

The Cutting Edge

September 2005

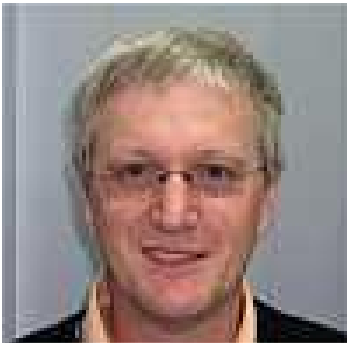
42 Courtney St Nth. Melbourne Vic 3051

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Featured this Month

Welcome to our new President
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Young Designer/Makers
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WOODWORKS 2005

2nd – 18th December

**Entries Close 31st October
(Less than 2 months)**

Opening speaker confirmed:

Mrs Terry Bracks
(More info page4)

Designer Makers confirmed:

Richard Raffan,
Evan Dunstone,
Andrew Potocnik,
Stephen Hughes,
and many more.

**Meatmarket Arts Centre,
42 Courtney St. North Melbourne.**

Contact Amanda McKay, Events & Programs
Manager: PH: (03) 9326 8553,
Email: VWA-AM@bigpond.com.au or download

VWA Monthly Meetings & Seminars

4th Tuesday of the Month – Always keep it free!

NATA

Native Australian Timbers Art

Presents

Native Tongue: The intimate language of trees

Walk through with the artists

Shop 5, 1 Exhibition Street Melbourne

Tuesday 27th September 7.30pm

Exhibitions & Events

OCTOBER



Fri 7th, Sun 9th October 10am – 6pm
Melbourne Exhibition Centre
2 Clarendon Street, Southbank, Melbourne. Adults \$15, Pensioners & Students \$10, Children under 14 yrs FREE
www.workingwithwood.com/melbourne.

Visit the VWA at Stand no. 174

2 October

Red Gum Forest to Furniture Showcase Furniture, turning, wood chop, chainsaw carving, sawmill/forest tours Mardie Gray: 03 5453 3782, Email: gfg@malleenet.net.au

October 8

Eildon & District Woodworkers Guild Inc. Eighth Annual Steam and Wood Show
The Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum, Station Street, Alexandra 3714. Max May: 03 5772 2013 Clarrie Glass: 03 5774 7513 Email: maxmaur@bigpond.com.au

October 14

Applications Close for



AWR Annual Maker Awards Competition December 2005

15–16 October

Exhibition & Sale of woodcraft, ongoing live demonstrations, high schools woodcraft competition, timber & accessories. Contact: Kath Milburn, Tel: (03) 6426 1051
Email: nwwoodies@tasmail.com
Website: www.nwwoodies.netfirms.com

29th – 30th October

Barwon Valley Woodwrights (Geelong) 15th annual woodcraft exhibition
10am-4pm, Admission \$3.00
State Government Offices Building, Crm Little Malop St & Fenwick (Melways Ref 452 A3)

29–30 October

Blue Mountains International Woodturning Symposium. 18 Demonstrators, Emu Heights
Contact Tom Fox Tel: 02 4739 2788
Contact Des Lane Tel: 02 4751 5128
Email: woodturner@pnc.com.au
Website: www.pnc.com.au/~k_j/woodturner

31 October–5 November

Jacaranda Woodcraft Exhibition
Northern Woodcraft Group
South Grafton Ex-Serviceman's Club, Wharf St
Dick White: 02 6642 5160

NOVEMBER

6 November

Redcliffe & District Woodcraft Expo
463 Oxley Ave, Redcliffe
Contact Graham Sprott: 07 3264 2626

17-20 November

Eltham Club Annual Exhibition
Eltham Community Centre, Pitt Street Eltham. Entries close 2.11.05 Contact: John Leahy on 9434 4313

DECEMBER

WOODWORKS 2005

Showcase of Australia's finest wood artists, designers and makers

2nd – 18th December
WOODWORKS 2005
Entries close 31st October.
Meatmarket Arts Centre,
42 Courtney St. North Melbourne.

Three exhibitions in one!

