



Crosscut – November 2025

Crosscut

Journal of the Wits Woodworking Association

◀ Toys made by Selwyn Jackson.

Secretary: Kenneth Jackson secretary@wwa.org.za Editor: Trevor Pope tpope@iafrica.com
All written content and opinions are those of the editor, unless stated, and are human generated. © Copyright reserved. Go to www.wwa.org.za for back issues of Crosscut.

Next meetings – Woodturners – Monday, 3rd of November 2025 from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop** – Appreciating bottoms – designs for the bases of turned pieces. Demonstration by Trevor Pope.

Main Club meeting – Wednesday, 12th November 2025 from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop** – Router jigs.

Triton router table and accessories on auction with a reserve price of R1500-.

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 – Woodturners – Monday, 6th October 2025 from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop** – Judging the design of turned artwork – a video on how to assess turned pieces by Tomislav Tomasic. Tom showed a pair of bowls made from *Hardekool* – *Combretum Imberbe*.



Main Club meeting – Wednesday, 8th October 2025 from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop** – Using a tracksaw. Tracksaws have become commonplace tools, particularly useful for breaking down sheet goods into component parts. Graham showed how to make and use a guide for a common hand-held circular saw (also known as a Skilsaw). Starting with a straight edge to define the initial straight cut, Graham showed how to make a saw track to suit your own model of saw.



Mr Woodturner has moved from Blairgowrie to 137 Alberts Road, Newlands 2192 - not far from where we had our workshop in Albertskroon and where Tom had his antique shop.

Mr Woodturner

Calendar of Events for the remainder of 2025

Toy-makers' Braai Saturday, 22nd November 2025.

This will follow the same format at previous years. Please make as many toys as you can to donate to the three charities that we support. You should have received a separate email with the details of the event. Please submit your booking using the link sent in the email. You will also be able to book and pay in person at the November club meetings.



Metabo bandsaw raffle – There are still tickets available - please see the email sent by the secretary on the 14th September for details of how to enter. The draw for the raffle will be at the braai, but you don't need to be present to win.

To enter the raffle, please make your payment into our FNB account using your Name followed by the word "Metabo" as a reference, and then submit your entry details using the following Google Forms link:

<https://forms.gle/QV4zud5qTLStqfb76>

Summer Challenge – Postponed to the Main club meeting at **MIW** on the 11th February, 2026. A competition to make beforehand and bring a wooden item for the kitchen. This can be turned or "flat-work" – cutting boards, spoons, rolling pins, salad bowls, pepper-mills, and trivets are examples of things you can make. Bring and braai. More details to follow.



These are the suppliers that donated to the 2024 braai. Please patronise them. If you can mention that you are from WWA and appreciated their donation, they will appreciate it.

CONTRIBUTING SUPPLIERS 2024

Supplier		
ANDROWARE (Blacksmith)	Häfele South Africa	Prosono International
Asax Agencies	Hamilton Brushware	Richem CC
CCL	HP Will	Robert Sorby
CGR Agencies	Lasher Tools	Skillcraft Agencies (INGCO)
Creative Turning	Maple Street Timbers	Spear & Jackson (ECLIPSE)
Eco Timbers	MATUS & Hi-KOKI	Spectra Spray
FEW	Metabo Power Tools	Sprayon
FIRST CUT	MITCO Tool Company	Stevens & Co (Ryobi)
Genkem	Pepper Mills for Africa	Vermont Sales
Gedore Tools	Power Tool Repairs Cape Town	Upat SA

"Established in 1987 ASAX Agencies are specialists in precision tooling and machinery for the woodworking and aluminium industries. Our commitment to quality, innovation, and precision engineering has made us a trusted partner. ASAX Service centre offers high precision sharpening, manufacturing, re-tipping of all types of woodworking tools."

Woodworking Association of Pretoria – Wood and Craft Expo –

27 to 30 November 2025 – the usual venue.



Hardware Centre Summer

Expo – Saturday, 29 November 2025, 8h00 to 14h00 – corner of Malibongwe and Rocky, Ferndale, Randburg.

