



Member Profile ~ Jane Ruehmkorff

I grew up on a farm in the Highlands of Kenya and emigrated to Australia in 1972, with a husband and two children under the age of 3. We had both grown up in Kenya, having moved out from England at a very young age with our respective parents.

The goings on of the farm were always fascinating to me and as a toddler I had watched our first house being built from wattle and daub, with a thatched roof, mud floor and a blanket across the doorway. As pioneer farmers, living in this hut, while a larger two roomed house was built close by, was more convenient for my parents than staying with the nearest neighbours a mile away. (The photo at left shows us outside that house in 1947.) My Dad made sure I knew how to hammer in a nail straight and use a saw as I got older, while home from boarding school.



We bought our first house in Sydney in Como West in the Sutherland Shire and when my daughter started school in 1977, I found my first job with Warner Lambert/Parke Davis in Caringbah. The office was moving from North Sydney to The Shire and with the chaos of the move, I was able to hide the fact that I had not worked for 7 years, as I readjusted, after staying home with my young children until they had both started school. I worked at Solahart in their Eastern States head office in Miranda, and Rendell Industries in Hurstville (who did all the fit-out for the Queen Victoria Building). Then I had a couple of years with Drake Overload, doing temp work, which meant going into an office and having to pick up quickly how the office was run, names etc., so that I could do the job assigned to me.

As a young Mum, I loved helping my children put together projects for school, and when my son was about 13 and showed a keen interest in lapidary I decided to go to evening classes in woodwork at Miranda High School to make him a display cabinet for his rock collection. He's 51 now and still has that cabinet filled with his precious rocks, since child-proofed with a perspex lid and doors.

Later, when the children were in Years 9 and 11 and we'd moved across the city, I got the opportunity to go to another evening class to learn woodturning, held at Normanhurst Boys High School and I made a few bowls, vases and salt and pepper shakers.



I have been fortunate to travel a lot, helped by my first husband being an aircraft mechanic with East African Airways in the 1960's when we were able to travel 'subject to load' and paid only 10% of the



scheduled fare. My parents lived in Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania for a few years (Dad was Bursar at Dar-es-Salaam University after selling the farm) and we could pop down there for the weekend in a DC 3 for the equivalent of \$10! When we came to Australia, my husband worked for Qantas for 6 years and we were able to enjoy overseas holidays with similar privileges, but less opportunity, being a stay-at-home mum with 2 young children.

When I met Peter Ruehmkorff in 2003, he wanted to show me Germany and meet his family, so in the nearly 10 years we were together before he died, we went to Europe 3 times, visiting Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia and Iceland. On the last trip in 2012 we went to China first, having originally booked to go on the Trans-Siberian Railway however, Peter was too sick to handle that long train journey, so we flew from Beijing to Moscow.

After Peter died, I had the good fortune to attend a workshop in New Mexico, over 5 years from 2014 to 2018, in May and November for 10 days each time. I loved the camaraderie of the class, with about 100, mostly young people from all over the USA, Canada and Europe and me from Oz. I got to know Santa Fe and Albuquerque where I stayed with friends before and after classes. What a privilege! Last year, I had a 'Trip-a-Deal' adventure in Russia, having loved my first taste of that country and people. I thoroughly enjoyed the river cruise from Moscow to St Petersburg, every day stopping at an interesting town or village. A Baltic Extension was added, visiting Helsinki in Finland, then across on the ferry to Estonia and a bus trip through Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland over 6 days Helsinki and Riga were the most memorable, as we were able to stay for 2 nights and see more.

My daughter lives in Perth and she also has a love of wood, attending W4 – Women Working With Wood – at Balcatta Men’s Shed, when she has time. (Incidentally, W4 only have access to the Balcatta Shed every second Saturday afternoon, which makes me feel very spoiled with our Shed here.) Nicola and I have a tradition of going on a weekend workshop together, if we get the opportunity, when I’m in Perth and twice we went to the Dwellingup School of Wood (about 1 hour south of Perth). I’m proud of the jewellery box I made about 20 years ago, with a simple inlay in the lid. A few years later we both made blanket boxes over 3 days, and my grandchildren have one each, as their toy boxes.



Greg Miller in Perth has a great business called *The Joy of Wood* and we’ve been to a few of his workshops, including one making furniture out of pallets, which was fun and I’ve left a 2-seat garden bench in my daughter’s back yard as a reminder of that visit. Also, a spoon making workshop, only using hand tools, was another thoroughly enjoyable day under Greg’s tutelage, leaving me with a strong desire to do more.

So, when I moved to Hornsby nearly 3 years ago and discovered a flyer for the Shed at Hornsby library, showing that women were welcome, I jumped at it!

