

The Cutting Edge

November 2011

42 Courtney St Nth. Melbourne Vic 3051

From The New President Damien Wright

It is an honour and privilege to accept this task and I look forward to the year ahead. I wish to thank the outgoing committee in particular Will Matthysen who carried out his role as president with commitment, intelligence, patience and creativity. Will's stewardship has been a very important one for the VWA. He took up the responsibility in difficult times and has steered us toward calm waters.

I extend my thanks to all the members of the committee of management. John Monument, Libby O'Brien, Stephen Farquhar, Marday Enasse, Rob Allan and Carl Lutz. Well done and thank you one and all for your tireless work.

Thanks also to Meg Allan, John Diorieties, Adam Stewart and Carl Lutz all employees of the VWA. You are of great value to the VWA and your unique talents and hard work are noted and very much appreciated. It is fantastic to see the school such a hive of activity.

Thanks also to all past presidents and committee members for their guidance and generosity. Through thick and thin we are still here.



Sculpture: Damien Wright



The Berwick Table

Welcome to the new committee members. Andrew Potocnik, Ken Free, Mark Wakeham and Jerome Wielens. Your willingness to lend a hand is the key to the VWA's future.

We stand as a well resourced transparent organization run by people who are passionate about wood, wood work and the need for community.

New President's report cont

At present we successfully manage a studio workshop dedicated to providing an opportunity for woodworkers to begin a professional practice. We have a fantastic new web-site. We run a school of woodcraft, which is over subscribed with students. We have an exhibition program, which is going from strength to strength. We publish an online bimonthly newsletter giving all members an opportunity to let us know what they are up to. And we have a gathering every two months. We administer a group public liability insurance scheme which gives us a secure financial platform. Through discipline and good management all of these initiatives are running at cost or better.

With a view to maintaining the hard won stability of the organization we have the opportunity to reposition ourselves within the woodworking fraternity. We need to be just as relevant to the professional as to the student and hobbyist. I see the breadth of our appeal as a great strength not a



Matched Coobah slabs for a coffee table

weakness. I hope to see students of woodcraft, design and apprentices alike gravitate to our organization. Students can see us as a point of connection to a vibrant and exciting practice.

I would like to connect the VWA to other clubs, craft organizations and universities. I believe this will improve the opportunities for both professional and amateur makers and lead to innovation in an ever evolving craft.

We need to reconnect with professional woodworkers and they need to reconnect with us. At the same time we are an open resource for those coming at woodwork at any point in their lives and for almost any reason. The hobbyist, professional, student, cabinetmaker, designer – all should be able to get something



Coobah Coffee Table, Damien Wright

out of the VWA and put something in. What we are about is wood. And what we support, respect and celebrate is material, the process, the people and the outcomes of working with wood.

New President's report cont

After a very successful display at the Timber and Working With Wood show we are looking to expand our exhibition program. This is an exciting and very demanding undertaking. We will need support to do this and I am trusting that it is out there. It has been some years since the VWA has put on a major independent exhibition. Our house is in order. Lets see if it is possible. We will be increasing the visibility of the meeting program. The numbers are improving at our meetings. This coming year we have a great line up of informative and entertaining gatherings planed. The working title for our mid winter meeting is *Burn Wood*. Bring the kids.

The newsletter is going from strength to strength. Thanks again George for taking on this huge job. Everyone can help out here by providing copy and images of their work. Put your work out there. It is a nonjudgmental supportive environment. Go on, publish!

When I set my sights on establishing a career as a wood worker the VWA welcomed me and my ambitions. It offered me encouragement, exhibition opportunities, friendships and professional connections as well as shared affinity with material and process. Some of us need to fashion wood for a living, others for fun. But what a thing to share! In a media interview focusing on a sideboard I had designed and made, the journalist said 'This is stunning'. Then asked 'Who did you get to make it?' My answer, 'I did of course'. When the journalist said 'But why would you do that?' I put on the smuggest smile I could and said, 'If only you knew.'

Damien

From The Outgoing President William Matthysen



Over the past year the Management Committee began the task of rebuilding VWA. A year ago we had a decline in our core woodworker membership. The problem I believe was a lack of relevance to people interested in woodwork. Providing affordable insurance is an important service to members but we are more than just insurance brokers. Ultimately, the role of the VWA is to foster and encourage woodwork in all its forms, and create a sense of community where we can enrich and share our knowledge with other members. It is encouraging that longstanding members returning to VWA. Even more rewarding is seeing new members joining up and getting involved. The VWA can do much to assist in developing the careers of designer makers.

