Editor: Please send any articles or photographs for the August newsletter to $\underline{richardasmith1955@gmail.com}$ by the 20^{th} of July.

GENERAL MEETING Wednesday, 2nd of July 7.30pm at the clubrooms Cnr. Ironbark and De Fredericks Road, Yarrambat. ALL ARE WELCOME

President's Report June 2025

It's been a bit nippy in the mornings, hasn't it? I went to hose off the ice on my windscreen one day and the hose snapped!

Now that we basically halfway through the year, it is time to turn our thoughts to our annual exhibition. The dates are 8th - 9th of November. The first Exhibition Newsletter will be hitting your inbox shortly. We will be looking for volunteers for: raffle ticket sales at Eltham Village, outside Coles in Diamond Creek, the Wattle Festival (31st of August) and at the exhibition over the weekend. We will need volunteers for the sales table and the exhibition sales table as well as volunteers for Wes's workshop and for the exhibits hall. More information will be in the Exhibition Newsletter.

We've had fabulous prizes for the raffles over the years, and this year is no different. We have the Rocking Horse, (the one that has been sitting in the kitchen for a long while), a beautiful piece of framed artwork – Peacock on Huon Pine, Kumiko Lamp, Carved Document Box, Chess Table and a Carved Owl. I am very impressed with the pieces that have been completed so far, and I am very much looking forward to sharing the pictures with you as soon as we can.

We had the working bee on the 31st of May. It was a very successful morning, the container was given a huge overhaul, with much of the items in there disposed of in a number of ways. The windows got a thorough clean inside and out, lots of vacuuming, dusting and especially the extraction filters which got a very good clean. The top end of the assembly room, where the lathes and what had been used as a bit of a dumping ground, got a very good sorting out as well. Great to have a good turn out and everyone worked very hard while they were there. Their efforts were very much appreciated.

We are getting closer to the shed being fully approved by council, with just some issues around one tree and its location and the removal of another. Raman has been working very hard in pulling this together.

Christmas in July!! 20th July @ 12.30pm

There is a notice in the club rooms where you can put your name down for this fabulous event! This is another great way of socialising and for partners or spouses to join us in enjoying some festive fare and mulled wine! All this for the paltry price of \$10 per person.

I touched on the Wattle Festival before and would ask that someone step up and take the reins and co-ordinate this event for the club. It is not terribly onerous. I am happy to discuss what's involved.

Don't forget Hamish's Skills, Techniques and Safety session, Monday 14th July @ 1.00pm. July's topic is demystifying the vast variety of drill bits and their uses. This one I am very interested in attending and having it demystified for me!

General Meeting 2nd July @ 7.30pm. I know it is getting colder and darker as we progress into winter, and the thought of going out instead of staying home, warmly nestled on our couches, can be very tempting. But think of all the information you are missing out on, and being involved

in the club's decision-making processes, as well as the raffle! Don't forget, we also need a quorum, 10% of the membership, to attend. One of the topics for July will be a presentation on some ideas for access into the club and the reconfiguring of some internal walls. Fully open for discussion and input from the membership.

Healthability will be running throughout July and the first week of August in the mornings.

Monday 7th July Tuesday 15th July Wednesday 23rd July Thursday 31st July, and Friday 8th August.

Put your name to come along and be a part of a community project, it's a bit of fun and very rewarding. If we're lucky Thommo will play his guitar and conduct a bit of a sing-along.

The first Women who Woodwork (WWW) lunch for 2025 was set held 27th of June. We dined at Rivers, and 11 lovely ladies in attendance!

It was a full house this Friday (20th) at the carving sessions with Steve's usual suspects, Chris' green spoon carving carvers and Peter's Kumiko Lamp making crew. We only just fitted around the table at teatime where there was a bit of a showing and telling going on.

Stay warm!

Jane

Secretary's thoughts

As the weather gets colder, the turn-out is getting smaller at the Meetings, so we're keeping them short and sweet.

