



The Cutting Edge

August 2012

42 Courtney St Nth. Melbourne Vic 3051

From The President Damien Wright

To the committee and staff thank you all very much for your fantastic contribution to the VWA. Since my last report the VWA has hosted several extremely successful General Meeting events.

In February we joined Wil Goodsir and Andrew Otto at their studio in [Reservoir](#) and were treated to a wonderful illustrated lecture.

In early May we honored the extraordinary Vic Wood and Jane La Scala. celebrating their massive contributions to woodwork and to the VWA. A full report in this newsletter. In late May Bonhula Yunupingu visited Melbourne from his home in East Arnhem land. He gave us an opportunity to talk and think about wood work in a new and challenging way. Members attending that meeting will have a vivid memory of Bonhula demonstrating the Gara (spear) using one of the Galpul (spear throwers) he made from Gadayka - the timber of his home lands.

In June the five tenants of the VWA workshop in the Meat Market Nth Melbourne presented their working lives to our members. We hope to make this "Meet The Tenants" event a regular feature of our calendar. Overall the meetings have been very well attended. We have recognised and celebrated our evolution as an organisation, engaged our core constituency and brought to light ways in which wood work connects across design and creative practice. In my humble view the only down side in the meeting program was the poor attendance at the tenants meeting. We should review and revisit this particular meeting. I wonder if is just too cold for a mid winter meeting?

The tenants need to be encouraged to invite their professional and family connections to this and other VWA events. Members share a right and obligation to make themselves familiar with the work and practices of the tenants. An attraction of VWA tenancy is the ready development of connections to the woodworking fraternity – tenants become the foundation for the next generation of drivers of the VWA.

The School and workshop continue to flourish. And they continue to take a lions share of the VWA's time and effort.

In the past months there have been some appointments and changes in personnel.

Carl Lutz has retired from his role as head of maintenance for the workshop. We are indebted to Carl for his contributions over the years. Carl has brought a lifetime of skill to the VWA. His knowledge of woodwork its tools and processes is peerless. Carl remains on as a Tutor at the School and we offer him our thanks and best wishes.

Thomas Skinner has taken the job of teacher's aid.

Another significant change has been the resignation from the committee of Ken Free. Ken has served the VWA tirelessly and his contribution will be missed.

Libby O'Brien and John Monument continue to work on our upcoming exhibition program. Details of the exhibitions are in this Newsletter.

..... Damien Wright

The Bonhula Yunupingu Visit



Vic Wood: a celebration

VWA General Meeting. May 2012



The last May meeting was by all accounts a most significant get together for the VWA. It was a slide presentation by Vic Wood of his career as a professional wood turner for over 30 years, and an acknowledgement of his award of the Order of Australia for services to the arts and crafts and to the Victorian Woodworkers Association. The meeting was held at a function room at the North Melbourne Town Hall, and attended by over 80 members and guests. Many had travelled considerable distances to attend, and many were students who had been taught by Vic in the 1970's.



VWA president, Damien Wright welcomed all the guests and members, and took this opportunity to confer a Life Membership on Jane La Scala, who had served as secretary from 1994 to 2003. Unfortunately, Jane could not attend on the night. Jane's contribution over this period cannot be overestimated; it was a period when the VWA was a vibrant organization which held large annual exhibitions in the main space of the then Meat Market Craft Centre, and attracted entries from prominent makers nationwide. Damien then introduced Stephen Hughes, Stephen has known Vic for over thirty years, was an ex-student of Vic's at the Melbourne State College, and also demonstrated wood turning with Vic on various occasions. Stephen's introduction for Vic has been included in full.



Introduction For Vic Wood: Stephen Hughes

*Hello everyone,
I am honoured to have been asked to introduce and say a few words about tonight's guest speaker; Vic Wood a man we have all come to*

admire as a genuine gentleman and a man who's reputation as one of Australia's most respected Woodworkers leaves one feeling privileged to know him. Achieving such an accolade may appear to have come easily for Vic; as watching him do a demo and create masterpieces on the lathe seems to be almost reflex actions. But like all great wizards of wood the magic he creates is not an illusion but based on hard work and experience. Every demo Vic presents comes from the craftsman within him who scrupulously and diligently pursues perfection. And this equates to hours of preparation and care to ensure each lesson or demo he gives run as smoothly as they do. Another of the reasons Vic is so admired is because of his humble approach to sharing his consummate skills as an Artisan. His willingness to generously share his years of experience and skills to Woodturning groups and individuals has been a well worn path to all manner of turning and woodworking events. And until he retired recently ran a successful business called Woodturning Workshops from his home address.