I love the Shed, the camaraderie and the friendly, unselfish assistance and encouragement of the Supervisors and the way some of you go out of your way to guide my sometimes cag-handed way of doing things to show me an easier way - usually achieving a better result.

A lot of you would have seen me making my shave-horse over the last many months. I learned a lot from that project – mainly, to think twice before tackling such a large project, with a heavy pieces of timber to lug back and forth. Anyway, it is finally finished so I will assemble it at home and carve spoons on it, while, at the same time, learning how to use a spokeshave! I am very grateful for all the assistance and encouragement I received doing this project.

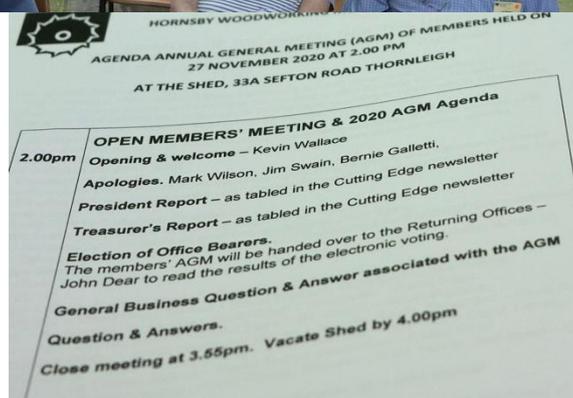


HWMS 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2.00 PM, 27 NOVEMBER



Normally, the Shed AGM is a routine affair with the current Committee members either committing to run for another year or seeking to fill positions for people who are retiring. That way, the Committee is able to implement succession plans and ensure that the Committee members are both complementary and cohesive.

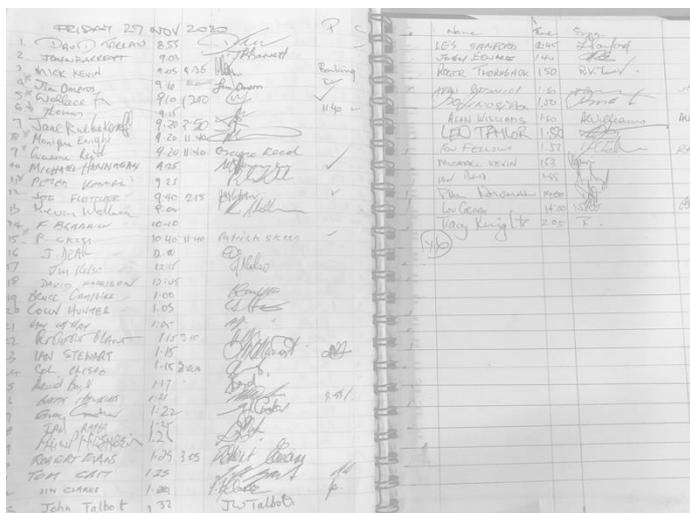


Not so this year. For the first time in the Shed's 19 year history, sitting Committee members were being challenged by a group who was opposed to some of the Committee's decisions over the past year. When more than one person nominates for a Committee position a ballot has to be held. This year, that situation applied to five positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Toys and Membership. That meant that the members had to decide which candidate they supported. Each member is entitled to one vote for each position.

Use of Technology

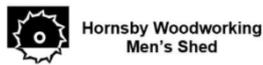
A. Electronic Voting

While a number of members voted to use a large hall, the Committee had to consider the risks associated with COVID-19 and the desirability to allow all members to vote without leaving home. The solution, adopted by the Committee, was a computer program called Survey Monkey. Ron Fellows describes the process and his involvement.



Survey Monkey is widely used in both public and private organisations throughout the world and highly recognised for its high security and ease-of-use features. For example, members were only allowed to cast one group of votes, any further attempts were blocked. The Shed has more than 180 financial members who were eligible to vote and it would have been difficult and expensive to find a suitable location for the AGM to house all members in a COVID safe environment. Electronic voting also allowed members who work or would be unable to attend the AGM to have their vote recorded in the election. This electronic voting was a first for the Shed and nearly two-thirds of members successfully recorded their votes and many members commented on how easy the process was to complete. As a member voted for a

candidate, Survey Monkey would automatically accumulate that vote to the previously completed votes. Another powerful Survey Monkey function was the ability to provide start and cut-off times for the election voting. Below is an extract from the Survey Monkey voting Website showing how members could vote for a President by simply clicking on the circle next to each candidate.



2020 Election of Hornsby Woodworking Men's Shed Committee

1. President (select only one)

- Bruce Campbell
- David Tarran

the election was opened, the election Survey Monkey password was changed so I was the only person with access to Survey Monkey. On Friday 27th November, 2020 at 8 am, I opened the results from Survey Monkey as well as the email votes and produced an audit-ready copy of the results. At 1.30 pm I met with the Election Returning Officer, John Dear and passed the Survey Monkey printed results to John to allow him to count all electronic votes and complete the election results summary. John then presented the results summary at the AGM.