The highlights for June where the discussions on Associate Membership that was well supported, a vigorous discussion on upcoming Grant opportunities and Peter's plans for the new Bookcase - it will be a significant step up from the current one!! If you have any suggestions or ideas, please let him know.

Thanks to all who supported the Working Bee, it was very productive. The clean up the Container uncovered a variety of Treasures and Trash – for example, if you are looking for half-round or dowel, there's a pile of it available. And after all that effort, we are requesting that nothing is put high up on top of the shelves or on the floor under the shelves – in both cases it is hard to see what's there and difficult to retrieve.

Regards

Catherine Watson

Mentoring June 2025

Even with cold weather, the mentoring sessions have been well attended.

The main aim of the session is to assist members with new skills, tricks and techniques and we are certainly seeing a lot of this happening. Kerrie and Di have applied themselves to framing lead light work they each made at another craft organisation that they attend. Curved rebates in Kerrie's case and Festool fastened mitres in Di's with the resulting beautiful work in the photos below.

Our next master class is box making using the Gifkins dovetail jig. Lisa has already done a practice run before committing her fine timber. Anyone else interested please just turn up.



Di's mitred frame



Kerrie's stained glass work set in curved Rebates.

Mentoring on a Monday

The Monday sessions continue to be busy with all benches full to overflowing and a wonderful assortment of interesting objects being produced, to list a few:- Boxes for tools as well as precious objects (bandsawn, fingers, dovetails and other less common joints), Library chairs, Bread boards (the Asian exports of bread boards must be suffering from the Eltham woodies production!), Frames for Leadlighting and an assortment of other oddities.

Skills and Techniques Session Second Monday of the Month Monday the 14th of July at 1-00pm Drills, drilling and which bits suit?

This session was suggested by Jane and seems a good opportunity to look at the varieties of tools and bits for drilling and that could well lead into discussion on some of the different screws and fixings available.

It appears that some of you enjoy these sessions and I am happy to keep them going, but I do need some suggestions on what topics you might like to see covered? It would also be great if those members with expertise or ideas on the chosen topics came along and contributed.

I am sure the 14th is not a Public Holiday so do come along.

Hamish

Pyrography Group Sunday 25/5/2025

Today was milestone for this group, it was our 14th anniversary. (To save you doing the maths, we started in May of 2011.) The original group was four people, and funnily enough, that's what we had today too. But Beryl and I are the only two original members left, Kerrie and Rowena are both "recent" additions.

As usual there were a couple of apologies and 'no-shows', but I wasn't proving cakes or drinks to celebrate, so no big problem. Beryl was keen to get to work on her large round platter and get the last bunch of flowers completed. When we start these projects we think it looks simple, but because of the detail we put into them it always seems to take forever to get them finished. Beryl has done an awesome job on this platter, and the detail is beautiful. Well worth the effort.

Kerrie has made a box to keep her Pyro gear in and already decorated the lid. (I wonder where she got the idea to make a box?) So Kerrie is now burning a small Hedgehog amidst flowerpots on the underside of the lid, effectively creating a double-sided lid. (Now why didn't I think of that?) With a bit of encouragement and embellishment, it has turned out to be a very cute pictorial embellishment.

On the other side of the table Rowena was burning a copy of a Banksia Seed Pod based a Linotype print depiction of the subject. This also turned out extremely well, so you can't pick the original from the copy. (Truth is we didn't have the 'original' here, just a picture. But let's not get hung up on the details!)

As for me, I was adding a Celtic border to the edge of the lids of two small boxes I had made up in the last month. They are both about 170mm wide, 85mm deep, and 65mm high. The lid sports a 20mm high lip along the front and two side edges, and that's where I am putting the Celtic border (two different designs), which I will paint in various colours when I get them home. One has a plywood lid embellished with a Celtic Wolf design (already painted), and the other has a Purpleheart lid (which is plain). Should come up great when I seal them with a couple of coats of wax. I will just point out that it has taken me longer to do the Pyrographic decorations than it took me to make both the boxes. So the Devil really is in the detail.....

Steve Mitchener.

Carving Group Friday 6/6/2025

Even though Kevin was an apology for this group, we still had ten in attendance. All beavering away on their various and mixed projects.

