

Crosscut

Newsletter of the Witwatersrand Woodworkers' Association

PO Box 411346, Craighall, 2024

Stanley #78 Rebate and Fillister Plane

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Next Main Club Meeting on Wednesday, the 14th February from 18h00 at the new WWA clubhouse at REEA. Denis Lock from the East Rand club will present on 'Router Jigs', preceded by Norman Cheerin who will talk on 'Applying stain with a sponge and putting edging on boards'.

Next Turner's monthly meeting is on Monday, the 5th February at 18h00 at the new WWA clubhouse at REEA. Demonstration of a polishing system by George Simpson.

News

January Main Club Meeting. Gavin Naylor gave a talk on Cabinet Making Design Software that is intended for built-in cupboard and kitchen work. He tried many different software packages before settling on **Cabinet Solutions**. The package allows the user to draw the room and then drag and drop cabinets onto the drawing. Three dimensional and orthographic views are available to allow the room to be visualised. This can be done with client present as the process is very quick. All the standard cabinet sizes and construction techniques can be tailored, materials selected and finishes chosen. The program can output detailed drawings, cut-lists and quotes based on materials and labour pricing inputs. Gavin estimates that he can design a complete kitchen in about half an hour, producing rendered 3-D pictures and a quote for client approval, cut-lists to send to the supplier, hardware lists and installation drawings. Because the software is interactive, before approval, client changes can be done interactively and the outputs all updated instantaneously. Although the software is expensive (R22k-) Gavin estimates that it will pay for itself quickly though increased productivity.

Not receiving Crosscut? If you didn't receive this issue of Crosscut, please let the secretary know. Seriously, if don't receive Crosscut, or know somebody who is complaining that they don't receive it, Ken, our secretary probably has the wrong email or postal address, or you haven't paid your subs!
(You did remember to tell Ken about your change of address, didn't you?)

Clubhouse Projects. We are looking into two significant projects this year – some sort of ceiling for the clubhouse and to smooth out the floor with a hard, floated finish. If you have ideas on how to do these – materials and costs, please let us know so we can make some plans. A ceiling will make the clubhouse cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, as well as keeping out the dust. Some sort of ceiling board or insulating boards may be suitable. Please contact any of the committee members if you have information that may help us.

Toymakers. The toymakers meet on the first and third Monday of every month, at 09h00 till 12h00 at the new clubhouse. Contact Eddie Marchio on (011) 678-8062 or renato@pixie.co.za for more information.

Wednesday Workshop. The Wednesday evening workshop is on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, from 18h00 till 20h00. Contact Winston Klein on (011) 674-1513 for more information.

Craighall River Market. (next door to REEA) We have provisionally decided to continue with this for 2007, provided members will assist with the running of the stall. Steven Barrett and Trevor Pope will alternate, and one member is required to assist each time. Setup starts at 8h00 and tear-down is around 13h00. The stall goods are stored in the clubhouse, so we carry them in the boot of a car round to the market and back afterwards. The market is on the second Saturday of the month, so we need 11 volunteers to help once each for remainder of 2007.

If you wish to bring wooden items to sell, these can be left at the club house, safely packed in a box. Each item must be marked with your name, price and commission payable to the club. (20% is suggested.) A removable sticky label is suggested, so that when the item is sold, the label can be detached and stuck onto the sales record sheet. The members manning the stall will unpack and display your goods and sell them. All sales will be recorded, and reconciled afterwards. At the end of the day, your remaining goods will be packed in your box and stored in the clubhouse.

Turning Courses. The suggested topics for future courses are:

The sign-up sheets will be at the meetings, and when enough people (usually 3) have signed up, a date will be agreed and that module will run. If you are interested, please bring your diary and approximately R50- per course to the meeting.

The cost of each module is R50- plus the cost of materials, to be determined by the instructor for that course. For example, the beginner's course is set at R80- (R50- plus materials at R30-.) For all the courses, except the beginner's introduction, you will require certain minimum turning tools – discuss this with one of the turner's committee when you book.