His speciality might be wood-turning but in the world of Wood his knowledge has more depth than the Sydney Harbour and his influence more reach than the Darling River. In fact you would be hard pushed to go anywhere in the world and not find a Woodworker of any repute that has not seen him turn or at least be heard saying the wished they had. Many here know him beyond this legendary reputation and know Vic as a charming gentleman and a friend who loves nothing more than to share his cheeky moustache topped smile and a down to earth chat about anything topical like health issues (and Vic has a fair level of experience with those too) but more likely than not to hear him chatting about footy or tennis news. And just this year it was wonderful news indeed to be chatted about as on January 28th 2012 after some Fifty two years after graduating as and practising as a Teacher and the last Thirty years or more as a professional wood turner

that Vic Wood was duly honoured on the Australia Day honour list. Vic received a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to arts and crafts in Australia as an artisan and this was done through the Victorian Woodworkers Association. To clarify how his nomination came about I will try to give some insight into some of the events and people who helped. Please forgive me if I forget to mention a name or two as this is only a brief account and I am going mainly by what I have been told. How do you actually receive an Order of Australia?

I was not completely sure myself so I Googled it and here is a short description I found to enlighten those not in the know. The Order of Australia is the pre-eminent way Australians recognise the achievements and service of their fellow citizens. Nominations to the Order of Australia come directly from the community: either individuals or groups. An official nomination process must be followed and in Vic's case this relied on the hard work of several people. Firstly and most importantly I want to acknowledge his beautiful and enduring wife, Bev Wood. Bev has been Vic's soul mate since they met at High School back in the Mid Nineteen Fifties. And a few years after graduating they married in 1960. Bev gave birth to their two wonderful sons Steve and then Jeff who are both now married with families of their own. While looking after her own family including several Grandchildren for some time now she has entertained and feed countless travelling 'Woodies' that Vic obligingly welcomes into their home. Bev also helped keep Vic's Woodturning Workshops running smoothly. From keeping the books to washing endless numbers of wood chip infested pockets and socks. Then there was the phone calls, the home phone was also the business number and Bev answered calls for all sorts of Wood related things and at all hours of the day and even into the night as Woodworkers would ring in desperate need; asking for anything from a bottle of Friction polish to a hour or two with her husband, thank goodness she knew they only wanted to see him turn in the shed. I think we would all agree that Bev also deserves an OAM or at least recognition for Vic receiving his. Seriously though it was with Bev's help that all the information about Vic's career, efforts and achievements was filed and sorted and passed to those who helped process all the paper work involved in his nomination. The whole idea of getting a nomination started way back in early 2002 at the third Turnaround Woodturning event on Phillip Island with Guilio Marcolongo, Bruce Talbot and others trying to nut-out a way to truly thank Vic for all his tireless help. In fact it was for the third Turnaround that Guilio came up with the concept of presenting Vic with a trophy in recognition of his amazing efforts. Guilio created the trophy as a surprise for Vic and it was in the shape of a tennis racket which he respectfully carved and turned from one piece of Huon Pine and Richard Raffan turned some tennis balls to go with it and the trophy had an award plate attached. The Award read: "To Vic Wood for Services to Woodturning" and the tennis racket and balls were a visual analogy that symbolised Vic's other lifelong devotion; coaching and playing tennis. As usual Guilio covered all bases and asked me to make a piece for Bev. So thinking of how lovingly she has supported and helped Vic I designed a fiddle back red gum hollow form with a carved rim depicting an 'Escher' like image of one hand helping shape another. I thought it would be fitting to make this a collaborative work and sort the skills of Australia's finest netsuke carver Susan Wraight and also a close friend of Vic and Bev. Like so many other woodworkers Susan too has been influenced by Vic and she was delighted to carve the 'hands' in English box wood.

