular kit takes you off to more and more kits!

Continue to be blown away by Googling website: <https://deverenigdemarqueteurs.com/> (mentioned earlier in the journal in the 'Other useful addresses'. Wow, what talent from this country!

Another 50 pages of absorbing interest maintained to the very end with the 'Readers Letters', this time highlighting 'The Last Supper' and 'You only need a few tools'. Yes, I smiled too, Alan!

Summer 2019 Edition, No.267 (following on etc.....)

As with 266 above there is a lot of person-type writing from various individual office-bearers which all in one way or another have that little 'pearl of wisdom' in them. Most readable!

Book Review. The book "The Craft of Veneering – a Complete Guide from Basic to Advanced" by Marquetry Society member Craig Thidodeau has recently been released and covers veneer production from log to finished pieces of beautiful furniture. It sounds like a great buy and is said to challenge Bill Lincoln's "The Art and Practice of Marquetry" as the today's 'bible' of marquetry. Priced at around A\$65 delivered it is not cheap for a paperback but could be a good investment for a society or club.

Veneer Examples – Unusual Figuring – Rosewood is part of a series featuring unusual figuring in veneers. Part 10. All Variations of Rosewood – all very beautiful but could be so confusing if you're trying to identify some!

Nice little article on Luthier clamps which are said to be quick and easy to make, and light to use. Made from wood (these were oak) each clamp consists of a bar, a fixed head and a movable, cam-operated jaw. They look good and would come into their own when in great numbers around a panel or such.

Part 2 on mounting a picture follows more wonderful examples of MS members' pictures – it's enough for me to give up and focus on tiddlywinks!

There's a very interesting article about Marquetry Society member John Sedgwick (who is ex UK but now lives in Canada) which appeared last year in the Canadian magazine Club West. It shows off some of John's magnificent work.

"A Simple & Cheap Press" shows the versatility of using a series of G-cramps instead of a formal press. This one using a couple of bread-boards as main items – inventive! Interestingly enough, though, is the lack of curved tines (if that's the word) that have always been promoted as necessary to ensure pressure starts from the middle of the panel.

As a follow-on from the glueing subject above is a Reader's letter describing using "Evo-Stick weatherproof extra fast PVA glue. Using the "Hot Iron Method" he spreads PVA glue on both surfaces and allows them to dry for about 15 to 20 minutes. Thereafter the surfaces can be brought together, positioned and fixed at one end with a veneer pin, if necessary. This is followed by the application of a hot domestic iron and 12 to 15 minutes to cure. Simple eh?! Anyone game to try it?

Fall 2019 Edition, No.268

Whilst it is only a tiny reproduction I could not resist showing the winner of the Marquetarian's Rosebowl Award as on the front cover. What a beautiful piece of work by Kerry Rath of the Staffordshire Group.

The 2019 International Marquetry Exhibition gallery and slide show has now been launched on the MS website at www.marquetry.org. but many of the exhibits are displayed in this latest issue of The Marquetarian and they make me feel so inadequate yet again – how people can produce such work amazes me! 24 examples in the winners' section and a further 13 in the "Nearly made it class". What a gallery of talent.

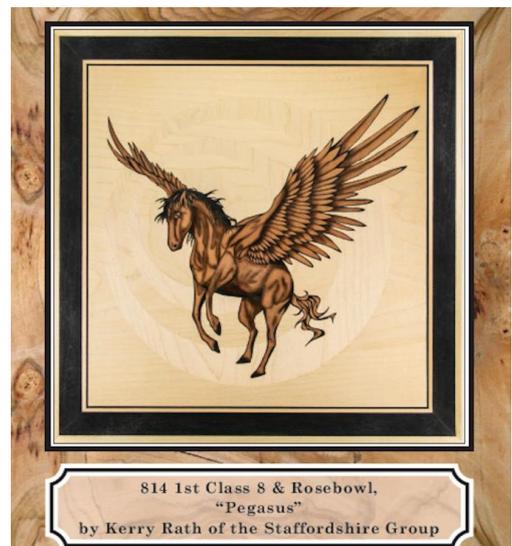
I don't know that I had fully comprehended the range of classes in the exhibition nor the number of awards given out but, really, it is most impressive. The Society must be so proud to have such a presence in these strange times

Another aspect that fascinates me is the titles to the works, how some of them are dreamt up beats me.

I need to have another good look at the reports from the MS AGM. It looks as if quite a few possibly contentious items have been aired and it will be interesting to see what comes from them in time.

Part 3 on mounting a picture continues a very descriptive essay on this subject.

The word 'contentious' pops up again here in that 7 pages are devoted to 'Abstract Art & Marquetry' in which there are some amazing applications of marquetry to this art genre. When you look closely at most of these they are really displaying the textures and figures of the woods themselves which I honestly feel is overlooked in much marquetry these days. I don't like to really push the idea of 'painting by numbers' being applied to wood veneer but somehow it does resonate sometimes.



The American Marquetry Society

As mentioned in my Editorial I have caused a bit of a hiatus in my system regarding their newsletters and it will take a little effort to find out exactly what we've got in our library and what I need to obtain. Reviews will have to wait until at least next MM!

Know Your Veneers

Just a short follow-up from MM Issue No.245, December 2018. Over the past few months on and off I have been sorting my sample veneers into the categories listed in that article and mounting them on corrugated boards size 1200 x 900 – 7 of them! It has been a mammoth task and I really wonder what the overall benefit is going to be! Nevertheless when I spread the boards out it is fascinating to see the range of colours and textures. I still have a few veneers unidentified to date in the workshop store so the challenge still remains. Also I bought some 8 pieces from Graeme Briton at the Artisan Show and made the mistake of not identifying them at the time. Currently trying to photograph them for Graeme to identify them but even that is proving to be a challenge in itself. The saga continues – watch this space!!