Maike was carving a life-sized Wren out of a piece of Huon Pine. (Sounds an awesome description doesn't it? But you know how big a Wren is, don't you?)

Bernie has shaped a large bowl in White Walnut with a thick wall. He's now in the process of carving a convoluted diamond pattern all over the outside. (Believe me, this is going to take some time to complete.)

Rowena did a bit more prep work on her Red Gum box cutting the mitres. Then started working with Chris Boylen on a green wood carving of a spoon in Lilly Pilly timber. Nice tight grain. Should look nice when finished.

Chris himself was working on a Green Man Face in a hefty piece of Bay Tree trunk, complete with bark. Chris expressed a desire to lead a "green wood carving" session within the group. (He is a "green wood carving fanatic". It's green, wet, soft, and easy to carve, he says. Where's the fun in that?) But it is carving, of a sort, so I supported his desire to encourage others. It all adds to the experience.

Rod was working fastidiously on his kneeling Shepherd, the twelfth of fifteen pieces in his Nativity scene. Ahhh, the end is nigh.....

Alwyn was working on his sitting figure. Replicating a stone image he saw that caught his eye. (So much easier to copy someone else's work. At least you know that it works, and what it should look like. I'm all for it!)

David was working on a low relief pair of grape vine leaves. It's a small handheld carving, and

because David doesn't linger long, he won't tackle anything big.

Hank was diligently sanding some of his many hand-held sculptures with some 1,000 grit sandpaper, then said he would "polish them up properly" to 2,000 grit level. Great to see a man dedicated to his work, and desirous of doing a "proper job" with great passion.

Barb Knell was working on one of her small sculptures. Smoothing it out with some sandpaper to give it the required smooth slick finish. Getting quite a little collection going here too.

As for me, apart from getting writer's cramp, I managed to work for a time on my "Bear in a Log" in a piece of Redwood. It's part of my "back-log" of unfinished works I carry around to these occasions. That way, there is always something for me to do. (Not as silly as it sounds, is it?)

Steve Mitchener.

Scrollsaw Group Sunday 8/6/2025

Started off with three apologies (Kerrie, Val and Kevin), but had an addition in Kim Webster wanting to tackle Scrollsawing. So before she changed her mind, I talked her through the process, explained the technical issues, and got her set-up and cutting her first test pieces. Took to it like a duck to water....

Rowena was knocking out some Christmas decorations. Nothing like starting early and beating the rush....

Chris Hand was cutting the waste wood away from her chain pattern. Sounds tedious working in and around the future links, but believe me, it saves literally hours of carving time. Been there, done that!

Jess joined us for a bit. (Busy young mum!) Working on some Pixie Doors. (I made an Elf Door back in 2020. A Pixie Door is just a bit smaller....)

As for me, I cut out another conundrum from a small piece of Cedar to add to my collection. Then made a small one-word sign for a future prank. (I just can't help myself!) And knocked up a couple of spare stacking men, they seem to go missing or get damaged at the Exhibition, so I am just getting ahead of the game.

I also was training Kim and "consulting" with the other three ladies, so I had a busy and productive day. And all the ladies were pleased with the success each of them had with their various tasks and projects, so we all went home happy.

Steve Mitchener.

Carving Group Friday 20/6/2025

What a day! Started with two apologies, Kerrie and Kevin, but ended up with fourteen people bustling around and doing stuff. Actually had three groups functioning here today.

First we had Peter Gannon and his Kumico Group in full swing. Due to Peter's mishap, he needed to make up lost time in regards to the Kumico item for the raffle. So we had Jane, Lorraine, Rowena and Peter in the workshop cutting up Kumico parts. Don't know if he'll throw a report in about their activities, but I don't think cutting half-lap joins on the table saw is awe-inspiring reading.

Then to mix things up, Chris Boylen "piggy-backed" his green carving session on my normal carving Group. So Chris had Maike, Rod, Bernie and Wes all taking a crack at 'Green Wood Carving', dropping shavings from the draw knife horses at the back, from the vices in the tables, and anywhere else they could think of. They all seemed to be having fun and enjoying themselves.