It was a small but beautiful piece and wonderfully symbolised Bev's lifelong support of Vic. Guilio was keen to do something even more prestigious to acknowledge Vic's lifelong devotion to supporting woodworkers and he encouraged others to think of ways to do this. The idea was born. It was Lewis Harper who was at the Turnaround event and a long time member of the Victorian Woodworkers Association who suggested getting Vic nominated

for an Order of Australia. He and Judy Wheeler approached Bev Wood and she agreed to help and forwarded them a copy of Vic's C.V. At this stage Lewis Harper asked me if I could use this information to write up a nomination. I agreed to help but I got lost in all the required documentation and after a few years of no progress from me Lewis and Judy decided to get the nomination process rolling again. It was then that Jane La Scala, Secretary of the VWA for many years, stepped in and helped complete the initial work in sorting the documentation for Vic's nomination. Finally it was Judy Wheeler who did all the detailing of completing and submitting the nomination form on behalf of the Victorian Woodworkers Association. The end result was Vic receiving his Medal of Order of Australia. So please join me now in thanking all those who helped this happen for Vic particularly Lewis, Judy and Jane. Receiving his OAM was a fitting honour for Vic who truly is the quintessential educator. Over recent years he has also been fondly referred to as 'the Grandfather of Australian Woodturning.' A title that reflects not only his long standing commitment to teaching and practising his craft but the fact he has been a pioneer and the most influential of all his peers in the field of woodturning. Besides this he has just the right amount of grey hair now to look the part.

So Vic, please let me say on behalf of all woodworkers you have encouraged and supported here in Australia and around the world; 'thank you so much'.

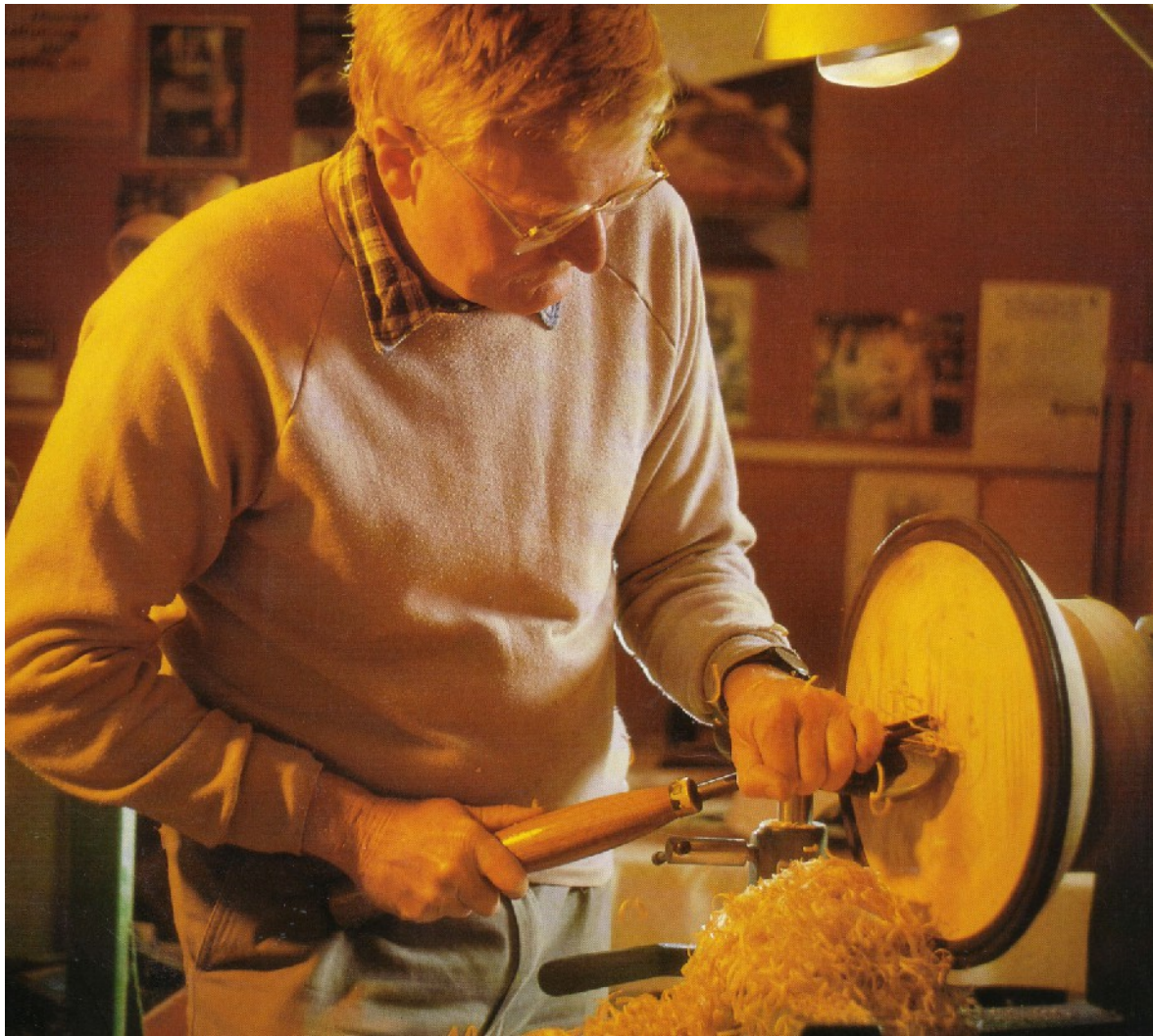
The VWA wishes to thank Stephen for his generous introduction.



