



October 2008

Crosscut

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

Norwegian stave-church near Oslo.

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Editor: Trevor Pope ([tpope AT iafrica.com](mailto:tpope@iafrica.com)). All written content and opinions are those of the editor, unless stated. © Copyright reserved. Go to <http://mysite.wweb.co.za/residents/tpope/homepage.html> for back issues of *Crosscut*.

Next General Club Meeting on Wednesday, the 8th October 2008 from 18h00 at the WWA clubhouse at REEA. 'Timber Preservation in South Africa' by Angus Currie. Angus will talk about the size of the industry that pre-treats of commercial timber. He will explain why timber is treated, the chemicals used with the advantages and disadvantages of each, preservation versus timber protection, and legal issues, such as the ban of some preservatives due to toxic environmental effects.

Next Turner's monthly meeting is on Monday, the 6th October 2008 at 18h00 at the WWA clubhouse at REEA. Peter Middleton will be demonstrating the turning of a table leg and how to reproduce the remaining legs so that they look the same. He will show to duplicate without a copy lathe. If Ari's talk on segmented turning has inspired you to do a segmented piece, bring it show off at the meeting

News

September General Club Meeting. Etienne Nagel (Co-editor of the Wood and Timber Times which is a trade publication for the timber and furniture trades) talked about interesting trends in the industry, mostly in automation of manufacturing processes. He showed pictures of large stationary machines such as combined CNC saws and routers used to handle sheets of chipboard or MDF. These can machine both sides of a panel at once. These machines can produce the components for a cabinet, ready to glue-up at the rate of more than one cabinet per minute. Peter Middleton demonstrated the use of a biscuit jointer to assemble a chipboard carcass for a bed-side cabinet.

September Turner's Meeting. Ari Mansur gave an exceptionally well prepared presentation on "segmental turning" illustrated with both AV slides and a full range of sample "work in progress" pieces, semi-finished and finished articles. Chris van Heeswijk talked about the Ash-leafed Maple (Box Elder) and showed some items made from this wood.

The new "Bockwurst Roll" eats were very popular with 70% participation. We will definitely be continuing this line at future meetings.

From the committee:

Spring Challenge is on Saturday, the 27th Sept 2008 (the 24th is the Heritage Day public holiday)

The turners will stage an exhibition of hollow forms with a prize for the best one judged on the day. There will also be a turning challenge and a bring-and-braai, starting from 11h00 onwards. The challenge on the day will be to turn a mushroom in an allocated time so you must bring the tools you would use to turn a mushroom and a R10- entry fee.

Rosh Hashanah. Our special greeting to our Jewish friends and fellow woodworkers at this time. May your New Year be filled with peace, warmth and happiness and many sweet moments in the company of good friends and family.

New Members Day. Karen Fairfield writes: "The Club has embarked on a membership campaign to grow our member numbers by 50%. To achieve this we need the help of all our members. A new and prospective member event has been planned for Saturday, 4th October 2008 at the Clubhouse from 10h00 to 14h00. There will be representatives from the Toy makers, Turners and Cabinet Makers Guilds to demonstrate or show off the unlimited potential of wood. Participants will get to use a variety of tools and make up a birdfeeder, cutting board, candle holder or trinket box. Enjoy a light lunch and get a feel for what the club has to offer. The cost for prospective members is R50.00. Newly enrolled paid up WWA members may attend free of charge. Booking is essential as numbers will be limited. To book or for more information contact Karen Fairfield on 083 879 6729 or klfairfield@telkomsa.net.

Calling all woodwork enthusiasts

Join the Wits Woodworkers for a morning woodworking workshop at our Craighall Park clubhouse where you will have the choice to make one of the following :

Birdfeeder
Cutting board
Candle holder
Trinket box

You don't have to be an expert, with guidance you will get to use a router, drill, driver and sander.

When: Saturday 4th October, from 10h00 to 14h00.

Where : WWA Club house
REEA Care Centre
Corner Richmond & Marlborough Ave

Spread the message we are on the hunt for new members.....

Pretoria Club Annual show. This will take place at the Lions Club off Atterbury Road on Saturday, the 18th October. Take the Atterbury Road off-ramp from the N1 Pietersburg highway, turn to the West and left at the first robot. The Lions club building can be seen from Atterbury Road. There will be the usual exhibition of turnings, furniture, tools and machine tools.