- Beginner's introduction to turning
- Spindle turning
- Sharpening
- Bowl turning
- Hollow turning
- Box turning

Unfortunately the original sheets were lost when Steven's bag was stolen out of his car in December, so please can you sign-up again if you have already done so?

For Sale:

Jacaranda Logs – Approx. 9 logs that are 500mm x 500mm in size. Contact Rene on 011 615 1577 or 072 243 8793.

Festool Router 101QEB 32 tool points brand new still in box.

Festool Dust Extractor. CT22E Brand new - Price R3,850.00. Contact Maureen Frankel on 011 782 7377 / 082 551 1888 or frankel@worldonline.co.za

Ivor Appleton's son has lots of **pallet wood free** for collection. Contact Ivor on (011) 646 3034 (h), (011) 447 1570 (w) or appleton@uiply.com for more information.

Wood in Switzerland and Bavaria.

By Roger Matthews

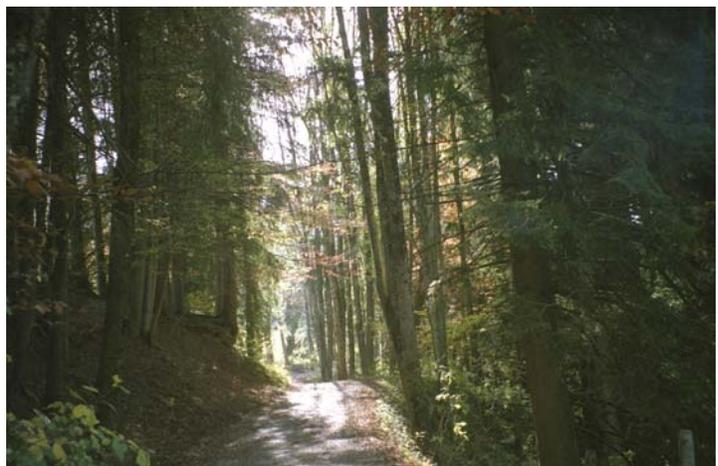
October 2006

These are casual observations of a tourist on aspects of wood that seem to figure large in the life of the more rural Swiss and Bavarian folk.

Forests:

We travelled through many miles of forests in Switzerland, in Bavaria and the Eifel region of Germany. There was plenty of evidence of timber extraction, but no visible 'sores' or bald areas in the forests. Felling must be done selectively and be well controlled. Some boles were up to a metre in diameter and at a guess the trunks up to 50 metres tall.

In some areas where the felled trees were visible they appear to have been left for years before being extracted as the stumps were discoloured and moss-covered.



Large Timbers:

Structures such as bus shelters, carparks, bicycle sheds at stations, waiting rooms at rail halts are made from heavy section beams and planking. Many of these are simple lean-to roofs instead of the traditional Swiss chalet style roof. These feature super-strong roof structures to support the snow load each winter.

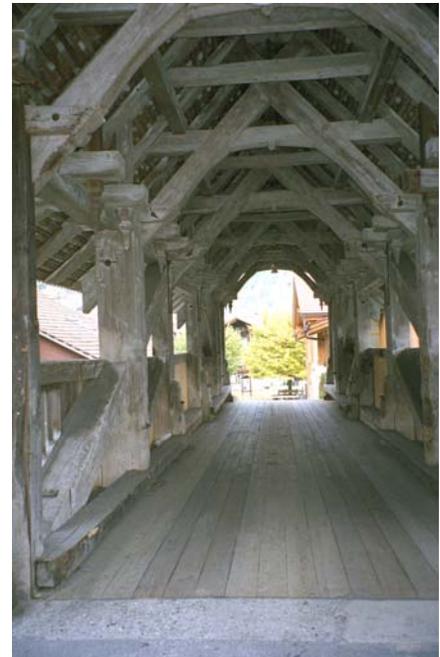
Damaged timberwork on old structures such as barns, factories and covered bridges are replaced with new (as can be seen on the centre section of the bridge below).
New industrial and commercial buildings are erected with timber structural members and sometimes sheathed in timber to maintain the Swiss chalet appearance.