TOUCHWOOD, START 05 and CREATE FROM A CRATE. Proudly presented by Victorian Woodworkers Association Inc. Contact: Amanda McKay, Events and Programs Manager on (03) 9326 8553 VWA-AM@bigpond.com.au or visit our website www.vwa.org.au

**ENTRIES CLOSE
31ST OCTOBER
LESS THAN 2 MONTHS AWAY!**

ENTRY FORMS AVAILABLE NOW

President's Report

WELCOME TO OUR NEW PRESIDENT DAVID HALL



As I sit to write this first monthly dispatch as President of the VWA, I do so with both trepidation and excitement. The trepidation comes from following in the footsteps of a number of high profile, highly regarded individuals of whom Will is the most recent and undoubtedly one of the best. Many of the past presidents are household names in the world of fine woodworking. They have each made contributions to the shaping of the VWA to bring it to its current high profile among woodworkers of all backgrounds and interests. As a fair average amateur woodworker and an engineer taught to think in straight lines, I will never fit such shoes but do hope that I can offer a perspective for the future based on many years association with the VWA.

The excitement comes from having the opportunity to contribute to that further development. The potential for the VWA is enormous but the process will be by no means simple.

The previous Committee has already covered much good ground and put in place such things as the appointment of Amanda McKay as a paid part time administrator. We perhaps should consider some other tasks that can best be undertaken by paid professionals.

The VWA is currently in a sound financial position. How long that situation continues is the subject of some conjecture but while it does last a unique opportunity exists to raise our services to members to new levels. These services take and can take many forms but I would like to mention three in particular:

Woodworks: The showcase of the VWA has always been the staging of exhibitions in various forms and locations over the years. Last year a number of exhibitions were combined in Woodworks 2004 to coincide with a most welcome return to the public for the Meat Market, albeit with some physical separation of the elements. This year the main hall will be available, so Touchwood, Start and Create from a Crate can be staged side by side inside one of the most spectacular exhibition spaces anyone could ask for.

In a recent letter to the editor I criticised some of the arrangements initially announced regarding entry conditions for this year's event. I am pleased to note that many of the issues that I canvassed had, prior to publication of my letter, been picked up and rectified. What is now important is to put any further criticism behind us and work towards making this year's exhibition an unqualified success. With Hamish Hill taking his leave after organising last year's event, the burden now falls more to the exhibition sub committee and to Amanda. They have large boots to fill but I'm confident that they are up to the task. That task will of course be made easier with assistance from others. If you can help out in any way, please call either Amanda, or myself.

Club activities and other events: Monthly meetings are attended by a fairly stable and regular group of members. They are well organised, diverse and interesting in content, the company excellent and the supper is generous. If you are not attending at least some of the meetings, you are missing a significant part of what being a member of the VWA is about.

By other events I mean such things as weekend workshops, master classes, and resident craftsman/woman programs. The VWA has conducted a number of these over the years and there has been a recent revival with the John McLennan workshops, the current box making and the upcoming wood carving classes. These sorts of activities are usually high on members' wish lists so this is probably an area where even more resources can be focused.

Newsletter: The third area of service is one that I have felt gets less attention than it deserves and that is the newsletter. The visible and audible face of the membership is largely those who attend meetings and for whom the newsletter is important but perhaps not the main interface with the VWA. There are however a large number of people who rarely or never make it to a meeting and who must rely on the newsletter as their return on membership investment. There has been a major improvement in the content and production in recent months and our aim must be to maintain and improve even further. One of the ways that can happen is by lively input by members in the form of articles and letters. The newsletter is perhaps the only effective way that the committee can inform all of the membership of its plans and for the public debate of those plans.

I look forward to the coming year with its challenges and opportunities. *David Hall September 2005*

Event & Programs Manager's Report

Opening Speaker

We are very excited to announce our opening speaker for WOODWORKS 2005 is Mrs Terry Bracks. Mrs Bracks will open the launch evening on Friday 2nd December (read all about Terry below).

Sponsorship

Our major sponsors are City of Melbourne, Arts Victoria and Arts House. We have also confirmed sponsorship for each sub exhibition. Carba-Tec is the major sponsor for Touchwood, Delta Group – Recycled Timbers are sponsoring Start 05, and faithful Waste Converters – are again sponsoring Create from a Crate. We also have the continuing support from Fasham Homes as a sponsor for the Start 05 - Design Award.

Advertising and Marketing

I have recently been appointed the additional role of advertising and publicity, and will now be in the VWA offices 4 days a week, instead of 3. Most of you will have noticed our ad in Australian Wood Review and also in Art Almanac, since these ads have been published the phone has not stopped, for more entry forms to be sent out. There a number of ads and press release in other magazines, and newspapers over the next few months, including a special feature on START 05 and interview with Andrew Potocnik in Monument Magazine – Australia's leading magazine of architecture and design.

