

APRIL 2005

WOODCRAFT MATTERS

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Doncaster Daycarvers – 1

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Doncaster Daycarvers – 2

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Doncaster Daycarvers – 3

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Box Making Evening Sessions

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Box Making Afternoon Sessions

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Remember

If you miss your normal meeting you are welcome to do a "make up" by attending another group that month. Just give the group leader a call to let them know you will be coming along.

"WOOD WILL ALWAYS BE GOOD"

Well at least it was whenever Robert touched it.

That is one saying I'll remember for the rest of my life. Most of us knew Robert and I know he touched you all. I, as most of us do, still find it very hard to believe what has happened.

I will always remember his beautiful smile and the warmth he projected.

He was always helpful, simply could not do enough for you. He was very active in improving the club. Whether it was by running night classes for woodturning to raise money for the club, running accreditation nights for using the bandsaw, researching new equipment to purchase to improve the value of the club or putting up some shelves for the new library which are out in the foyer. Stuart Watson recounted to me how much effort Robert put into those shelves to get them perfectly straight and level.

Whenever he spoke I kept my mouth shut and ears open otherwise I would miss out on gaining something of value.

In a lot of ways Robert reminded me of my late father with his honesty and the way he would do what ever he could to help you.

Robert you will be missed.

Gino



Robert McNamara
Oct. 18th, 1940—Apr. 5th, 2005

Our Friend – Robert Mc Namara

This eulogy was read out during Roberts funeral Mass

Robert was born in Bairnsdale on 18th October 1940, and he had one of those great country upbringings that showed through with his warmth and friendliness. When he was 15 years old he came to Melbourne to commence his Carpentry and Joinery Apprenticeship that he completed in 1960. During this time - thanks to the matchmaking skills of Melva's brother Reg and his wife Helene - Robert met Melva at Williamstown Beach. Seeing what a bright young thing Melva was, and noticing how tall dark and handsome he was - Melva accepted Robert's invitation to the movies that night. And that's where it started - a romance that developed over three and a half years with time together only twice a year! You see, Melva was still living at home in Tutye, just up past Ouyen - and she could only come down to visit once a year, and Robert could only go and visit her once a year. Eventually they became engaged, and Melva moved down to a "live in housekeeper's" position on the other side of Melbourne. So the romance developed into a weekend courtship - not just a twice a year catch up.

On 14th April 1962 - 43 years ago on Thursday this week - Robert and Melva were married in Sunshine. They were only 21 and 22 at the time, and they took a flat in Kew for 18 months, before moving out to Park Orchards where Robert and Melva built the house they are living in today. A year later in 1964, Melva and Robert's first child Michelle was born, followed by Sharon in 1967, and Stephen in 1969. Three beautiful Children who are now all married - Michelle to Gary, Sharon to Rob, and Stephen to Sandy. Robert was also a lucky man, as he was blessed with the birth of two wonderful Grandchildren, Sean, now three years old, & Phoebe who will be one year old in June.

Robert was the most adoring of Grandfathers, and I have it on good authority that Sean may have a touch of Grandpa's woodworking genes. I hear he liked to watch Grandpa making things, and loved the noise of his hammering and drilling - so you never know, Sean may follow in his Grandpa's footsteps.

Robert's first and only thought was to provide for his family. This included their physical surroundings, and since the children have all become married he would love to work on their homes, often to the detriment of his own! He was the family emotional "rock", and if there was a crisis Robert was there to sort it out and fix it. He had a great love for Melva and his Children, and in his undemonstrative way this love also extended into his passion to help others in the community through his work, and his giving to friends and the community. The community was also part of Robert's family.

During their early marriage, Robert worked as Works Foreman with the Railways, work that included Spencer Street Subway and the Frankston Overpass.

In 1968 Robert decided to go into Technical School teaching. He applied, but quotas for training were already filled. In those days you could start teaching with no formal teacher training, providing there was a solid background of a trade or profession. On the basis of his skills he was offered a position at Ferntree Gully Tech. With the knowledge that his third child was expected, he took the brave step of accepting. A year later he secured entry to Teachers College and moved to Heidelberg Tech, then to Box Hill Tech and finally to Lilydale Tech where he spent 20 years from 1972 to 1992. During his years at Lilydale Tech Robert achieved many things. I would like to list just a few to give you an idea what an amazing and humble fellow Robert was. He was :-

- The Coordinator of Technology Studies
- Head of Department for Engineering Practices
- Member of the Management Committee
- Member of the Curriculum Committee
- Organizer and Teacher of Adult Night Classes
- Member of the Policy Making Management Committee
- Member of the Teacher Training Panel
- Housemaster
- Organizer and Compare of the School Awards Presentation
- School Sports Master for Inter and Intra School Sports

And Maintainer of all the Woodworking Machinery

As well as these work activities Robert achieved many educational qualifications, which enhanced everything he did. They were in Carpentry & Joinery, Building & Construction, Works Foreman, Scaffolding and Explosives qualifications, and a Diploma of Technical Teaching.