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. Second Saturday of month at 9h00 at **Made in Workshop** – Herman – all things turning related – 083 631 0501 [hermanpotgieteresq AT gmail.com](mailto:hermanpotgieteresq@gmail.com)
2. **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

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



Track saws etc

Festool first introduced a tracksaw in 1963. The current Festool designs date back to 1981. Now, most power tool manufacturers offer one. There is a range of models on the market to meet both professional and hobbyist needs. The Festool seems to be the best for professional use, albeit at a price.

Less expensive options can be found from some reputable brands, Makita, DeWalt, Hikoki, Metabo, Bosch, Milwaukee, etc. There are also both corded and cordless models.

At the bottom of the price range of plunge-cut/ track saws there are Woodstar (R6600-), (shown on the right), Adendorf (R4000-), Ryobi (R3800-) and Einhell (R2400- + rails @R1500-) - These look quite similar, so they probably all come from the same factory.

I have the Woodstar which is fine for the occasional use I put it to. I did have a problem with shavings jamming up in the housing when ripping. This is due to the long fibrous shavings that are inherent to rip cuts.

Comparing the Woodstar and the Einhell you can see that they are similar – the base plate seems to be the same. The Einhell includes a parallel ripping guide. I made one for my Woodstar from some aluminium angle and threaded rods.

As one may expect, not much is interchangeable between manufacturers. Some of the tracks can be used with different models, and the common blade size is 165mm, giving a 55mm depth of cut.

For those with a hand-held circular saw that is not a track saw – Graham showed how to make a saw guide to match your saw's width. Using a straight edge guide to define the initial straight cut, Graham showed how to make a saw track to suit your own model. This video shows how to do this



<https://www.thisoldhouse.com/tools/21016152/how-to-build-a-homemade-track-saw>

A downside of this shop-made guide is the reduced maximum cutting depth possible. Most plunge-cut saws have a maximum cutting depth of 55mm, so you will lose 16mm or 19mm depending on the material you used for your guide. For most sheet goods this won't matter. Kitchen work tops might be too thick.

An important use for a track saw is cutting up sheet goods such as plywood, chip board and MDF. The sheet of material rests on trestles, or a sacrificial sheet of material. The saw track is clamped onto the sheet with the guide edge lining up exactly with the line to be cut. The best track saws are plunge cut saws so the blade is only exposed when the cut is started. At the end of the cut the blade is safely retracted back into the housing.

If you need additional rails for your saw, it is important to confirm that the new rails fit to your existing rails, and the base of the saw fits onto the new rail. There are a number of variations on the market. The best rails are at least 1400mm long, allowing you to cut across a 1220mm sheet of plywood without needing to join rails. Only two 1400mm rails are needed to cut the 2440 length of a standard plywood sheet.

Experience has shown that care is needed when joining rails to get a straight edge. The connectors are not inherently very accurate, even on the best models, so minimising the number of joins is best. The picture on the right shows the single connector supplied for joining two Woodstar rails. From experience using my Woodstar rails, I know that I must check the two rails are aligned using a straight edge.



The better rails use two joining connectors for reduced flex. Graham suggests using a separate straight edge to confirm that the joined rails are aligned before making a cut.

It is quite possible to make your own connectors from bar stock. If you are comfortable working with mild steel, you can file, drill and tap them to fit. You can make them as long as you wish to improve the alignment. Here is an Instructables link to make two-part connectors that can be tightened without marking the soft aluminium of the rails. <https://www.instructables.com/DIY-and-Better-Festool-Rail-Connectors/>

The clamps supplied with tracks vary somewhat in quality. Some are rather slow and flimsy, like the ones that came with my Woodstar. They work OK but if I was to use the saw more, I would look for some aftermarket quick action clamps. Be sure to check that the clamps fit your guide rails. The key measurements are the width of the base of the clamp and opening of the slots on the underside of the guide rails. They are not all the same.

When buying an additional rail, check if connectors are included. Connectors are extra in some cases and can be expensive for what they are. (The Makita SP6000K guide rail connector set is R580- in addition to the extra rail, length 1400mm, at R870-. The Metabo guide rails and connectors are also sold separately.) If there are two slots on the bottom of the rail, then two connectors are better at keeping the rails properly aligned.



Be aware that the variety of saw bases, rails and clamps make buying off a web site riskier – you are reliant on the descriptions given and these are not always clear. When buying from a retailer, if you can, take your saw and rails along to check that they fit the accessories.