Some achievements:

- Thanks to George for taking on the role of resurrecting "*The Cutting Edge*" which had been dormant for three years.
- Our website is now easier to navigate. Thank you Stephen for updating its content and structure. We look forward to members providing a biography and images of their best work to include in our Members' Portfolio.
- We have improved our finances by cutting wasteful practices and unnecessary expenses. Thanks to the work of the committee and the treasurer.

Outgoing President's report cont

- Our meetings this year included:
 - a visit to the workshop of Mark Tuckey Furniture
 - a visit to the joint workshop of contemporary furniture maker Adam Stewart and guitar maker Phil Carson Crickmore
 - a talk by Stephen Farquhar on *Woodwork and the Web*
 - a presentation by Andrew Potocnik on *Woodturning*.

Turnout at these interesting meetings continues to be a bit low. I hope next year's meetings programme will attract greater numbers of new and younger members.



- This is the second year running that we have held the VWA Exhibition at the Timber and Working with Wood Show. It was a great success. The People's Choice Award, for the best piece shown, was once again very popular. Many thanks to John Monument and Libby O'Brien for their hard work organising our *Across the Board* exhibit at the show.
- For the first time, the woodwork classes are fully booked and are making a modest profit. This will enable VWA to upgrade woodworking machinery and other equipment over time. Our thanks go to the tutors Carl Lutz, John Diorites and Adam Stewart, and to Meg Allan for organizing the student enrolments.
- The VWA insurance Flood Rebate Scheme was well subscribed. We received many calls and emails from our flood affected members expressing their appreciation for our waiving of their membership fees for the year.
- Our Wood Design Centre acquired two new tenants this year, namely Russell and Alex, both recent graduates from the RMIT Furniture Design School. They are producing excellent work, and rapidly acquiring the experience necessary to become effective designer makers. We hope to attract two new graduates in the next few months.

Finally, I am standing down as president of VWA. I believe it is healthy to have a rotation of committee members taking on new roles, and contributing their skills in different areas. I wish to thank the committee for their support over the past year, it has been an enjoyable experience. I would be pleased to stay on and assist the new committee in the coming year. Best wishes to all in VWA.

Will Matthysen



Andrew Potocnik - A Fox in the Workshop *William Matthysen*

The August general meeting was held at the Meat Market Conference Room. There was a good rollup with many visitors from other woodwork and wood turning clubs attending.



Andrew Potocnik has been a member of the VWA for as far back as I can remember. Always cheerful and effervescent with enthusiasm for the latest project. Andrew spoke with passion about his involvement in woodwork, his influences, and some examples of his work. Andrew told his audience how he developed a love for woodwork at an early age, completing woodwork courses at high school, and later graduating as a woodcraft teacher. Andrew has always been more interested in wood as a creative and expressive medium, rather than a technical medium. He remembers a teacher from his school days who encouraged him to use salvaged timber. From this teacher he learnt to appreciate wood for its intrinsic colour, grain and smell. Andrew gets enormous enjoyment from exploring these sensory qualities of the material, and loves to expose and reveal this inherent beauty. As a teacher Andrew now gets great enjoyment from passing on to his students his discovery of this sense of wonder.

A converted garage serves as Andrew's home workshop, and the first images of his presentation gave us a video walkthrough

of his workshop. The philosopher Isaiah Berlin once made the playful distinction between essentially two creative types, namely the hedgehog who knows one big thing and the fox who knows many things. I think Andrew is definitely the latter, drawing his influences from a variety of sources. A view of his workshop with a myriad of projects at various stages of completion seemed to confirm the impression. The hedgehog sees the world from the viewpoint of one overarching perspective, while the fox realizes that the world is far too complex for a single static view. Pin-boards in Andrew's workshop are covered with photos taken on his numerous travels. Scribbled notes and sketches serve as the germ of ideas to be developed later into completed pieces.