Vic then took the floor, and took the audience through a life time of work. Some two hundred images through two projectors covered his output. The work varied in scale, from exquisitely made jewellery in silver and wood made before Vic took to woodwork proper, to his monumental wall mural, and to everything in between. Subsequent conversations with Vic brought out the human dimension, the teaching, mentoring and demonstrating, the emergence of fine woodcraft in the 70's and 80's and the

formation of the VWA, and then the challenges of setting up as a self-employed wood turner. What follows is a brief account of those conversations.

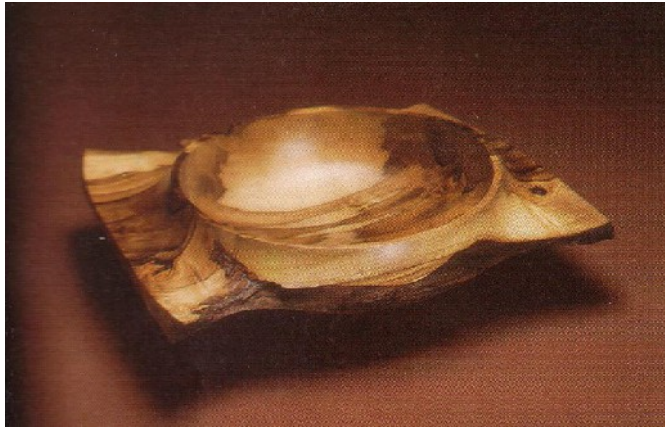
Recent members to the VWA might not realize that the association was founded in 1979, at a period of resurgence of interest in the crafts. Melbourne hosted the first National Wood Conference, organized by the Crafts Council of Australia. The conference was attended by several prominent designer makers of the day, including John Makepeace, Michael Cooper and Stephen Hogbin. The conference was also accompanied by an exhibition in fine woodwork including works by Allan West and Clinton Greenwood. Vic Wood was largely responsible for the establishment of the Victorian Woodworkers Association at this time, and served as its inaugural President.



From 1970 to 1982 Vic Wood was a Lecturer in Woodcraft at the Melbourne State College, where he taught 4th year students who were to major in Craft. It was during this period that Vic provided a lasting influence on a generation of woodworkers who were later to become designers and makers in their own right. It was also the first institution where woodcraft was taught as an art and design subject as opposed to a trade.

In 1983 Vic set off on his own as a self employed wood turner. This was to be his full time occupation for the next 30 years. His new commitments meant he had little time left to devote to voluntary organizations, and stood down as president of the VWA.

