



# Crosscut

Journal of the Wits Woodworking Association

◀ New WWA logo, thanks to Daniel Erasmus

Secretary: Kenneth Jackson [secretary@wwa.org.za](mailto:secretary@wwa.org.za) Editor: Trevor Pope [tpope@iafrica.com](mailto:tpope@iafrica.com)  
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**Woodturners - Monday, the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026** from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop**. Peter Middleton will demonstrate turning pewter.

**Main Meeting – Wednesday, the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026** from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop**. Trevor Pope will show how to bend a thin strip of wood into a semi-circular shape.

Don't forget we have the members' free raffle for those attending meetings - prizes normally have a minimum value of R1, 000.00

## News

**Woodturners - Monday, the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026** from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop**. Richard Raffan video and discussion on how to distort wet turned bowls creatively.

The YouTube video we watched was entitled "Richard Raffan turns and microwaves green lemon scented gum." Richard showed him turning a conventional bowl, except that the wood was freshly cut. In expectation that it would shrink and warp as it dried, Richard carved a three-point foot on the bottom, so that it would remain stable after drying.



The video can be found here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqhLd3xVpGM>

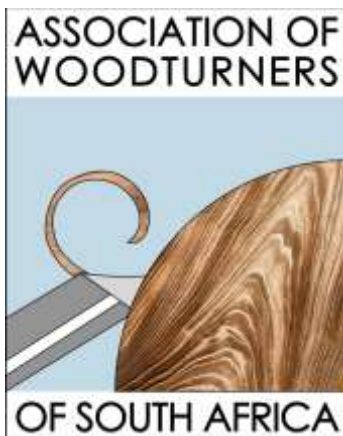
We explored some examples of using the shrinkage of wet wood to our advantage.

**Main Meeting – Wednesday, the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026** from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop**. Trevor Pope showed some spoon carving tools that he bought on Temu amongst other places. Temu tools are good starter tools, where you can try out a tool to see whether it suits your way of working without spending a fortune. However, the quality of the steel and the designs often don't match brand name tools. If you wish to modify a tool to try a new technique, using a Temu sourced tool can be a starting point, without sacrificing good quality tool. Trevor showed how he put a new, larger handle onto a hook knife to make it easier to use for hollowing out a spoon or bowl. The new handle was

described in detail in the October 2025 Crosscut. In use the larger handle gives much better control over the hollowing process. Although the blade seems flimsy, it has proved strong enough for hollowing with the increased pressure from the longer handle. This picture shows the final handled tool, with the tool's original handle shown for comparison.



## Calendar of Events for 2026



**AWSA Annual Symposium – 2026** – this will be held from 03-05 October 2026 at the New Hope School, Menlyn, Pretoria.

Visit [www.awsa.org.za](http://www.awsa.org.za) to see registration information when it becomes available later in the year.

**Reminder** – New WWA Account number with FNB – **63026931287** – please add this to your beneficiaries list. Please make sure that your payment can be identified by adding your **name**, perhaps cell number and **reason for payment**. Annotations such as “annual subs” or “WWA shirt” without your name are not helpful – Anesh will not be able to trace your payment. Please note that the **Nedbank account has been closed**.

### Access times for **Made in Workshop** for WWA members :

**MiW** access control for WWA members – all current paid-up members who have attended a meeting have been issued with a bar code sticker to be used to gain access. Please remember to bring your bar code, so you aren't delayed at the entrance.

**MiW** times for WWA members are as follows

Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 9AM to 12AM. However please take note of the following: WWA members CANNOT just arrive at **MiW** and use machines unless they have booked them with **MiW**. This refers to the bookable machines such as the panel saw, thicknesser/planer, drum sander, spindle moulder as well as CNC machines of any kind. This applies only to the woodworking machines. The other machines require the purchase of a membership at the monthly (30 day) rate – which is a good rate anyhow. Machines such as the bandsaw and the Triton router table need no booking. Henry also requires that all the major machines may only be used if the WWA member is familiar and fully understands the importance of the correct and safe use of these machines. Speak to Graham regarding training and qualification to use machines.

**MiW** is a **Maker Space**, which means that members are able access the machines which are included in the list above. Access to the other machines and facilities is subject to additional fees as mentioned above. While **MiW** will provide assistance and training where necessary, members are responsible for providing materials and performing the work themselves. Members need to be skilled and competent to use the facilities to do the work. For example, if you wish to use a CNC machine, you will need to manually program the tool path on the machine or import it from a design tool that generates the tool path for you. There may be a steep learning curve, but that is part of the challenge.

