



< Toy Windmill interior - on display at the braai

# Crosscut

Newsletter of the Witwatersrand Woodworkers' Association  
PO Box 411346, Craighall, 2024

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Go to [www.wwa.org.za](http://www.wwa.org.za) for back issues of Crosscut.

**Next General Club Meeting on Wednesday, the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012 from 18h00 at the WWA clubhouse at REEA. Repairing veneered finishes.**

**Next Turner's monthly meeting is on Monday, the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 18h00 at the WWA clubhouse at REEA. Off-centre turning by Dries. Wood of the month – Chinese elm.**

## News

### Turner's Meeting (December 2011)

Gregor Heidermann gave us an update on the status at REEA and welcomed the WWA's support to date. He said that REEA were proud to be associated with the WWA. REEA presently has a shortfall of about R40k per month and they are looking for ways to make this up. Contributions and ideas from the WWA will be welcome. Go to [www.reaa.org.za](http://www.reaa.org.za) for more information.

John Speedy presented the "Taming of the skew" where he discussed the best sharpening angles and shapes for skew chisels. He gave some hints on the use and demonstrated the skew on some spindle turning examples. Boerewors rolls were supplied.

### Main Club Meetings

**December bring and braai:** There were tools for sale as well as a tool quiz, which was probably too difficult for most people – only Tom Howden managed to get most of the answers correct, as one would expect as he is in the antique tools business. Perhaps a multiple-choice quiz would have been better.

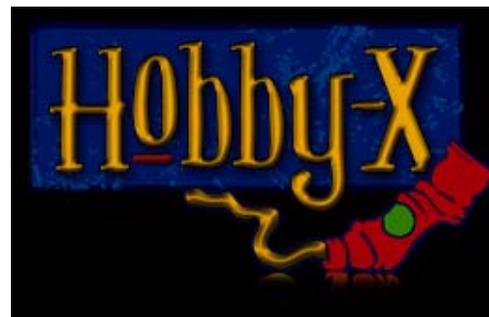
**January Meeting:** Martin Roussow who is the training manager for Vermont Sales demonstrated their new Multi-angle Drill bits and a range of auger bits designed for use with power drills. The Multi-angle bits challenge the assumption that holes need to be straight. These bits can drill around corners and make slots, as Martin demonstrated. They are made of carbon steel, so nails are not tolerated as was demonstrated when Martin hit a nail. Martin can be contacted on 011-314-7711 or [martin@vermontsales.co.za](mailto:martin@vermontsales.co.za) Vermont offer a range of training courses on their products which we will be exploring in future.

Vermont also now represent Triton in South Africa, having taken the agency over from Bantam Trading. They carry a limited range of Triton tools at present, and provide full spares back up for Triton as well as the other products they sell. (Previously, Triton Australia was taken over by a large tools conglomerate, which then went bankrupt. Triton then went into limbo for some time, but it has been resurrected, hopefully to continue with the innovative products that we have come to expect.)



### Club Notices:

**Hobby-X** is at the Dome, Northgate, from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2012 – 1<sup>st</sup> March is the trade day. The WWA will take part in Hobby-X in the same way as previous years. Please volunteer at the next meeting for a turning demo slot or to look after the stand.



**Club house.** We were given notice with a letter dated the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 by REEA that our lease for the clubhouse will terminate at the end of March 2012, so we are on the look-out for new premises. As you may know, we are unusual amongst the woodworking clubs in having our own workshop, so we can't just meet anywhere. We need a place where we can keep our machines and benches. Ideally, a venue that has a store-room where we can store our equipment would be ideal. Then we can move it out into the meeting area for demonstrations and workshops. The meeting area should accommodate at least 40 people for a demonstration or talk. Our present schedule is 2 formal meetings and 4 informal workshops per month – a total of about 20 hours per month. We cannot afford a commercial rental without a large increase in our subscriptions. Also, the area would be idle most of the time, so some sort of sharing arrangement for the meeting area would be preferred. We would like to continue with the present way the club operates, but if need be, we can make changes.

The committee is exploring all alternatives, so all suggestions and participation from members are welcome. If you have any suggestions on how the club should operate or on premises, please contact a member of the committee. You may be expected to do a bit of following up of any opportunities to the point where they become real before the committee will become involved.



**Newco Power Tools** have launched a new

Divar 55 Plunge Circular Saw with a Rail System to their range. The system can be viewed on

<http://www.newcopowertools.co.za/index.php/woodster-power-tools/circular-saw/model-divar-55.html>

Members can win this saw by visiting the website [www.newcopowertools.co.za](http://www.newcopowertools.co.za) Newco donated a prize at the braai and have also contacted the Home Handyman, Hardware Retailer and DIY Trade News to bring out the work that the WWA is doing for Charity.

#### For Sale:

**Rhodesian Teak.** Ranging from off-cuts to full lengths, flooring and decking. Commercial supplier with a large range. Off-cuts priced at R2500-per cube. Off the M14 near the Lion Park. Turn off Malibongwe near the Lion Park traffic lights at the Ball and All Golf place. Contact Mark at Sawmill Products CC on 072-128-1024 for more information.