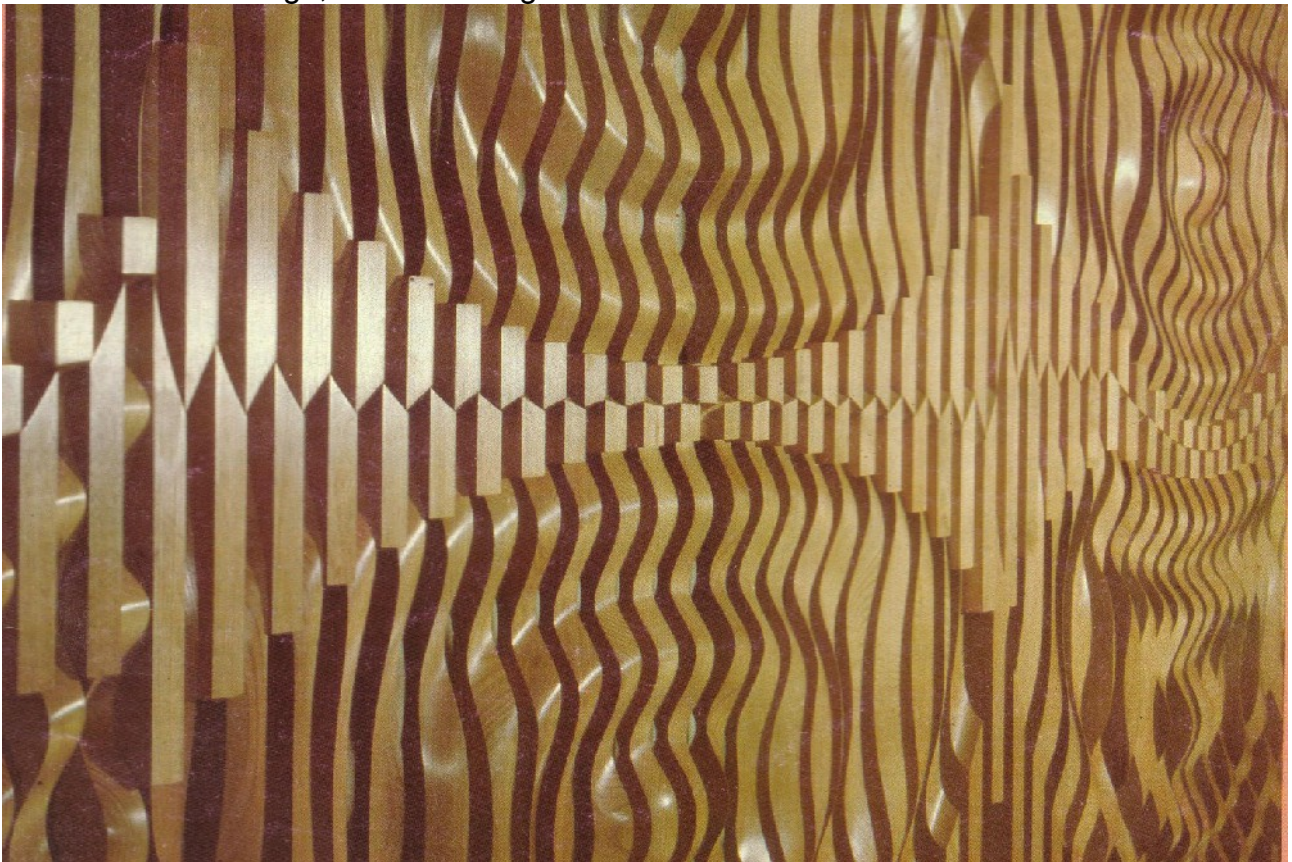
Bruce Dobbie ran a woodturning supply shop in Burwood, and suggested to Vic to start giving woodturning lessons two days a week to two students at a time. It was to be intensive hands-on tuition covering turning between centres, bowl turning, and making a turned lidded container. A maximum of two students were taught at a time, and this ensured a high degree of individual tuition for the students. This was to be a very successful formula, which Vic continued until 2009.