That left Alwyn doing serious carving with his small, seated figure. We discussed some small adjustments to the design to embellish it, and Alwyn started instigating them straight away.

Hank was sanding the bowl of a large ladle. Not getting caught up in 'greenwood fever' like the others. Sticking to traditional carving.

David Green and I collaborated on the handle for his drawer front he is making. Some minor technical issues were discussed and resolved, and work progressed accordingly. He didn't have the back, sides or bottom with him, so I don't know if they even exist yet, or if he is just making this magnificent front piece to fool people. Time will tell....

And before I get to me, we had Raman on-site showing builders through to get quotes on future work. Wouldn't have minded so much, but every time they went outside to view the front and chat, they left the bloody door open. We had the heater on to stop us "traditional" Carvers freezing our butts off, and that gaping hole in the wall wasn't helping! But we survived!

As for me, I started on another small Gecko-type lizard carving. (I got a couple of pre-cut blanks in my kit, so I figured it was something easy, I could beaver away and still keep an eye on everything.) And Lo and Behold, I got it finished apart from the sanding. So having Peter and Chris running sub-groups under my carving Group lessens my workload considerably. Damn! I might be onto something here......

Steve Mitchener.

Pyrography Group Sunday 22/6/2025

As the weekend approached the apologies started rolling in. Between family functions, holidays, and illness, my little Pyrography Group got decimated pretty quickly. So I was expecting just three of us to front up.

Surprise! Had to settle for two! Beryl came in and said Maike couldn't make it either.

So Beryl settled down to do some doggie picture coasters, and I started on some signs I am making into fridge magnets. Work was slow, because the conversation was too interesting. So we stopped for morning tea and chat, did a little more, stopped for lunch and chat. Then decided we would stop the work and just chat.

Not sure if Beryl actually finished any coasters, but I got my two little signs done. Didn't bother starting the box I had laboured on preparing through the week. Had laid out Celtic weave pattern around the four sides and decided on the pattern for the top. But I knew I would never finish it in the afternoon, so decided not to even start it. Will save it for next time.

So we decided an early day was called for, and we packed up and left. While it may not have been a hugely productive day as far as Pyrography goes, it sure was a great day for two friends to spend some quality talk-time together.

Steve Mitchener.



Baltic Pine

Ripping up the carpet, sanding the exposed wooden floor and applying oil — a familiar rite of passage for many of those who bought an old house ripe for renovation. And everyone seems to know that if the floor is a yellowish looking softwood then the timber is **Baltic pine**. But is it? Let's grab a long length bit and have a deep drill into the **BP** story.

In the 19th century lots of housing was needed for Victoria's rapidly growing population: some things never change. Native hardwoods were unsuitable for quite a few applications and so there was a demand for softwoods. There are very few native softwoods in Victoria and those that do exist, like white cypress pine (*Callitrus glaucophylla*) grow too slowly to be suitable for large-scale commercial plantations. So, from the 1830s Victoria imported large quantities of softwoods, mostly from North America and Scandinavia.

Initially, the Scandinavian timber was imported by British merchants but from the 1870s it was being imported directly from Norwegian ports by Norwegian trading families, some of

whom relocated to Melbourne. Gunnersen was one such family and they are still in the timber business today. A history of their company states that between 1857 and 1887 an annual average of 38 million linear feet of Baltic flooring was consumed in Victoria with a peak of 68 million feet in 1886-87. Somewhere along the line **Baltic pine** became the generic term for these imports.

Baltic timber imports flourished until the 1920s but in that decade lobbyists persuaded the government to protect an emerging local softwood industry from foreign competition by imposing tariffs. Sound familiar? Tariffs on Baltic timber increased from six pence per 100 super feet1 in 1916 to four shillings in 1921 and 24 shillings in 1930, virtually bringing imports to a halt. That's a 4 700% tariff increase, much BIGGER!!!! than Trump's, but don't tell him.