Bookings can be made during office hours of 8h00 to 17h00, weekdays by contacting one of these numbers:  
Henry – 083-269 9505; Josh – 083-768 7853; or Trenton – 081-365 6039

## Schedule for Regular Events

1. **Show & Tell** meetings are held at Hardware Centre every Friday Morning at 09:30. All WWA members welcome. Contact Eugene on 0824953394 or [eugene@antlerfin.co.za](mailto:eugene@antlerfin.co.za)

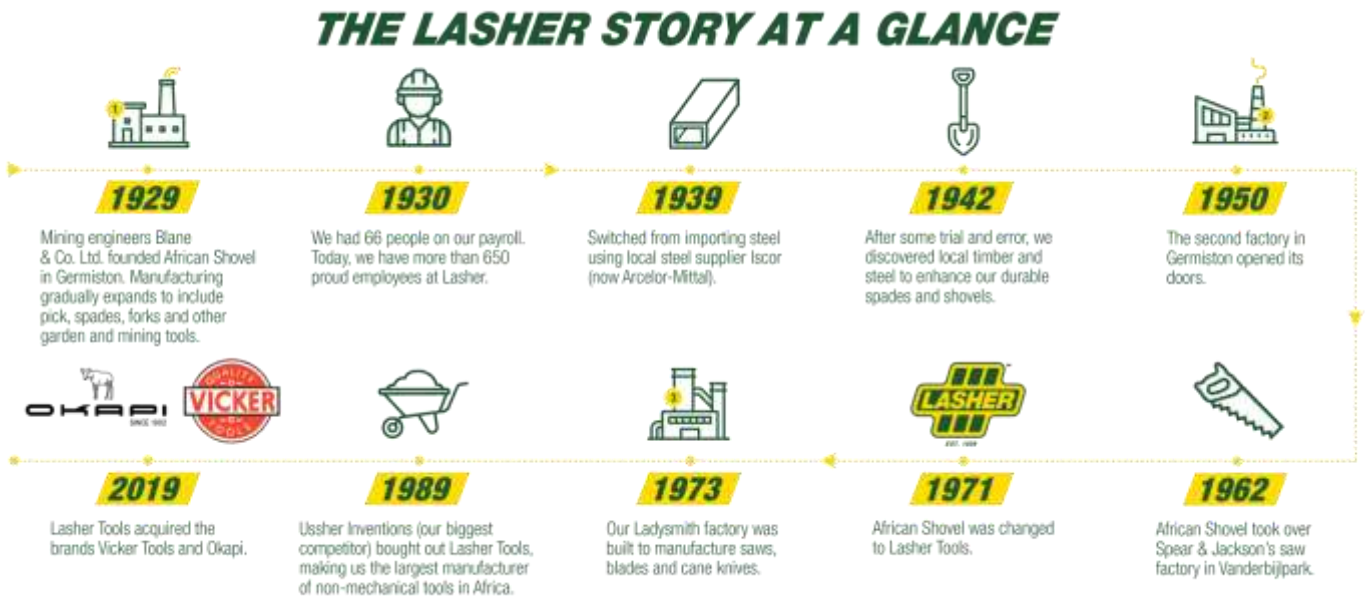
This list is subject to change, so please consult your *Crosscut* each month for any updates.



## Lasher Tools

You are probably familiar with Lasher's range of tools, mostly locally manufactured. In the days of most tools coming from the Far East, this is something to be celebrated. They employ more than 600 people at their Germiston and Wadeville factories. They make a range of woodworking tools that are respectable quality. They offer 18 different handsaws, some with wooden handles that are good quality – I have three that I use regularly.

This diagram shows their history in South Africa.



Go to [www.lasher.co.za](http://www.lasher.co.za) for more information. Their web site lists over 400 products. They are regular donors to the WWA Toys for Charity function.

## Tail Vises

Trevor Pope

The tail vise and the face vise probably date back to medieval times. The Lost Art press book *Ingenious Mechanics* by Christopher Schwartz has some drawings of early examples. The book can be found here, and there is a free .pdf download for those who are impoverished and/or impatient.