**Saturday Workshop.** Ken Bullivant previously held the Saturday workshop at the clubhouse, but when we moved from Helpmekaar, he decided to move it to his house in Boksburg. Currently 5 of our members attend these meetings and more are welcome. The location is 13 Franklin Avenue, Comet, Boksburg on the last Saturday Monthly – possibly changing to 2nd Saturday from 09:00 to 12:00. They decide on an annual project and work throughout the year making it. They also make toys, several of which were displayed at the braai, and individual projects are discussed and problems solved. Contact Ken on 082 809 0020 if you wish to take part.

#### Please Note:

**Toymakers.** The toymakers meet on the first and third Mondays of every month, at 09h00 till 12h00 at the clubhouse. **The last toymakers meeting was 21st November and we restart on the first Monday, 6th February 2012.** Contact Eddie Marchio on 011-678-8062 or [renato AT pixie.co.za](mailto:renato@pixie.co.za) for more information.

**Wednesday Workshop.** The Wednesday evening workshops are on the first and third Wednesdays of every month, from 18h00 till 20h00. **The last meeting for 2011 was the 7<sup>th</sup> December. We resumed on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012.** Contact Winston Klein on 011-674-1513 for more information.

I'M AT HOME MOST SATURDAY MORNINGS  
FROM 9-00AM TO 12-00 NOON  
COME ALONG - BY ARRANGEMENT

- ❖ For coffee, biscuits and a chat
- ❖ No obligation to buy
- ❖ Creates good fellowship
- ❖ Word of mouth promotes sales

I have in stock a full range of Record Irwin Lathe accessories,  
Record Irwin wood turning tools, Record Irwin hand tools,  
Record metal/wood band saw blades  
AND MY OWN WELL KNOWN JIGS

**I CAN MACHINE TOOLING ACCORDING TO CLIENTS IDEAS, NEEDS AND DRAWINGS**

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Tel (011) 802 3046 or 072 989 6310

## Making a Gavel

Trevor Pope

The telephone caller needed a gavel for a present for a special occasion – a law graduation on Saturday. He was unable to source one in Gauteng, and it was now Thursday – he was running out of time. Did I know of somebody who could make one for him?

I recall that one of our club members made a lot of gavels at one stage, but at the time, I couldn't remember who. (Alistair?)

OK, perhaps I could help. What did he have in mind? He said he would drop off a sample. We agreed a price, and then he wanted a box as well. That was a lot more work, and in the time available, would be a problem. He said he would try a shop that sells decoupage supplies.

When the sample arrived, with a note, he said he wanted a dark wood. This was because the sample was painted brown – see the picture below. I cast an eye over the sample provided – it came in a presentation box marked Executive Gavel, and was bought in Israel. I suspect it was made in China. It was made from a light-coloured, lightweight wood that was spray painted a maroon/brown colour. The paint was quite brittle, as I managed to knock a few tiny chips off as I was handling the pieces in the workshop. The silver metal band was held on the handle screwing onto a threaded rod in the head. The thread was probably 6mm and had already stripped in the handle. The anvil was made from MDF, also painted. It really wasn't a functional gavel - after some active service, I expect it will look really tatty.



The only wood that I had in the right sizes and colour, without having to cut up and laminate was Transvaal Beech – Boekenhout – Faurea Saligna, which is a reddish wood with a very distinctive grain. It turns well, even if it seems to be quite abrasive. It also finishes well. Compared with the sample, it wasn't really dark enough, so I decided to stain it.

The gavel was made in three parts, the head, the handle and the anvil. I essentially reproduced the sample provided – see picture. The head and handle were dealt with as spindle turning tasks that I turned between

centres. I parted the ends down as small as I dared, and then worked off the ends by hand, which took a few minutes. The anvil was made from a square of Boekenhout, mounted onto a screw chuck, and turned to shape. The bottom was planed flat and the hole for the screw drilled into the centre. Turning the outside and top was straight forward, using light cuts to avoid tear-out. The anvil was finished with some green stick-on felt, which also hid the screw chuck hole in the bottom.

(The bottom of the sample provided was finished with felt. That's my excuse... it is actually quite functional. )

Using a dark stain, applied with a brush and then wiped off after a few minutes, the wood was darkened slightly. I would have preferred the natural wood, which would darken with age anyway.

For something that will be actively used, an oil finish is ideal as it remains flexible, doesn't chip and can be easily repaired with fresh coats of oil after years of use. Wood 10 isn't called an oil finish, but I think it is a fair approximation. Danish Oil would also be appropriate. Woodoc 10 was used over the stain, with two coats, rubbed down with steel wool, and then finished with Rustins Mahogany wax. The wax collected in the grooves and corners, which gave a slightly aged appearance.

Time spent was about 4 hours, so this wasn't a paying proposition. Some time was spent finding the wood, setting up, accurately copying the sample and finishing. Making a batch would be faster. I think once I had made a dozen or so, the whole process would be down to less than an hour per set.

The finish was dry enough by Saturday morning, despite the cold spell, for a final rub down and wax. The client was pleased with the outcome – I'm not sure he knew what to expect and was pleasantly surprised.

It was a challenge, as I hadn't made a gavel before. I need all the practice I can get in accurate spindle turning.