

The Centre for Fine Woodworking

An educational charitable trust

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Newsletter - November 2008

This newsletter is to keep you posted about some forthcoming events and generally to let you know what's been happening here in the workshop. The full time students are very busy working towards finishing their final pieces of furniture for our annual exhibition in December. We liked this photo of Rod with his extraordinary laminated table leg - doesn't he look pleased with himself? Incidentally, he didn't glue it all up by himself - everyone in the workshop is owed a beer. Eh, Rod?!



Centre for Fine Woodworking 2008 Exhibition. 6TH December - 9TH January - Refinery Artspace, 3 Halifax St., Nelson



Firstly, we are absolutely thrilled to have heard last week that BBS Timbers Ltd have agreed to be the major sponsor of our 2008 exhibition. We would like to send our sincere thanks to Paul Wickham and Darren Hunter at BBS Timbers in Auckland, and Kelvin and the boys at BBS Christchurch office, for their ongoing support and commitment to us. An email invitation will be sent out to you in the next week, so if you are in the Nelson area

between 6th December and 9th January do go and visit Refinery Artspace on 3 Halifax Street, Nelson to look at the exhibition of 2008 students' work. Indeed if you are in Nelson - have a drive out to North Nelson and come and see us here at the school.

"FOR TENDER" Traditional Lapstrake Dinghy

One of the major attractions at the exhibition will be a beautifully crafted lapstrake dinghy, which was created earlier this year by a group of students who participated in the Traditional Dinghy building course. We were lucky to have a fleeting visit from Nigel Whitton last week who was back for a few days from working on Sir Richard Branson's superyacht - Nigel is known for producing woodwork at a prolific rate so whilst he was passing through he managed to produce a couple of oars to go with the boat.



It was always the intention that the dinghy would be sold once it was completed, and so this will appear in our exhibition and we will be accepting tenders by prospective buyers of this boat up, until the end of the exhibition period. All proceeds from the sale of the dinghy will go towards a scholarship programme we are currently working on which will be made available to New Zealand students who attend the full time furniture making course. More details will appear on the website in the next few days, but If you are interested in putting in a tender then please do get in touch with us at cfwoodwork@gmail.com

Nelson A&P Show 22nd & 23rd November

We sometimes get comments from people saying that they didn't realise where we were, or that we existed, so in an attempt to raise our profile in the top of the south we thought we would make an

appearance at the A&P Show at Richmond Showgrounds. We will have a stall with lots of information about the 2009 course programme, general information about ourselves, and our handsome dinghy on show. If you are there - come and find us.

Woodcarving with Mike Davies Saturday 6th/Sunday 7th December. Cost: \$350

This workshop is filling up nicely, so if you are still thinking about it, get in touch. It's shaping up to be a great weekend - you could get a look at the exhibition of student work at the same time. Even if you were thinking about it but the date doesn't suit you - let us know in case we have an opportunity to run this workshop again in the future. Full information on this workshop is on our website www.cfw.co.nz

Bending Solid Wood with David Haig 19th - 26th January 2009 Cost: \$1625

An exciting and inspiring two week exploration of the techniques and potential of wood bending. Students will be guided through the making of a stylish and contemporary seat, utilising and understanding the processes of steam-bending and kerf-bending. If time allows, students will be able to explore design options further or make some of the specialised tools David uses to shape his iconic "Signature" Rocking Chair.



Veneering with Darryl Kiel

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Darryl is not able to come to New Zealand in January as planned. Apologies to everyone who has been considering this, but hopefully we will see Darryl here in the future.

So, during this two week slot we have now on offer a series of short workshops - each three days long, covering a wide range of project based courses. Below are the details - please get in touch with us if you are interested in any of these short courses.

Router Workshop Mon 7th, Tues 8th & Weds 9th January Cost \$525 - plus materials

A 3 day workshop exploiting basic and more complex router techniques to construct a distinctively crafted and textured container/box. Students will learn all about routers from basic to complex processes - how to use them safely and make decisions about useful and worthwhile router bits. Students will need to bring their own router in order to make the most of this workshop. If you plan to buy a router in order to do this workshop then please feel free to contact John for advice on what to buy. A range of appropriate timbers will be available for student to select from - approximate cost of materials will be \$50.

Toolmaking Workshop Fri 11th, Sat 12th & Sun 13th January Cost \$525 plus materials

Discover the pleasures of making your own woodworking tools in this three day workshop. Students will construct and then refine and tune a wooden Krenov style plane, a chair making stock scraper, a hand knife and if time allows a small bench top vice. The sharpening of these tools will be focussed on especially during the workshop.