Designer Makers

We also have a number of designer makers confirmed such as: Andrew Potocnik, Evan Dunstone, Richard Raffan, Stephen Huges and many more.

So, what is due on 31st October?

Your entry form with detail and measurement of piece, entry fee, photo of work complete / in progress / something so we know what you'll be bringing on the 28th November. The information is to start building the catalogue (need text), to start the layout (thus need sizes), and basically need to have your commitment to the exhibition. Any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Mrs Terry Bracks - Opening speaker for WOODWORKS 2005

Terry, was born in Victoria, 1957. Her father was in the armed forces and the family, moved around Australia including (Canberra, Tasmania) a number of times before finally settling in Victoria. Terry and Steve were married in 1984, both lived in Ballarat until 1990 before settling in Williamstown.

Terry Bracks has a Bachelor of Education from Rusden, a Graduate Diploma in Applied Science from the West Australian Institute of Technology and is completing a Graduate Diploma in Student Welfare at Melbourne University. Terry has worked as a teacher in regional Victoria and as an electorate officer to Federal MPs.

Terry Bracks is member of the Australian Labor Party, Patron of Heide Gallery and Big Brothers Big Sisters; Chair of Computers for Every Child; Co-Chair of the East Timor Friendship Schools Project; Board Member of the Breast Cancer Network Australia, Emily's List and the Australian Children's Television Foundation and the Number One Female Ticket Holder of the Melbourne Football Club. Terry is the Founding Chair of Western Chances and the Chair of the Western Chances Audit Committee.



I appreciate the craftsmanship because I know the hours that go into sanding and finishing. [Terry Bracks, wife of Victorian premier Steve Bracks, on making her first table]

The Age (13/08/2003) Ann Pilmer

VWA Meetings - This Month

Tuesday 27th September at 7:30pm

Native Tongue - *The intimate language of trees Exhibition*

ADDRESS: Shop 5, 1 Exhibition Street, Melbourne

7.30pm Walk through with the artists - Supper will be provided.
Any queries, please contact Amanda McKay on 9326 8553.

An inaugural exhibition to launch native Australian timber art.

Native Australian timber art (NATA) is a collective of artists, students and professionals set up to promote and advocate the sustainable use of Australia's native timbers. NATA hopes to bring a focus to the origins, customs and values associated with true Australian heritage.

The Victorian Woodworkers Association has the privilege of a 'Personal Tour with the Artists'. Each of the exhibiting artists will talk about their work, their influences, and the Australian Native timbers they use. The talks will be by the seven Australian artists who specialize in creating works in our native timbers for the exhibition Native Tongue.



Damien Wright (VWA Member), a leading craftsman whom will exhibit an object made from a 10,000 year old tree, **Kaya Storm**, internationally renowned for his organic sculptural forms, **Michael O'Dwyer** (VWA Member), uses the purest of form so as not to distract from the natural beauty of the material, **Andrew Wood**, (VWA member) uses green timber to highlight the natural movement and memory of trees, **Vince Manna**, turns and carves the largest vases you've ever seen, **David Worthy**, a maker of beautiful musical instruments and **Pete McCurly**, who utilizes traditional Japanese netsuke technique to carve miniature objects.

Native Tongue will display the gorgeous diversity of local artistic expression, all resulting in beautiful portraits of our landscape and its origins. For more information visit their web site: www.nata.org.au

Parking bit tricky in the city but most street parking is free after 6:30pm.

The official opening is on 22nd of September 6:00pm. Opening speaker The Hon. Senator Rod Kemp Minister for the Arts and Sport. For more information contact the NATA exhibition coordinator Megan Wilson on 0402 757 187

VWA Meetings - Calendar Of Events

4th Tuesday of the Month – Always keep it free!

Oct Tue 25th (Clubrooms) Steven Hughes – Contemporary Wood Artist

Nov Tue 22nd (Port Melbourne) Delta Group – Recycled Timber Specialists
Shed 2, 577 Plummer Street, Port Melbourne

Dec Tue 13th (Main Hall) Woodworks 2005 Walk Through With the Artists
(2nd Tue of the month) Meatmarket Arts Centre, Main Hall.