Shopping Around / Bunnings Spotting / Commercial Break

Australian Premier Veneers, Box Hill

I recently popped into APV and had a chat with Robert Fabris. Apparently sales of veneers are going well currently, especially to interstate customers and some even to the UK! This is good news for a veneer in relatively small quantities business that was needed to fill the gap when Peter Scott-Young passed away. I had alerted Robert to the fact that Graeme Briton in Tasmania may be interested in selling up and, apparently, he has made contact with him but I am not aware of the outcome.

Check out their website at www.apveneers.com.au; it is a most comprehensive and impressive catalogue of the veneers that they stock.

Graeme Briton, Tasmania

Graeme has been a stalwart supporter of the Working With Wood Shows for many, many years. However some recent health problems have prompted him to consider winding up the business and he was heard to say that if someone were to come to the show with a pocketful of money he would be willing to consider it! I believe that such a person did arrive but I am not aware of the outcome. If he is not continuing we wish him well for the future – he will be sorely missed.

Float a Boat, Ringwood

Another pop-in visit that I made recently was to Float a Boat to have a look at their current stocks of modelling stuff. It is a fascinating little shop catering mainly for the model boat-building community but their materials stocks of plywood, timber and metal tubing take over from where Bunnings leave off size-wise. Particularly are veneer strips 0.6mm thickness in Basswood, African Walnut and Mahogany and in widths 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8mm, all 1M long. Think of the time saved in cutting such widths accurately with a veneer saw let alone a knife! Prices of each strip are around \$1.00 which is not likely to break the bank! The strips are also available in Lime, with smaller sizes of 2 and 3mm width but only in 0.5mm thickness which probably wouldn't match our standard range of veneer thicknesses.

Well worth a visit if you're in the neighbourhood.

They have a website www.floataboat.com.au

The Woodsmith

Their RARE WOODS OPEN DAY is on Saturday OCTOBER 19th, 2019. A huge range of Australian & Imported Rare Wood Species that can only be seen at The Woodsmith (or so they say!). - All Dry - All colourful - many never to be repeated! Woodturning, Carving and Cabinet-making Woods; 100s of Bowl Blanks, Turning Squares, Short Boards and Limb Wood, together with lots of useful Bargain Off Cuts. They haven't mentioned veneers but I would say that there is a good chance of some being sold off at bargain prices!

Open 9.00am to 1.00pm at The Woodsmith Pty Ltd Factory 1/35 Lusher Road Croydon Vic. 3136.

Quiz Time

I think I received this a little while ago from our compatriots in Western Australia – my apologies, sort of, for not including it earlier.

VENEER RIDDLES

Here are some cryptic clues for you to see whether you can name the veneer:

Example: A veneer you can get your teeth into

Gum.

1. What veneer grows nearest to the beach
2. What veneer is older than most
3. What veneer always has a partner
4. What is the neatest veneer
5. What veneer grieves the most
6. Zsa Zsa Gabor's favourite veneer
7. One half of a famous comedy duo
8. The RAAF's favourite veneer
9. What veneer is reduced to nothing
10. What is the loneliest veneer
11. William Tells' favourite veneer
12. The veneer that bore 'a hundred yellow ribbons'
13. Early convicts felt the wrath of this veneer
14. A very handy veneer
15. A pronoun veneer
16. A veneer that is ill all the time
17. A veneer with a burnt bottom
18. A veneer with a deep voice
19. A veneer to make crates from
20. A veneer that makes you lay your own floor coverings
21. A very regal veneer
22. A veneer to make cloth from
23. A veneer that secures the bottom of a dress
24. A veneer that comes from Colorado
25. A well liked veneer if it has you
26. A female veneer

Answers will be provided in the next issue of MM in December.

May your troubles be less...

May your blessings be more...

May nothing but happiness come through your door

This Month's Design

I believe the following "Tranquil Scene" would make a beautiful marquetry picture provided that the right veneers were used.

It has been developed from a birthday card and the enlarging has caused a lack of definition. Even so I believe the basic concept is captured so it's now up to you!



**THE MARQUETRY SOCIETY OF VICTORIA
INC**

The aim of our non-profit Society is to promote and foster interest in the art and craft of marquetry.

Meetings are held at the
Box Hill Community Arts Centre,
Cnr. Combarton and Station Streets, Box Hill,
Melways 47 D11
on the fourth Saturday of the month, 12.30pm to
3.30pm with hands-on workshops on the second
Saturday of the month, same times.

Hands-on workshops are also held on Tuesday
afternoon of each week, 1pm to 3pm, at the
Scout Hall, Cnr. Edith Street and Heathmont Road,
Heathmont. Melways 50-A11

Phone anyone to check times.

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

Direct all enquires to the Secretary.
An annual membership fee of \$40 and a
joining fee of \$6 apply.

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MARQUETRY MATTERS

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Other marquetry associations are welcome to
use this material provided credit is given to
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MEETING & WORKSHOP DATES

coming up

SATURDAY 12.30 to 3.30 P.M.

@ BOX HILL

Workshop	12 th October
Meeting	26 th October
Workshop	9 th November
Meeting	23 rd November
Xmas Break-up	Check with Hon. Sec.. or C'tee member