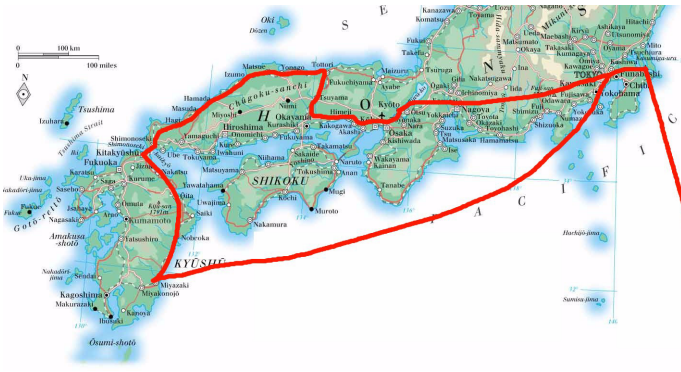


Outdoor Furniture **Tues 15th, Wed 16th, Thurs 17th January** **Cost: \$525 plus materials**

An exciting new workshop where you will have the opportunity to create something special for the outdoors - you will learn how to work with durable materials, glues, joints and connectors to create a piece of outdoor furniture. The first half day will be spent discussing appropriate materials and techniques for the outdoors. Students will then be encouraged to develop some simple designs based around these principles, resolve them and then build them under tutor guidance. If you feel you have materials you would like to use feel free to check with the tutor to ensure they are appropriate. Suitable materials will be available here at a cost of approx \$200 - \$300.

Update from Larry's Recent Trip To Japan

The goal of this trip was to visit with Japanese woodworkers and to start the planning for a group tour of Japan approximately this time next year. On that tour, we hope to visit woodworkers as well as tool makers and exhibitions of Japanese woodwork. A secondary goal was to visit an area of Japan we had never seen before with the idea in mind that we would tour this area on bicycles at some point in the future.



We spent most of our time in Japan in quite rural regions. We flew from Tokyo to Miyazaki in Kyushu to meet with Kintaro Yazawa. Yazawa-san is a very successful woodworker famous for his complex joints as well as for his traditional furniture. He has eight apprentices for three years each. He maintains a showroom adjacent to his home and workshop but most of his sales are through exhibitions in department stores. If you have the June 2007 Fine Woodworking (#191), have a look at page

101 and the back cover. Yazawa is interested in novel visible joints. Yazawa's son is a modern furniture maker who shares the showroom space.

The workshop is large and well-equipped with a broad diversity of hand and machine tools. Upstairs is a finishing room where high temperature and humidity are maintained to suit the application of urushi (Japanese lacquer).

We were treated to a delicious dinner prepared by Yazawa-san and his wife. All of the cooking was done over a hibachi started with shavings, offcuts and locally made charcoal. The beef was Australian because Japanese beef was thought to be too fatty.



The next day we took seven trains - some of the connections were as brief as one minute - to get to Hagi on the San'in coast of the Japan Sea. We didn't have Sarah Palin along to tell us that we could see Korea from there, and it was a bit far over the horizon, but you get the idea. We spent several days exploring San'in, stopping as well in Matsue and Tottori. Of particular interest were the sand dunes of Tottori. Who would have expected to see camels in Japan? Who would have expected to see men in business suits and ties walking the dunes on a 30 degree day?

From Tottori we made a stop in Imbe in the Bizen region to see the Bizen-yaki (pottery) which is unglazed and fired at low temperatures for long periods of time: weeks. From Imbe to Kyoto, just because it's there. We took the Shinkansen (bullet train) from Kyoto to Tokyo. There I met Kenji Suda a superb craftsman who is slated to become a Living National Treasure as soon as he is old enough. Suda introduced me to Iseto-san a timber dealer. Iseto took us to a timber auction which had a large variety of wood, both Japan-grown and imported. An interesting aspect is the thickness of the individual pieces of timber. There is very little 25 or 50 mm thick, but a lot that is 150 or 200 mm thick and some much thicker than that. Wood is sold by the piece, not by volume. One board, seemingly interchangeable with another in terms of species, dimensions, figure and grain, might go for half or double the price of the other.



Then we toured Iseto's workshop/warehouse where he had large quantities of many species including three planks of Paduak approximately 300x40x5.0.

Suda-san will have an exhibition at the Object Space gallery in Auckland in March and April, 2009. I recommend that you see it if you can. Once the exhibition has been opened Suda will come to Nelson to the Centre for Fine Woodworking, where he will teach the tuning and use of Japanese tools and the techniques of urushi. The exact dates have not yet been fixed, but are likely to be about the last two weeks of March or the last week of March and the first week of April. More information will be on our web site, and in a subsequent newsletter once it becomes known.



Suda-san also invited us to visit him at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts where we met some of his students and saw a fantastic exhibition of lacquerware. An interesting aspect that I had never considered is that the basic shape of a piece of lacquerware might not be wood, but paper, hemp cloth or even cow hide.

In addition we got to see some of his boxes "in action". That is we watched while components of boxes were put together using just gravity and patience as the nested parts settled slowly into place indicating the precision of the fit.



More details of the Japan tour will appear in subsequent Newsletters.

As we draw to the end of our second full time course in furniture making, and the first years as a charitable organisation, we feel like we have come a long way forward. Our aim now is to make sure we get funding to secure our future in offering high quality tuition to new and existing students, and to create future generations of fine woodworkers and furniture makers. We always welcome any feedback you may have - whether you have attended a course here and want to make comments, suggestions for future courses, and indeed any bright ideas for funding assistance.

All the best from us here in the workshop. John, Dave, Larry & Co.