<https://lostartpress.com/collections/books/products/ingenious-mechanicks>

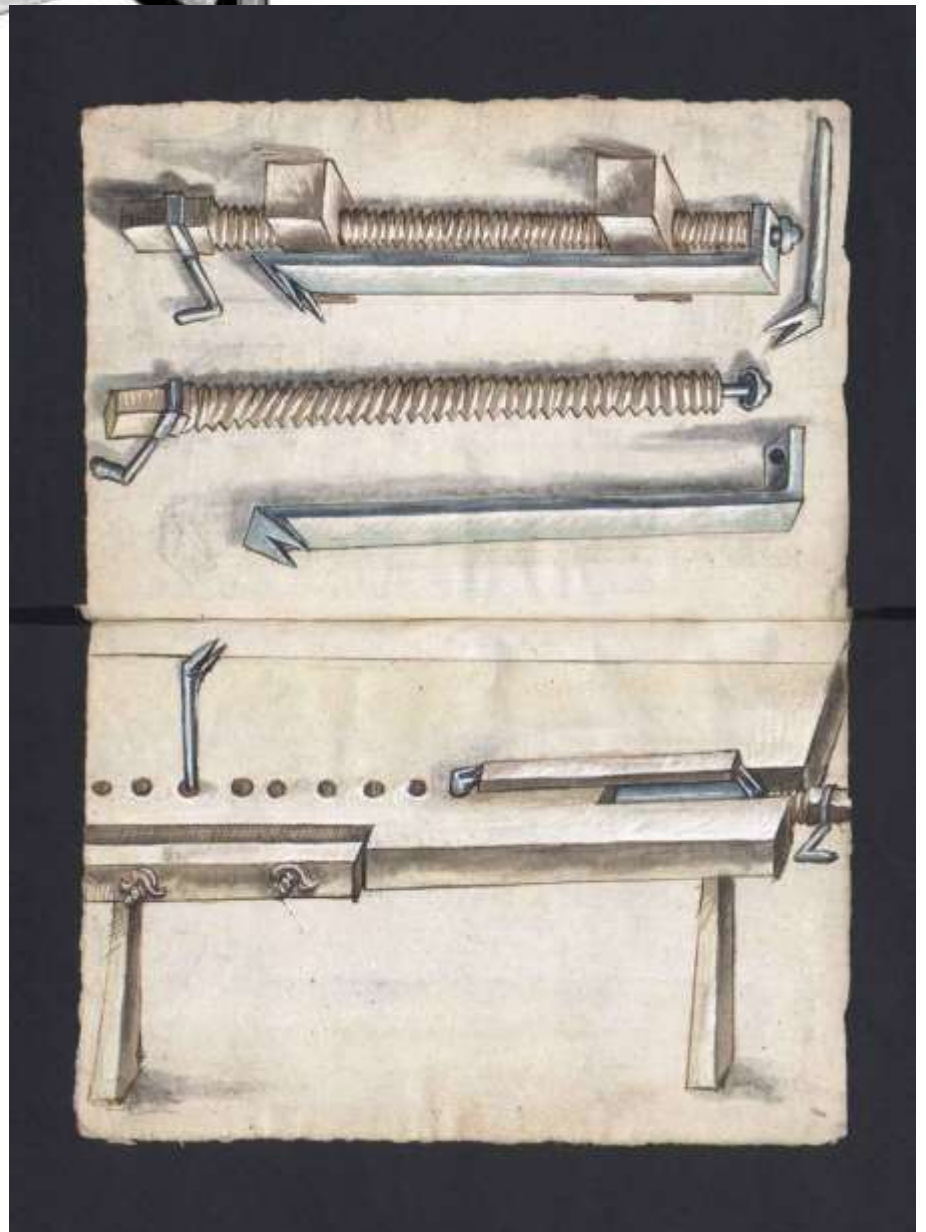


This is a modern European workbench with both a face vise (on the left) and the tail vise (on the right). You can see a row of dog holes along the front, to allow different lengths of boards to be clamped on the bench top between two dogs.

This drawing is from a codex written by Martin Löffelholz in 1505. It shows a tail vise, with black-smith made hardware and a wooden screw and socket. (See page 124)

The strange object with the two points is a planing stop that corresponds to the two points on the sliding part of the tail vice mechanism. This is used to clamp a workpiece as shown in the lower part of the picture.

If you want one, you'll have to make friends with a blacksmith. The book describes the woodworking parts of making one.



Shown below is a modern replica of the tail vise as described in chapter 9 (page 136). This shows how the ancient hardware can be implemented as a modern tail vise. The screw engages in the thread of the left-hand block. The right-hand block just supports the screw. Turning the bar rotates the thread and moves the L-shaped iron bracket with the dog sticking up.