August general meeting continued

Andrew looks for the narrative thread weaving through his projects that he can communicate to others. He shares his thoughts mainly by writing articles for local and international magazines. He is a regular contributor to the *Australian Wood Review*. Andrew has travelled to 27 different countries in America, Asia and Africa. He documents these trips with numerous photos of everyday life together with the objects and practices typical of the area,

Andrew's work is now represented in galleries and collections through Australia and the U.S. including the Del Mano in LA and Derek Bencomo, Honolulu. He participates in many collaborative events such as completing his version of a five sided 'turned' form made by American turner Harvey Fein. Similar forms were given to other prominent turners and then the completed pieces assembled and exhibited. Andrew's piece went through several transformations and refinements before he was satisfied with the result. Much of his work involves delicate carved flutes to visually lift the piece and a finely turned insert rim to define the opening of a vessel. To achieve his typically flawless finish Andrew works his way through all the grits of paper finally applying a thin coat of polyurethane to show up the timber grain and figure to its best effect. He sometimes uses other techniques such as pyrography and sandblasting to contrast with the wood grain.



In his own words, Andrew's aim is to "celebrate wood as a living material that grows around us, as a material that can give voice to ideas conjured in our minds, as a material that says something about our culture and world". The VWA is very fortunate to have Andrew as a member.

Will Matthysen

From The Editor

In this final edition for 2011 we have messages from the outgoing and incoming VWA Presidents. You will notice a couple of member advertisements. I encourage you to use *The Cutting Edge* for your advertisements which are free to members. A couple of other notices sent to the editor were for events that were over before publication. Apologies for that. There are still no takers for "Show & Tell" so I make good my promise to show some of my own work. I made a new set of balustrades for the verandah of my beach/holiday house. They are made of solid ironbark. George Wright editor@vwa.org.au

Show & Tell



George Wright's new ironbark balustrades during installation

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Location
13 Dec	Christmas Drinks & Student Exhibition	WDC@ Meat Market
Feb 21	Will Goodsir of Goodsir and Otto P/L	5 Parer Street, Reservoir

TWWS Exhibition & Competition – *Across The Board*

Winners of the People's Choice award:

First Prize Yanni Rigos
\$1,000.00



Second Prize
Randall Kohn
\$750.00



Third Prize
Byron Miatke
\$500.00



To see other entries in *Across The Board* go to this address:

<http://www.vwa.org.au/index.php/exhibitions/>

**Next VWA General Meeting
7:30pm, Feb 21, 2012
At the workshop of Will Goodsir
5 Parer St, Reservoir**

Goodsir and Otto P/L is a joinery and furniture company established in Nov. 2010. Wil Goodsir and Andrew Otto have worked together as independent sole practioners on various projects over the past 19 years. Wil is a registered architect and Andrew is a qualified pattern maker.

G & O is creating a unique business by combining traditional woodcraft skills with contemporary manufacturing and computer aided design. This relationship requires the differences between the individual and the mass produced to be resolved.

Building networks with industry and outsourcing manufacturing offers G&O the resources to deliver projects far greater in complexity than our workshop alone could achieve. We are building the human resources required to piece together the jigsaw of parts made by today's machines.

At the same time we search for opportunities to keep our furniture making skills and love of wood alive.

We are at 5 Parer Steet,
Reservoir



VWA School of Woodcraft

Syllabus for 2012

Evening Classes Timetable: 10 Sessions per Term

Monday Class	Term 1 Jan 30 – Apr 2	Term 2 Apr 16 – Jun 18	Tutor – John Diorietes
6.30pm – 9.30pm	Term 3 Jul 16 – Sept 17	Term 4 Oct 8 – Dec 10	
Tuesday Class	Term 1 Jan 31 – Apr 3	Term 2 Apr 17 – Jun 19	Tutor – John Diorietes
6.30pm – 9.30pm	Term 3 Jul 17– Sept 18	Term 4 Oct 9 – Dec 11	
Wednesday Class	Term 1 Feb 1 – Apr 4	Term 2 Apr 18 – Jun 20	Tutor – Adam Stewart
6.30pm – 9.30pm	Term 3 Jul 18 – Sept 19	Term 4 Oct 10 – Dec 12	
Thursday Class	Term 1 Feb 2 – Apr 5	Term 2 Apr 19 – Jun 21	Tutor – Carl Lutz
6.30pm – 9.30pm	Term 3 Jul 19 – Sept 20	Term 4 Oct 11– Dec 13	