VWA Master Classes - Box Making Presented by Tony Hoffrichter August / September

A perfect day awaited us on arrival in Harcourt at the home of Tony Hoffrichter our teacher for the next three weekends. His workshop was "to die" for, everyone was very impressed. Tony spent most of the day explaining all facets of box making, from the tools required, timbers, fittings, finishes but particularly the magical jigs that made it all happen surprisingly easy.

VWA put on a great barbecue lunch outside, after which it was our turn to start making our box. At the end of day 1, we had the sides of our box, cut, glued and the base attached.

Day 2, was in the VWA workshop in North Melbourne. After some more theory, we set about grooving the front, installing the hinge and preparing the surface for finishing. We then grooved the feature panel for the inlay edging piece. Of course another great VWA lunch in the meantime.

Day 3. With some assistance from Tony, who prepared our tops to save time, as it was a sprint to the finish in installing the inlay edge piece, fitting the lid, and the magical shaping of the top, Then the import finishing coat to bring up a wonderful finish and then the final inserting of the velvet base. Seven people went home very appreciative and proud of the heirloom they had created.

Many thanks to Tony for his professionalism, help, guidance and good humour, and to Amanda for three wonderful meals and her organisational skills. I can highly recommend this course to any member. An experience you will never forget. **Bruce Hensell**



Day 1 – the class made the base of the box



Tony's fantastic workshop in Harcourt



One of Tony's many jigs this is to cut the splines on the corners of the box



Another of Tony's jigs..... this one is for the hinges.



The Finished box! No that's Tony's vacuum press.....Stayed tuned for photos of finished boxes.

VWA MASTER CLASSES - CARVING

November 5th & 12th - Wood Carving - Presented by Carl Lutz

Carl is well known as a local wood carver, who has a wealth of teaching expertise with trade apprentices in furniture construction and design. He is also a mastercraftsman and technical advisor to Gus-Tec Pty Ltd on the use of routers, has been a judge at Winterfest Outer Eastern for many years, and a tutor at the Geelong Carve-in.

DATES (2 day course): Saturday 5th November & Saturday 12th November

TIME: 9:30am – 5:00pm - lunch included

VENUE: Wood Design Centre, 5 Tyrone Street, North Melbourne

COST: \$195 Includes materials, tools and lunch.

BOOKINGS: Essential – class numbers limited - register with

Amanda McKay, 9326 8553, Email: vwa-am@bigpond.net.au

The
Wood
Carver
as the
Green
Man



Craftsmen, such as stone masons and carvers, often drew on pagan myth for their inspiration, even in churches.

Such was the green man. Usually he'll be found disguised as a roof boss, hidden in a corner, or lurking under a misericord seat.

He is believed to embody the life cycle or represent Silvanus – God of the forests.

VICTORIAN WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

AFFORDABLE PUBLIC & PRODUCT LIABILITY INSURANCE

A scheme for woodworkers and other craft workers

working or teaching from home, or undertaking markets or craft demonstrations in public. Underwriter: QBE Insurance

Contact: Meg Allan, VWA Membership Secretary
PO Box 1162, Hartwell, Victoria 3124

Tel: (03) 9889 3105 Fax: (03) 9889 3155, Email: rob Allan@preston.starway.net.au

Or see details on the website at www.vwa.org.au

Installation & Workshop Cover Now Available

WELCOME TO A NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

Committee Member Profile - Christian Groves

I've been interested in woodwork since childhood when my cabinet maker grandfather would give me a couple of nails, a hammer and some wood and let me build something. However it was only after university that I managed to acquire my own tools and workshop. From those beginnings my interest and skills evolved enough to feel comfortable to join an organisation such as the VWA.

Having attended the "Touch Wood/Create from a Crate" exhibitions last year (2004) and seeing the high quality of the work on show (plus getting some gentle persuasion from Michael O'Dwyer) I decided to join the VWA. As an amateur woodworker I saw it as a way of meeting like minded people and continue learning. Being a relatively new member I'm still finding my way in the club, meeting new people at club events and getting to know some of the club's history.

Hopefully during my time on the committee I'll be able to assist in moving the club forward. My main interest is in producing contemporary furniture from re-cycled Australian hardwoods with natural finishes. I work as a telecommunications engineer and am living in Newport.