However, the fledgling Victorian softwood industry didn't flourish. *Pinus insignis* (as *P. radiata* was then called) had grown well when first planted as windbreaks at Doncaster in the 1860s. From 1909 to 1925 experimental plantations were established at Frankston, Wilsons Promontory, French Island, Bright, Port Campbell, Anglesea and Mount Difficult in the Grampians. Nearly all these failed due to poor soil and site conditions. It wasn't until the 1960s that large-scale plantations of P. radiata were again planted and this time with success.

The most common softwoods growing in the Baltic region are the **Scots pine**, *Pinus sylvestris*, and the **Norway spruce**, *Picea abies*. The *Scots pine* is also known as the **European red pine**. Other names for **Norway spruce** include **Baltic white wood** and **white fir**. So when they were imported into Australia they became known as **red Baltic pine** and **white Baltic pine** respectively.

The 2 types of **BP** are very similar:

	Scots pine	Norway spruce	
Other names	Scots fir, European redwood,	Baltic whitewood, white fir,	
	European red pine, Nordic	white spruce, white deal,	
	redwood, red deal, yellow	Russian whitewood, violin	

	deal.	wood.		
Colour/appearance	Heartwood is light reddish brown, sapwood is pale yellow to nearly white.	A creamy white with a hint of yellow and/or red.		
Grain/texture	Grain is straight with a medium, even texture. Knots are grouped.	A consistently straight grain with a fine, even texture. Knots randomly distributed.		
Properties	Reasonably strong, light (550kg/m³).	Light (405 kg/m³), flexible, long length, straight.		
Rot resistance	Heartwood is moderately durable to non-durable.	Heartwood is slightly resistant to non-resistant.		
Workability	Easy to work with hand and machine tools. Glues and finishes well.	Easy to work as long as there are no knots present. Glues and finishes well. Can give blotchy and inconsistent results when stained, so use sanding sealer.		
Uses	General construction, panelling, flooring and interior joinery. Poles and pit props when treated with preservatives.	Wooden ladders, oars, roofing timbers, paper pulp, flooring and cladding, inexpensive furniture, joinery, musical instruments, Christmas trees.		
Allergies/toxicity	Can cause allergic skin reactions and/or asthma-like symptoms in some people.	Can cause skin irritation and asthma-like respiratory effects.		

Scots pine is an evergreen conifer and one of the most widely distributed conifers in the world, its range extending from Portugal in the west through to eastern Siberia. Fun fact – it is Britain's only native pine. It usually grows to 35 m in height and 1 m trunk diameter. The lifespan is normally 150-300 years. It can be readily identified by its combination of fairly short, blue-green needles and orange-red bark. There is a great amount of natural variability in terms of its density, strength and appearance because of the wide range of growing



conditions. Trees from colder northern climates produce denser, more finely textured wood because of their slower growth rates. The spruce is king in the harsh forest environments of the northern hemisphere. Within the Pinaceae family spruces (Picea) are most closely aligned with pines (Pinus) but they are still distinct. The two spruces indigenous to Europe are the Norway spruce and the Serbian spruce (P. omorika). Norway spruce occurs naturally across the principal mountain ranges of Europe, reaching east to the Balkans and Russia and north as far as the boundary of permafrost. Its eastern limit in Russia is hard to define, due to extensive hybridization with the Siberian spruce (P. obovata), but is usually given as the Ural Mountains. It is a large, fastgrowing evergreen coniferous tree growing 35-55 m tall with a trunk diameter of 1 to 1.5 m. For the first 25 years it can grow 1 m per year. The Norway spruce is one of the most widely planted spruces, both inside and outside of its native range, and one of the most economically important coniferous species in Europe. Another fun (and confusing) fact – Picea is the botanic name for the spruce genus and abies the botanic name for the fir genus. So Picea abies, the Norway spruce, is literally a fir like spruce!