And did you know that in Robert's younger years he played for Footscray Seconds and for Yarraville?

Robert has been a very busy man !!!

In 1992 Robert retired from teaching – formally that is – and took up assembling and installing kitchens and general cabinet work with Wedmore Industries. He stayed with this for 2 years, and then decided to take up a sessional position at Holmesglen Tafe, teaching Wood Work to kids with special needs. His great humor and ability to get on with people made his time there really productive, both for the kids who came from all sorts of backgrounds, and for Robert.

His love of timber, and all the things that you could do with it, pervaded Robert's life. He really enjoyed making things – beautiful things – practical things – and things that worked. The gentle perfectionist is probably a good way of describing his approach.

Many of you would know about Robert's association with the International Woodcollectors Society and his club Woodcraft Manningham. Woodcraft Manningham started many years ago with the move of an organization from RMIT; at that time called "Central Woodturners;" from the city to Templestowe. Robert, along with some great friends of his, many of them here today - Stewart, Charlie, Don, Ian, Alan, Reg, Ken, Greg, Ken Barker, Ronnit, and Jack, just to name a few; really got behind this woodworking club and helped to make it one of the best in Melbourne. Robert was the current President, and had worked tirelessly to develop and grow this group that helps people develop their knowledge and skills with timber. Robert was a great teacher.

I was fortunate to be one of the amateur members of his group, where every so often at one of our meetings, he would come up to me while I was attempting to turn something on the lathe, and he would gently say " Phil, when you hold the gouge touch it to the spinning wood like this, then gently move the angle of the tool until you see the fine shavings start to spin off." It was always amazing how he could get the tools to "talk"; and if you followed his guidance the turning became so much easier.

Robert was a patient and excellent teacher and will be sadly missed by all his club members and students. I will really miss Robert and his quiet helpful ways, ways that taught me and so many of us how to enjoy creating things with our hands. We will miss his happy disposition, his great friendship and the great fellowship of which he was always a part, with all his friends.

Our dear friend Robert – Gentle – Loyal – True - Modest – Intelligent – Selfless – Caring – Considerate – Trustworthy – Compassionate – - all these things we can say of Robert. He was also a perfectionist in his work with a fine attention to detail; and he also had a great sense of humor to go along with it!

Robert, an adoring Grandpa and Father, and a loving and wonderful Husband to Melva. He will be greatly missed by everyone.

The only consolation for us all is that we now know that Robert, a reflective man of deep faith - is at Home with His Father – Our Lord and God in Heaven.

Rest in Peace Robert – and may your guiding hand which you have shared with so many of us, live on through the lives and work of all those you have touched.

Written and Compiled by Phil Newell

Robert and I through our similar interests became the very best of friends. His knowledge and skills he had gained through his years in the railways and teaching I admired.

We worked together on various jobs and Robert was always a pleasure to be around. I certainly gained a lot from his friendship.

Through watching his turning and his ability to solve problems I was inspired to try harder. I enjoyed helping him out with the different groups at the club, chatting afterwards and then getting home late occasionally. We always bounced off each other and I can never remember a cross word passing between us. His presence will certainly be missed around the club.

Stuart Watson

If wood is good so are woodworkers. They are special people no more so than our own Robert McNamara. I have had a bit to do with Robert for quite a few years with the Introduction to Woodworking courses plus on committee. I have also spent time with Robert and Melva at Down Under Turn Around. We thought that Robert was a good bloke so much so that we made him an honorary member of the Central group, and then made him work for it doing a demonstration at Maroondah. The thing that was most obvious to me is that Robert lead from the front. Would not ask anyone else to do anything that he would not do himself and he also told it like it was. I think this why he had such good support from the committee and members. I am not going to go on too long as Melva has told me before that Robert would say, "Why use 20 words when 10 will do". I would like to finish with a true story about a man dedicated to his wife. Melva was doing a French polishing course with me on a very wet, cold winter's night and turned up with a very old tin of stain, which was no good. I was asked what time does Bunnings close, I said 9, can I make a call to my husband he's home by the fire. Three quarters of an hour later Robert turns up with new tin of stain in hand.