Daytime Classes Timetable: 10 Sessions per Term

Saturday Class	Term 1 Jan 28 – Mar 31	Term 2 Apr 14 – Jun 16	Tutor – John Diorietes
9.00am – 12 noon	Term 3 Jul 14 – Sept 15	Term 4 Oct 6 – Dec 8	
Saturday Class	Term 1 Jan 28 – Mar 31	Term 2 Apr 14 – Jun 16	Tutor – TBD
1.30pm – 4.30pm	Term 3 Jul 14 – Sept 15	Term 4 Oct 6 – Dec 8	

Fees: \$580 per term (\$550 for current VWA members)*

*If not sure on current member status, contact Meg Allan (contact details below)

Please note that fees do not include the cost of materials such as timber

VWA Membership is compulsory for all students attending the VWA School of Woodcraft

Full payment is required prior to commencement of each term

Venue: VWA School of Woodcraft

Tyrone St

North Melbourne

Street parking is usually available within close proximity to the school

Enrolment forms will be sent via email or post once the class has been booked

Bookings: Meg Allan

Course Co-ordinator VWA School of Woodcraft

Phone 03 5776 2178

email to school@vwa.org.au

The 2012 VWA Committee

<i>President</i>	Damien Wright
<i>Vice President</i>	John Monument
<i>Secretary</i>	Stephen Farquhar
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rob Allan
<i>Committee :</i>	Libby O'Brien
	William Matthysen
	Marday Ennassee
	Carl Lutz
	Andrew Potocnik
	Ken Free
	Mark Wakeham
	Jerome Wielens

VWA Website <http://www.vwa.org.au/>

Advertisement: Router For Sale.

HITACHI M12 SA 2 Router

I paid \$375 for this new machine which I had poorly researched and does not suit my requirements. The router has had less than 3 minutes use.

Asking price \$275 plus postage.

Bill Bell. Koonwarra. Phone 03 5664 2430

Advertisement: Workshop Space Available in Reservoir

I currently share a 500 m² workshop with two others who are moving to a bigger space.

In November our lease comes up for renewal and I am looking for people to share the space.

It has three phase power and great natural light.

To view pictures of it look up my website: www.roseadora.com
Call me on my mobile: 0418 136 147



IQ of a Fence Post

Wood Art by
Ken Free

10th November –
13th December

Opening: Sun 13th Nov 2.30
With Artist Talk by Ken Free



66 Princes H/Way, Stratford
Ph 5145 6790 Thurs-Mon 10-4pm
www.stratfordcourthouse.com.au



Stormwood Christmas Meeting Giveaway

It's a Merry Christmas Time at the VWA !

Come along to the Wood Design Centre at the Meat Market, North Melbourne

on Tuesday December 13th from 7.30pm

for the final Members meeting of 2011 and share some festive cheer

Arrive early and it could be a very merry Christmas for you

The beautiful Stormwood will be divvied out for members to take away to their workshops

You can be Santa to make and create an exhibition piece

Those taking some timber will be have plenty of time to produce a piece for the special STORMWOOD section of a new 2012 exhibition

The timber comes from storm-fallen trees in Melbourne's parks

It includes air dried wide boards of English Elm and other exotic species

See you from 6 o'clock at the Wood Design Centre

It could be the best Christmas gift for all good wood girls and boys.

Ho Ho Ho, get on your sleigh!





Silas is on his way!

MARQUETRY WORKSHOPS

Combining great technical virtuosity with an engaging sense of whimsy, Silas Kopf is widely regarded as one of the leading exponents of his craft. His work is held in both public and private collections, but perhaps just as important is his experience as a teacher and mentor.

In 2012 he will be visiting Australia, and will be holding one weekend workshop in Victoria, with David Emery's furniture studio in Kyneton as the venue.

Located just one hour north of Melbourne CBD on the Calder Highway, the township of Kyneton gives great opportunities to those who choose to travel each day, or to stay in one of the many accommodation options available. The town is renowned for the variety of restaurants on offer, and those who choose to stay over will be able to relive the day's activities over a meal with friends new or old.

The dates for Kyneton are 3rd and 4th of March 2012, with an evening session on Friday 2nd also planned. The cost for the workshop is \$395.00, including lunch and refreshments, with numbers limited to twelve participants.

Places are expected to fill fast, so please make contact with expressions of interest asap, indicating whether you might need accommodation organised.

Visit www.silaskopf.com for more information about Silas.

Email to shohdo@bigpond.com, or through the contact page at www.davidemery-furnituremaker.com.au Telephone enquires to 03 5422 3026