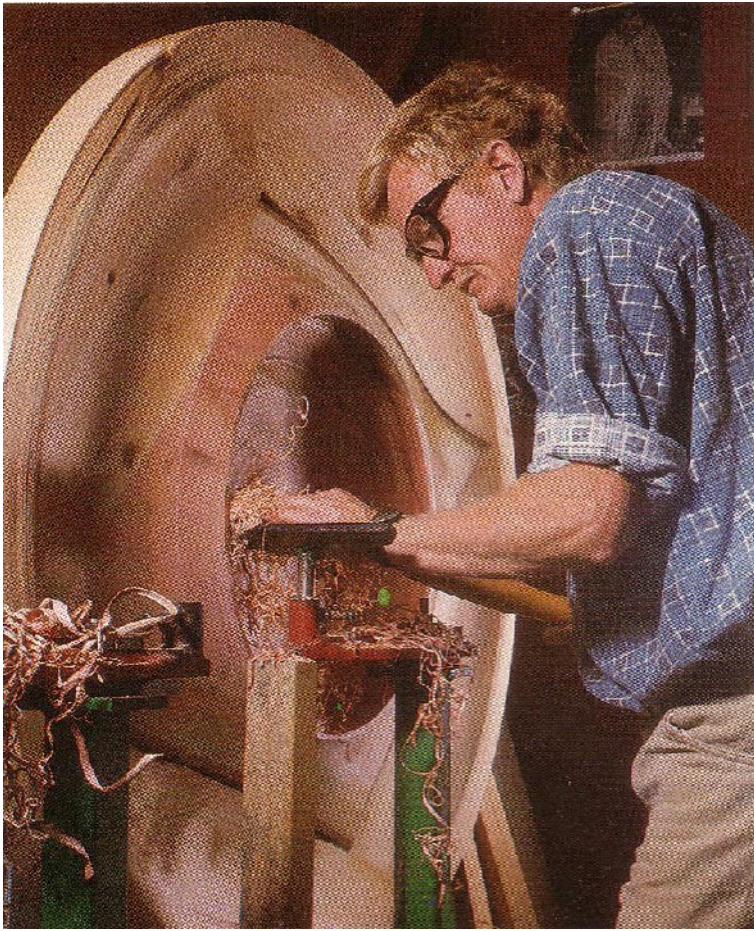
During this time Vic also undertook many private wood turning commissions, and perfected his technique of turning square format objects. His signature pieces were his wane edged bowls and off-centre lidded containers.

Often he took this technique to a monumental scale. The largest of which is undoubtedly the mural designed and made in 1983-4 by Vic for the Housing Industry Association

conference room in Jolimont. The mural was to be fourteen and a half metres wide by two and a half metres high, and is the largest timber mural in Australia.



Its construction consists of sixteen large turned panels, each panel consisting of 26 Victorian ash boards about 1200x100x50mm clamped and bolted to a 1.8m diameter faceplate, and then turned to the desired profile. The individual boards of turned panels were then disassembled and then reassembled in a staggered fashion to produce a complex three dimensional pattern.



A large part of Vic's career involved judging, lecturing and demonstrating wood turning at various Wood Shows and Symposiums in Australia, New Zealand, U.K., Canada and the U.S.A. Vic has been a fixture for many years at the Doncaster Woodwork Festival, the National Woodturning Competition, and the Timber and Working with Wood Show in Australia, to name a few; and the Utah Woodturning Symposium at the invitation of Dale Nish where Vic demonstrated for 11 years. In addition to his teaching and demonstrating activities, Vic also found the time to write 56 articles for the magazine *English Woodturning*, where he acted as a tireless promoter of Australian woodwork. At a community level Vic was always interested in supporting local wood work clubs, always ready to encourage and inspire.



Vic Wood's teaching philosophy was quite simple, and could be summed up as follows: *'share everything, have nothing to hide, and have no secrets; for ultimately it is in giving that you receive'*. And it has been through adhering to this, together with his considerable talent and experience that we have all benefitted. Vic always seemed to bring out the best in people, always positive, always constructive. Above all, Vic demonstrated to younger generation of woodworkers, that through sticking to your principles and doing the best you can, it is possible to have a rewarding career in woodcraft.

..... William Mathysen

High-Rise Timber Building

CASE STUDY

Lease has unlocked a new era for the construction industry by introducing a more efficient and environment-friendly construction process that has not been undertaken in Australia before. Already proven successful in Europe for more than a decade, the company will build the first high rise apartment building in Australia and the tallest in the world using Cross Laminated Timber (CLT).

Sustainability and a lowered environmental footprint have been the key drivers behind the wide use of engineered timber, referred to as Cross Laminated Timber (CLT), in Europe for more than a decade. A building material that has been around for centuries, timber, enables the permanent capture of carbon, making them essentially 'carbon sinks'.

Using innovative technology, timber panels undergo a process whereby they are stacked at right angles and bonded together over their entire surface and then hydraulically pressed. This process delivers a viable alternative to concrete and steel that can withstand the same pressure as prefabricated concrete. Being designed and produced in a factory

World's Tallest Timber Building to Rise in MELBOURNE



A new 10 level building is going up in Victoria Harbour, Melbourne constructed from timber rather than the usual reinforced concrete.