The wood of Norway spruce is particularly resonant when slow grown, making it a favoured timber for tonewood used in the tops and sides of stringed-instruments such as violins and guitars. One form of the tree called **Haselfichte** (*Hazel-spruce*) grows in the European Alps and was used by Stradivarius for his instruments. Quartersawn billets of instrument-grade Norway spruce, frequently sold under more "sophisticated" names such as German or Yugoslavian spruce, can be far more expensive than many hardwoods.

It is very appropriate that BP was chosen as the timber to construct the main huts for Douglas Mawson's famous 1911-14 expedition to Antarctica. Trees that could survive the deep winters of northern Europe proved more than adequate to survive 300km/h blizzards

and -40° C temperatures. The huts were prefabricated in Australia using **oregon** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) for the frame and tongue and grooved BP for the inner and outer walls, with tar-paper providing some insulation. !00 mm thick BP was used as roof cladding. **Norwegian white wood**, another name for Norway spruce, was specified for the floor because of its superior insulation qualities. The huts

were flat-packed, loaded onto a ship and reconstructed at Cape Denison in East Antarctica. Maybe this story inspired Ikea, a company also from the Baltic region, to develop its range of flat-packed furniture?



On the Hobart waterfront just 200 metres from where Mawson's expedition departed in 1911 there is a Replica Museum of the Mawson's hut. Carpenters who worked on the conservation of the huts in Antarctica took hundreds of photos and measurements and these were used to create a replica in every sense of the word:

- · Every saw cut and corner mirrors the original.
- \cdot The BP cladding and flooring where sourced from the same sawmill in Finland that provided the original boards.
- · The tongue and grooved boards have exactly the same dimensions as the originals.
- \cdot The BP was imported into Australia by the same Melbourne merchant that supplied the original timber.

End grain description of Scots pine (x 10)

- · Medium sized resin canals, numerous and evenly distributed, mostly solitary.
- · Earlywood to latewood transition fairly abrupt.

End grain description of Norway spruce (x 10)

- · Resin canals are small, infrequent and sporadically spaced.
- · Gradual transition from earlywood to latewood

Peter Goddard





Footnotes:

1. The superficial foot, or "super foot" is defined as the volume of timber in a board 12" wide, 1" thick and 12" long.

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EDWI CLUB SCHEDULE

Note: Colin Groves will now be opening the club rooms on Tuesdays

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Second Sunday	Every Monday	Every Tuesday	Every Wednesday	Every Thursday	First & Third	First & Third
Scrollsaw	Mentoring	Open Workshop	Wes' Exhibition	Open Workshop	Friday	Saturday
9.00 – 4.00pm	9.00am-	9.00am-	Toy Making	9.00am-12.30pm	Wood Carving	Open Workshop
Steve Mitchener	12.30pm	12.30pm	9.30am –	Paul Rushton	9.00am-3.00pm	9.00am-12.30pm
0409 003 487	Charlie Camera	Colin Groves	12.00pm	0417 017 347	Steve Mitchener	Jane Hammett
	0413481699	(TBC)	Wes Weight		0409 003 487	(until further
		0417563699	0478 021 269			notice)
Fourth Sunday	Hamish Hill			Every Thursday		0408 195 965
Pyrography	0428 577 878	Every Tuesday	First Wednesday	Wood Turning		
9.00am –		Instrument	General Meeting	1.00pm – 4.00pm		Second & Fourth
4.00pm	Second Monday	Group	7.30pm @ the	Rod Gorfine		Saturday
Steve Mitchener	<mark>Skills</mark>	1.00pm –	club rooms	0418 108 551		Open Workshop
0409 003 487	Techniques and	4.00pm				9.00am –
	Safety Session	Frank Camera	Third Wednesday			12.30pm
	1.00pm –	0427 964 254	Committee			Toby Grant
	2.00pm		Meeting 7.30pm			0488 994 741
	Hamish Hill		@ the club rooms			
	0428 577 878					Fifth Saturday
						30 August 2025
						29 November
						2025
						Will be advised

Dates for the calendar

General Meeting Wednesday 2nd July

Christmas in July Sunday 20th July

Healthability Monday 7th July

Tuesday 15th July Wednesday 23rd July Thursday 31st July, and Friday 8th August.