Saw several new barns, some industrial and commercial buildings being constructed with timber in the traditional style. Completed units are light beige compared to the weathered black of the really old chalets.

In Bavaria benches on the wanderweg (walking paths) were constructed from two stout vertical trunks (600 mm dia.) set in the earth with heavy planking for the seat and backrest (300 x 50 & 200 x 40 respectively).



Along one



wanderweg there was a children's playground comprehensively furnished with bulky wooden gadgets – 3 oversize chairs, 2 log bridges criss-crossing a stream, a horizontal tree trunk with the upper-side branches left intact as a climbing frame, log walking steps, et al.



Decaying structures:

Not all is perfect. We saw many drunken farm sheds and barns, some neglected homes where the small vertical shingles on the walls were rotting and falling off. One residence in Wilderswil was in use but lacked the care needed achieve the expected Swiss standards, however it must have been a gracious home when built as it featured many carved and patterned timber components on balconies, beams and the wooden equivalent of "brookie lace".



Firewood:

This must be the biggest consumer by volume in the rural areas.

Split logs are stacked in every conceivable place – under the specially broad eaves of the chalets, in sheds, in yards in the towns, and alongside roads and rail lines everywhere. The stacks seem to be built one timber-length deep (about 600mm) and about 2 metres high, then covered with corrugated iron or plastic.

Hydraulic log-splitting machines do exist, but walking through a small town we came across a senior citizen toting a large splitting axe casually on his shoulder. The axe had a sledge hammer head on the reverse side and was well polished from use.



Wood shaving boxes:

These are similar to the shaker boxes demonstrated by Clive Stacey in March 2006. There is a museum of “chip-wood” boxes in the small town of Wengi, close to Frutigen in the Kander valley. I suggest the translation should be “shaving-wood” boxes.

The enterprise supporting the museum is Buhler Holzspan with a factory mass-producing boxes and other wood products. In their yard and at other wood merchants there were stacks of wood stored straight and some deliberately curved in the form of a big arch – possibly getting some pre-curl?

Die Spanschachtel



This text is copied from Buhler Holzspan's pamphlet.

“The “Chip-wood” box is the oldest type of packaging for dry goods and was known to the Merovingians, the Celts and the Vikings. It is the predecessor of the tins and cardboard boxes that appeared only during the last century. In the Middle Ages the “Chip-wood” boxes were decorated in innumerable ways and used for a variety of purposes. Among other things they were used by chemists for powders, pills and ointments, as coffins for infants, as storage for hats and ribbons or as a safe haven for bridal wreaths and precious souvenirs.

The reason this handicraft is present in the valley of Frutigen today is thanks to the cottage industry that grew up to produce one of the smallest boxes, the matchbox. These matchboxes were made to hold the first yellow phosphorus matches between 1855 and 1910.

The museum shows in a fascinating way, the machines and tools used by the original creators of “Shingle” and “Chip-wood” boxes. There is also a large collection of original antique boxes, which gives the visitor a

good impression of the variety of shapes, sizes and many purposes they were used for. There is also an exhibition of new boxes that have been made in the area but decorated by artists from various parts of the world”. Unquote.

The museum is in four parts:

- Working tools – a display of tools, jigs, cutters used by the workers before machinery.
- Collection of a variety of historic handmade boxes from the area in many shapes, sizes and applications, some plain and practical, some with decoration and artwork.
- Collection from round the world of old and new boxes, most with quality finishes and some with beautiful artwork.
- The showroom and shop. This is a ubiquitous feature at every place of interest tourists visit and skilfully designed to extract many Swiss Francs from your pocket.

Some of the artwork and decorative carving is primitive and homely with simple pictures of traditional themes, while some lids were elaborately carved and further decorated and painted with delicate artwork. The joints and lacing varied from copper rivets to lacing threaded from plant roots and sometimes contrived into decorative plaits.

(continues next month...)