Read about this Cross Laminated Timber (CTL) material in the online [Wood & Panel](#) magazine. The relevant article begins on page 14 of the magazine. Be patient – it takes a little time to load the magazine reader application into your browser.

Check out some technical details of Cross Laminated Timber on this [WoodSolutions](#) website.

The Age of Saturday, Aug 4 has an article entitled [up Green sentiment going](#) in the Domain section p10.

The 2012 VWA Committee

President Damien Wright

Vice President John Monument

Secretary Stephen Farquhar

Treasurer Rob Allan

Committee : Libby O'Brien

William Matthysen

Marday Ennassee

Andrew Potocnik

Mark Wakeham

Jerome Wielens

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

CALL FOR ENTRIES

VWA woodworking exhibitions and competitions

ACROSS THE BOARD 2012



and



STORMWOOD



This year the VWA will be showcasing members' work via two exhibitions

ACROSS THE BOARD 2012 and **STORMWOOD**

at the VWA stand as part of the Timber & Working with Wood Show

Melbourne Showgrounds, from October 19 – 21, 2012.

Both exhibitions are open to all VWA members. All forms of fine woodwork including furniture, box making, wood turning, wood sculpture and carving will be considered. **ACROSS THE BOARD 2012** will be open to all timber types.

The **STORMWOOD** exhibition will feature the timbers that were rescued and salvaged after severe storms hit the Melbourne Botanical Gardens in 2005. These timbers have already been distributed to members so we look forward to seeing the **STORMWOOD** creations!

Applicants may submit up to three works for each exhibition. Please provide photographs or drawings and brief written description of your work, including dimensions, timbers and materials. As part of the exhibitions we will be having a digital display of the works and the making of them. We encourage participants to photograph their work as it is being made. The process is as interesting as the product. Demonstrations of woodwork and skill sharing by members will also be at the VWA stand.

There will be two major cash prizes of \$1000 and \$500 in each exhibition. **ACROSS THE BOARD 2012** winners will be based on a people's choice vote. **Stormwood** winners will be judged by three woodworking professionals.

Entry forms are available on the VWA website. For further information on **ACROSS THE BOARD 2012** and **STORMWOOD** please contact the exhibition committee at exhibitions@vwa.org.au



Wil Goodsir and Andrew Otto Some Pics from the Feb 21 meeting

Wil Goodsir



Andrew Otto

A big crowd at the presentation in the Reservoir workshop.



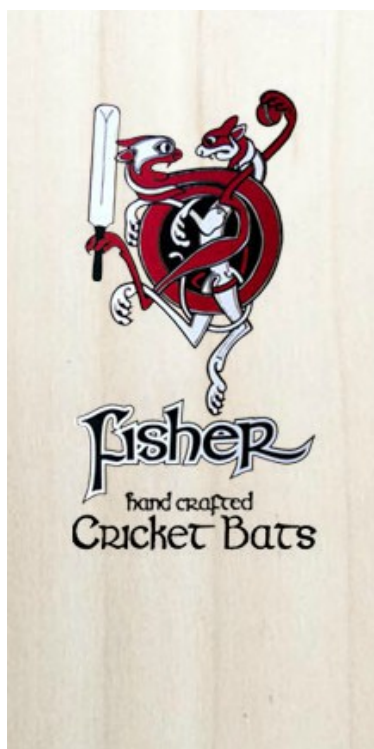
VWA Gig Guide

Next Member's Meeting

**Tues September 4th,
7:30pm**

at

**Fisher Cricket Bats
126-128 Williamstown Rd
Kingsville, Vic 3012**



Lachlan Fisher - master cricket bat maker - will guide us through his workshop in Kingsville where his bats are made.

Lachlan has worked professionally as a bat maker for 19 years and has produced over 12,000 hand made bats.

Lachlan will take us through his wonderful craft from tree to the finished cricket bat.



Tuesday October 30th

at

**Blueprint Furniture
183 Laurens Street Nth Melb.**

The Blueprint Furniture factory is housed in the old railway print works in North Melbourne. Built in the 1890s, the historic building is now stacked to the rafters with rows and rows of recycled timber. Charles Scott will guide VWA visitors through an extensive joinery which houses a giant bandsaw made in the 1920s.

Tuesday November 27th

at

**Christian Cole Furniture
5 Dairy Drive
Coburg Vic 3058**

Members will have the opportunity to meet the award winning furniture maker Christian Cole