On behalf of the Central members and Maroondah I would like to pass on our condolences to Melva and the family.

Charlie Chamberlain

From one of the Presidents men.

How things can change in a short time. Our club has been left without a President and as we have no Vice President I offered to chair the last committee meeting and fill in until the AGM. The date for the AGM will be in the next newsletter and a subscription form.

The saw and the sharpening station are in hand but will have to wait for the members who will assemble and do the training on this.

Now to the most important part of all. As a group we must have a President and a Vice President. Somebody will have to put their hand up to take on the job or we won't have a club. Please get together in your groups and talk about this, it doesn't have to be somebody who is a good turner or carver just somebody who is a good organiser. You would have the support of a great group of people who form the committee. I cannot take it on full time with my work commitments. If anyone wants to talk to me about this you can call me after hours.

Charlie Chamberlain

Demonstration night.

How to use an angle grinder to carving timber by Rod Jones.

7:30pm April 14th at our workshop.

Rod Jones will be giving a demonstration of how to safely use an angle grinder to carve timber. While this demonstration has been organized for members attending our annual carve-in all members of Manningham Woodcraft will be welcome.

Bryan H Thompson

**Active membership is the lifeblood of this club.
Have you brought a new member to the club yet?**

CENTRAL TURNERS.

MAY MEETING

PROJECT LIDDED BOXES.

For this project you will require a piece of timber (long grain) approx 120mm by 80 mm square. Bigger or small depending on the size of the box you wish to make plus extra gear such as sand-paper polish etc.

Stuart Watson.

DAY CARVERS

The smaller than normal group of seven wood carvers who attended on the second Friday in April were all taken back by the sad news of first the loss of life member Jack Jones followed by the sudden death of dedicated President Robert - both colleagues will be sorely missed.

Not surprisingly the subject of ages came up and this small group of 7 admitted to 531 years between them with Noel Strahnan claiming the title of most experienced and Brian Ludders that of youngest on the day.

Brian had another claim to fame in that he recently attended a workshop in Mount Gambier doing lime stone sculpture and his piece, a stylised head, was sold for the highest price in the subsequent blind auction of works produced. On the wood side he is still relief carving two brolgas out of a block of jelatong.

It was good to have Amy Elliot back after a long bout of shingles and she soon set to work whittling out a small bloodhound. She is looking forward, in her role as Treasurer, to the forthcoming Carve-In in May.

Others present were Ken Barker completing a rural design on a poplar box lid. Cyril's project was a stylised wooden sculpture and Noel was busy producing a pair of sassafras salad servers which he intimated were for a wedding present for a relative in the near future. Derek spent a noisy time on the band saw cutting the outline of red gum fish platter which he hopes to work on at the Carve-In while Pat Burder hovered in the background offering help and advice wherever it was needed.

Derek Borrell

Wanted

Wanted

Wanted

Articles of interest from Readers (and in particular newer members) to fill this newsletter.

Trips, trees, problems, tips & tricks, jokes, Question and Answers. Etc.

Wanted

Wanted

Wanted

WOODTURNER WAFFLE

The April meeting had about 14 people attend and a good number of those worked on the project for the night that Ian and Alan ran. The candle snuffers, there seemed to be some nice ones made and some not finished, bring them to the next meeting – 19th May, and you can finish them. The activity will be more hands on run by Stuart, lidded boxes, details elsewhere in the newsletter.

Our youngest member had a win in the raffle which he seemed to be pleased about.

On the night of the 14th April I attend a carving demonstration by Rod Jones. I was made most welcome and thank Brian for the invitation and recommend to other groups to do the same if you get the opportunity in the future.

Charlie Chamberlain



From far left Ian Hansford, Yen Ip, Ken Morrison and Allan Way.



From far left the guy with the big nose is yours truly, Stuart Watson and Ronit Freedman

Photos Courtesy of Carl Jacobs.

These are photo's are of the last committee meeting which we had to discuss what needs doing after the loss of our beloved president. Charlie Chamberlain kindly has stepped in as Caretaker President .



From Far left we have Anne Schafer Who is well hidden behind Charlie Chamberlain and Stan Smith

From the Editor.

I apologise for the lateness of this newsletter. It was a combination of work commitments, being interstate and waiting for certain materials to show up which caused the delay. Hope you understand.

Regards Gino