Christian Groves

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150 x 25 mm to 300 x 50 mm
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(**Black Jarrah**) from
50 mm thick boards to 100 x 100 mm and 150
x150 mm

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MVXDesigns PH: 03 9305 3311



In the News

Designs on career in furniture

A young designer is making her mark in the furniture industry, writes Ann Pilmer.

The Age July 18, 2005

Furniture designer Alex Edwards, with her Triptych coffee tables exhibited at Furnitex 2005, is inspired by "balance, symmetry and repetition of forms".

Furnishing her North Carlton house was no problem for Alex Edwards, 21. She simply made everything she needed, including a bent laminated black-bean veneer computer desk, a bent ply upholstered stool, and an organically inspired floor lamp to go by her bed. As for the bed: "It's knocked-together pine slabs," she says. "My dad Mark and I made it about three years ago."

Edwards isn't in the habit of knocking together furniture. She finished a diploma of arts, majoring in furniture design, at RMIT TAFE last year, and spends hours on the design and construction of her pieces.

Her skills have marked her as a talent to watch. Curator Uli Hasel selected her AED04 chair and Triptych coffee table for the VIVID design competition, which showcased innovative designers' work as part of Furnitex 2005, at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, which ended yesterday.

A bus ticket was the inspiration for her stainless steel and black leather chair, which she made during her course last year - the rectangular ticket was ripped halfway, and the flaps were folded to make the "seat", she says. Her triangular Triptych table has a coloured, moulded cone-patterned top on stainless steel legs.

"I'm inspired by materials, and I wanted to see how flexible polyurethane could be used for other applications. Originally, I had just the moulded triangular polyurethane top.

You could stand a glass on it, but a lot of people were nervous, because it wasn't like anything they'd used before. In the end, I got a piece of glass cut to sit on the top.

I'm trying a new material now, a rigid polyester resin. The new material is crystal-clear, and I add dyes. I like balance, symmetry and repetition of forms."

Trying out the new table-top material hasn't been without its headaches. The resin has been sticking in the old mould, so Edwards had to make a new, more flexible one.



"I've even dreamt about the mould, but I think I've got it sorted."

Edwards is plotting her future with an intensity that belies her age.

"I like to consider my future in a practical sense so I can have choices," she says. "I like to think I can direct myself rather than have circumstances direct me. I'm a worrier. I get mad if something I'm making won't go right."

What she's realised from two "hands-on" days a week at Anton Gerner Furniture in East Hawthorn, and a day at the Shabumi furniture company in West Heidelberg is that designing is what she really wants to do.

She knows that concentrating only on furniture will be a hard way to make a living because of imports and competition, so she plans to study graphic arts as well.

Edwards has been weighing up choices since she was a keen student netball player who was good, but not quite good enough, to play at state level. Art and design took over from a possible health and sports career. Her choice was consolidated when she found she enjoyed school woodwork classes.

In the meantime, she is relishing the work for the experience. *"I really enjoy seeing how people run their businesses. It's opened my eyes in so many ways. I get to see financial issues, the rise and fall in demand in the industry, and how they deal with clients."*

Alex Edwards Design furniture is available at Mondo Trasho, tel 9486 9595.

Vacuum Chucking using a Vacuum Cleaner (continued from August Issue)

The theory is exactly the same here as before, you need a vacuum source and a way to feed it through to the face-plate. Chucks using a vacuum cleaner work on a different philosophy than the pump varieties, as the vacuum cleaner has a low vacuum but a high volume. However there is still enough to hold and even damage thin walled articles. This has the advantage of allowing less than perfect seals and still providing sufficient suck to hold. I have held cracked bowls on this type of vacuum chuck.

This type of chuck, as featured in the pictures following, will hold a 10 inch bowl with such a force that it cannot be removed by trying to physically pull it off. The turning speed when chucking this way should be reduced to a "sane speed", under 300 RPM, so that the risk of losing a piece, short of a "dig in from hell" is very minimal.

It is essential to provide an air bleed (a deliberate leak) in this type of system to prolong the life of the vacuum cleaner as the motor relies on the air flow to keep cool.

If you have a perfect seal, you will burn the cleaner motor out. For this reason, coupling devices are a lot less engineering feats and more of a hit and miss affair as this picture shows.