Lastly, it must be noted, that voting in Survey Monkey was optional and not all members voted for all open positions. Hence, resulting in a different number of votes for each position.

Ron Fellows

Use of Zoom (*computer software that allows a group of two or more people to see and talk to each other over the internet using their computers, tablets, or smartphones*)

Thanks to Colin Hunter and Ian McKay's technical expertise, members who could not attend the AGM were able to see and hear the proceedings via Zoom.

The picture at right shows a computer screen that people at home would see when logged in to Zoom. It also shows senior Shed member, Tom Gait, reading through the submitted questions and their answers.



Forty-six people attended the Shed, about the same number as previous years. The atmosphere was mostly positive during the proceedings. John Dear, the Returning Officer, opened a sealed envelope and read the results: President – David Tarran; Vice President – Robert Plant; Treasurer – Michael Kevin; Toys – David Boyd; Membership – Kevin Wallace. All those Committee members retained their positions, each with a clear majority of votes.



The rest of the Committee: Secretary – John Barrett; Woodturners’ Representative – Ian McKay and Public Relations – Tracy Knights being unopposed, retained their positions.

The picture at left shows the eight Committee members who will take the Shed into 2021.



A number of the meeting attendees stood up and talked positively about looking forward to attending Shed workshops while doing their woodworking in an atmosphere of mutual

respect.

The meeting ended at 2.48 pm after the Committee was congratulated with a round of applause by all those present.

Following is an extract of an email sent by David Tarran in the lead-up to the AGM:

I am passionate about the Shed. I have been a member for just over 7 years and until about 2 months ago loved going to the Shed. However, 3 weeks ago, like many members, I was on the verge of walking away. I decided to go for President last week because I want to see members with their heads down making the toys again and enjoying themselves and, more importantly, I want to see the Shed buzzing again with friendliness. The majority of members are only interested in woodwork and the camaraderie the Shed offers. Let's get back to enjoying the Shed for what it is meant to be.

December is Toy Time

Usually, we have the toys ready for our charities in November, just before the Shed Christmas party. But 2020 was no ordinary year for many reasons including a deferred AGM. See article above. So, it was only after the AGM that there was time available for a working party to re-discover all the items that our toymakers had constructed that year in the various storage areas. We were surprised that there were so many but that made sense when we remembered just a few months ago that members were spending up to three months at home while the Shed was closed so it was an opportunity to make toys, thus gaining personal satisfaction from using that time for a very worthwhile cause.



Our two charities are Wesley Mission and the Salvation Army Hornsby. We set pick-up dates of 4th and 7th December, consecutively. The following story is about the delightful young ladies from Wesley Mission and their great enthusiasm and appreciation for all the items that we donated. See the letters and pictures below, recording that event.





Hi Phillip

I just wanted to pass on my thank you on behalf of the Brighter Futures team. The work the Men's Shed does for our families is simply amazing. You not only bring joy to our families and their children, but you also bring joy to our workers. They love delivering the equipment to their families and seeing the smiles on the children's faces.



In a year that has been particularly difficult for our families we all thank you
Catherine Wood | Operations Manager, Wesley Brighter Futures

Hi Philip,

On behalf of Wesley Mission, I thank the Men's Shed for all the toys donated this year. We are always incredibly impressed by the quality and variety of the toys made each year and the time and effort put into the toys is greatly appreciated.

As discussed, this year we collected a few stories from Christmas and thought you might like to use these for the newsletter. I have also included a brief overview of Wesley Brighter Futures.

Wesley Brighter Futures works with families with children aged up to 8 years. We work with and help support families who may be dealing with a range of issues including mental health, alcohol/drug use, domestic violence and parenting challenges. This year we have collected some stories from Christmas that reflect the joy that the Shed's gifts bring.

- A two-year-old boy loved the wooden duck he received for Christmas last year. For months after receiving it, he would take it everywhere waking or sleeping!
- A two-year-old girl received a doll and cradle as a gift. She carried the baby everywhere and would put it in the cradle when it was bedtime and imitate her Mum. Mum was also able to use the doll and cradle to demonstrate different activities with her daughter.
- Through the generous donations we received we were able to give a refugee family toys of their own. Mum was able to play with the children and this brought a lot of joy to the whole family.