Annual Braai. This is scheduled for Saturday, the 29th November at Greenside High School. More details to follow. Tickets will be sold by Glenn the same as last year R25 for members and R35 for non members

Subscriptions. Annual subscriptions are overdue. If you haven't paid, you should get a personalized reminder soon. If you stop receiving the Crosscut, perhaps it is because you haven't paid up, unless you changed your address and forgot to tell the secretary.

Mentors. Several members offered themselves as mentors, and members are encouraged to contact them to gain the benefit of their experience. A list will be posted on the notice board, together with contact details.

Please Note:

Toymakers. The toymakers meet on the first and third Mondays of every month, at 09h00 till 12h00 at the clubhouse. Contact Eddie Marchio on (011) 678-8062 or 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. Contact Winston Klein on (011) 674-1513 for more information.

For Sale:

Powermatic Lathe Model 90, cast iron frame with stand. 3 phase motor. 1,3 meter swing and ± 900mm between centres R500-00 Contact Schalk van Niekerk 082 443 4977 (It is superfluous to his needs and he requires the space.)

Veritas planes: No 6 fore plane, No 4 smooth plane, Medium shoulder plane, Low angle block plane, Bull nose plane

Machinery: Delta scroll saw, Festool dts 400 in a Systainer with R 1000 worth of sand paper, Tormek Supergrind 2000, SAM bench mortising chisel.

All reasonable offers will be considered including swaps for woodworking tools of equal value and quality. I have need for a good quality mitre saw and table saw fence. Contact Thomas Murphy (Boksburg) on 0716863550 or mrphy.thomas@yahoo.co.uk

I have some **new pumps (small hand)** which are designed to measure small quantities of liquid very accurately. These are up for grabs if any one cares to phone me. They could be useful for mixing chemicals such as stains, thinners etc. Contact Harold Theunissen (alias Mister Crusty) 072 554 8092 or 011 447 3334

Architectural Joinery

These pictures were taken at the Norwegian Heritage Museum in Oslo, of buildings transported from various sites and re-erected in the grounds of the museum. They are preserved as they were built. The museum restores and maintains the buildings on the site.

This first picture shows a two storey store-house, made entirely from wood. It dates from the 1700s and was typical of rural buildings, where wood was widely available. The upper level is built with a characteristic overhang. There is an

enclosed porch on the front with stairs up to the upper level. Such a store house would have been used to store food for the winter. It is raised above the ground, away from the snow.



The second picture shows a close up of the corner. You can see that stone footings are used, but then everything above that is made of wood. The base is made from very substantial beams that interlock at the corners with the upright columns. The joints and ends all slope outwards, to shed water and snow. The undercut posts fit into sockets in the beams resting on top of them. The walls are made from beams that are halved and hewed straight with an axe. Each is notched top and bottom, so that it interlocks with beams below and above. Where necessary, wooden pegs were used to fasten the joints together. The corner pillars are carved, as are the door posts.

The horizontal beams making up the walls interlock. Even though they may have been closely fitted at the time, they may not have been fully dry, so the gaps were probably filled with dried mud mixed with straw, to keep the weather out.

The roof on the building in the picture below is made of turf, which is an effective insulator. In the foreground is a vegetable garden with a scarecrow.



The next picture shows the detail of the roof at the passage between the parts of the building. Under the turf, you can see two layers of birch bark that are used for water proofing. The silver birch (*Betula alba* or *Betula pendula*) grows widely in Norwegian forests. The bark was probably stripped off while the tree was green, so that it was still flexible and could be flattened without cracking.



Silver Birch also had other uses – the bark was reputed to have medicinal properties, and the sap was used in drinks. The oil extracted from the leaves had a variety of uses, and contains some salicylic acid (the active ingredient in aspirin), so there was probably some foundation in the claims. The inner bark is edible and was used as a famine food. The wood is good for furniture, paper making, and charcoal.

The last picture shows the process of hewing beams from solid pine boles. The beam in the front has notches cut to a uniform depth. These are then cut away using a side axe. The beam at the back shows this in progress. The one in the middle is completed. These beams are intended for use in restoring a building surrounded by scaffolding in the background. The beams used for the walls of the turf-roofed building were probably made in this way too.



Usually, the wood used for building such as the walls was not seasoned. So allowances had to be made for shrinkage. This could be a problem if vertical timber columns are used in addition to the horizontal members making up the wall, so this needs to be allowed for in the design. (As wood dries, it shrinks more across the grain than lengthways, so the cross pieces can be expected to shrink more the vertical column.)

Silver Birch reference: http://www.ibiblio.org/pfaf/cgi-bin/arr_html?Betula+pendula