This coupler consists of a piece of copper pipe that goes just about through the head stock with a piece of wood attached that is a snug fit for the vacuum cleaner hose, which in this case has been extended using standard PVC pipe fittings. This set up has the added advantage that the copper pipe which rotates freely in the spindle shaft of the lathe, can be withdrawn when the lathe is stopped, greatly reducing the vacuum and allowing minor centering to be achieved, or with a bit of force, the work removed. The soft vacuum bleed valves must be left operable and open to allow some air flow to allow cooling.



Here is how to make the vacuum coupling device. The ways of doing this are many and varied, but this is one idea. Get a hold of an old ball bearing race, with a minimum of about a 1 inch hole in the middle. Turn a pair of wooden blocks as follows. The first, needs one end to either be a tight fit into or over the headstock shaft, depending on the lathe style and what fits best. The other end needs to accommodate the outside of the ballrace, again a snug fit. The race can be glued in if you want, but it needs to be firm. Drill a 1/2" hole right through the center of the block. The second needs to be a tight fit into the center of the bearing, and the other end turned to accommodate the end of the vacuum cleaner hose.

Again, drill a 1/2 inch hole through the center of the block. With the two pieces connected to the bearing, you have a rotating joint. Don't worry if the thing isn't completely airtight.

Now all you need to do is to create an air bleed to stop the vacuum cleaner from destroying itself. The air bleed is set up for two reasons: firstly to facilitate cooling and longevity of life for the vacuum cleaner, and secondly to regulate the amount of suction, for large pieces. Drill two small holes in the solid section of the vacuum hose, one 3/8 of an inch, and the other a couple of inches away 1/2 an inch in diameter. The 3/8 hole is the bleed, and should never be covered. The 1/2 inch hole can be covered when holding smaller objects, and uncovered when turning large surfaced areas or those with thin walls. Put the whole thing together and you are off and away. Center your work as described in the press mount explanation above.

A couple of things to watch here.

Don't ever turn the vacuum source off while the lathe is turning or you will wear your precious turned piece.

When mounting your work, start with the maximum bleed (Minimal vacuum), and check the vacuum. If you can't move it then its fine. If you can, re-centre and then increase the vacuum by adjusting your bleed system.

As an indication of the forces applied, I understand that a 12 inch platter mounted by this system is subjected to the equivalent of about 200 lb. weight bearing down on it if there is no air bleed available (with a vacuum cleaner), and about 1000 lbs. if you are using a vacuum pump with no bleed and a leak proof system. With the system working properly, and and a reasonable level of suck from the old Hoover, you will be hard pressed to move a 12 inch platter, even with the vents both open.

Opportunities

BRYAN POYNTON - GEELONG GALLERY

Well known Woodworker and one of our very best is exhibiting at Geelong Gallery, Little Malop Street, Geelong from Sunday the 25th of September to Sunday the 23rd of October, The Gallery is open from 10-5 Monday to Friday and 1-5 Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.

Anyone interested in seeing the works of a true master craftsman should go to Geelong and see Bryans work, he is exhibiting with John Druce another surf coast artist.

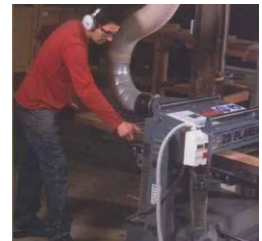
Contact: Rebecca Kerr, Gallery Assistant, Ph: (03) 52293645



Wood Design Centre

The Wood Design Centre (WDC) was established in 1985, and is managed by the Victorian Woodworkers Association (VWA). Since then it has fostered the creative careers of numerous well known furniture designers, makers and artists.

The WDC is located at the Meatmarket Arts Centre, 5 Tyrone Street, North Melbourne, and comprises of 650sqm of workshop, including spray facilities, well equipped machine room, and workbenches. Also available are meeting rooms, a library and office space with computers, photocopier, fax and internet facilities.



We currently have 2 (Two) full time studios available. Studio spaces are not available very often, don't miss this opportunity to work alongside a great team of designers, in a great environment and location.

For all enquiries please contact: Adam Stewart, Wood Design Centre Manager (03) 9326 8553 or 0423 221 728 or email: adamstewart@optusnet.com.au

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE – 9th October 2005

VWA invite you to submit articles of interest for any of the newsletter sections:

- Calendar of events
- Timber & Trade
- Tree Watch
- Workshop
- Product Review
- Letter to the editor

Or any other interesting information you think the members would appreciate.

Just email Amanda McKay – Editor on VWA-AM@bigpond.net.au