Prue Ghali | Regional Services Coordinator, Wesley Mission Brighter Future

Goodstart Early Learning Street Library

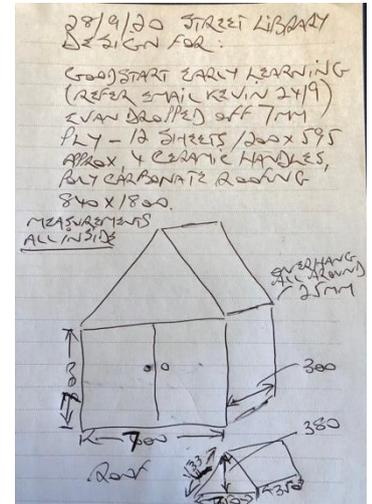


Hi Kevin,

As per our recent conversation, I was wondering if Hornsby Woodworking Men's Shed would be able to help us out in building our little street library box. We have had this idea for a while, and finally got materials donated from Bunnings Thornleigh but got stuck as we lack the equipment & skills to put them together hence reaching out to you.

Yifan (Evan) Hu Assistant Director, Goodstart West Pymble 23 September 2020

Following Evan's first visit to the Shed, I came up with a rough plan of the dimensions that we discussed, largely using the materials donated by Bunnings. He was happy with that, so I commenced construction, using the 7 mm ply, provided. I kept him in touch with progress by sending regular emails. He was very appreciative of our efforts.



I took it home so that I could focus on painting it with two coats of the supplied sealer/primer.

The doors were tricky. I mitred the frame then cut

polycarbonate panels to fit. The hinges supplied were too small so I bought more substantial stainless steel ones that could cope with the weather. The roof was waterproofed with capped with plastic angle.

An artistic touch was the secured with brass, slot-

There's a lot of work of a street library. That's built the last one. There was unlevel stump where the sit it on a plinth with legs level.



corrugated polycarbonate roofing

use of hardwood planks on the gable, head, screws.

involved in the design and construction why it was about three years since I just one problem to resolve, that of the library was to be located. I planned to cut to various lengths to enable it to sit

I set a date of 9 December for delivery and installation at Goodstart's West Pymble location. After a last check of my list, I packed the car full of library, roof and all the tools, timber and fixings that I thought would be needed.

The stump was more of a problem than I anticipated. The use of a reciprocating saw helped remove some unstable timber and, eventually, I levelled the plinth. At that stage, it was ready to place the library on it and then the roof on top.

The following pictures tell the story of what happened next.



Hi Philip,
 Thank you again so much for installing the street library on Wednesday (9 December).
 Nearly every family walked past standing nearby to have a look at the library. Was wondering if I could have the photos you took, and I wanted to use them for our west Pymble's website and family's newsletter.
 Talk soon Philip. You're and the Shed's contribution to us is commendable.
 Kind Regards, **Yifan (Evan) Hu**, Centre Director

SHED-GATE

Every year, we are eligible to participate in “Club Grants”. This year, Tom Gait applied to Asquith Magpies and Hornsby RSL for funding to enable us to update our dust extraction equipment by installing automatic blast gates. The applications were successful, resulting in payments of \$3,091 to fund that upgrade.



John Talbot reported on the acquisition/installation process: “These units have been used by Tony Blair at his new Men's Shed at Woolgoolga and he reported that they were reliable and worked well. Other suppliers were contacted after the grant was given to us and their offerings were either more expensive and/or did not meet the Committee’s specifications.

We have 10 units, 9 active and 1 spare. The gates automatically open when the machine starts by sensing the

motor current. After the machine stops, the gate stays open for 50 seconds to clear the pipe system of dust and then closes. The benefits are that manual opening and closing of the gates is not now required and the suction from the dust collector is optimised to make for better overall efficiency; i.e. more useable suction.

A couple of months ago I sent the Committee a technical appraisal of what was involved in interfacing the units with our electrical system. The power for each machine and the associated sensor and gate solenoid must come from the same power outlet for the gate to work with its machine correctly. The sensor and the gate are coded with small switches so that the correct sensor and gate work together. Communication is wireless. A range of about 40 feet is possible.

Yuval Cohen and I are working together on this project as there is a lot of work involved and the bulk of the installation and testing will be done over the Christmas/New Year break.”

Mailing Address:
Hornby Woodworking Men's Shed
33a Sefton Rd
Thornleigh NSW 2120
Australia

Delivery To:
Hornby Woodworking Men's Shed
33a Sefton Rd
Thornleigh NSW 2120
Australia

Timbecon
Everything to get wood working

Unit 6/ 38 Newlands Road
Reservoir VIC 3073
Australia
Phone +613 9448 8300

31 Canville Road
Carrivick WA 6155
Australia
Phone +613 9448 8300
ABN:6001953682

Quotation

Account No: 0008887 Date: 5/11/20 Terms: Salesperson: JR Quote No: 718 Tracking#

ID	Description	Ordered	Backorder	Deliver	Sell incl GST	Total Incl GST
PBG-04	Dust Extraction Control System 4in Automated Blast Gate	9		9.0	\$1,971.00	\$1,971.00
TPNA	Dust Extraction Control System Tool Plus Pro Machine Activat	9		9.0	\$801.00	\$801.00
DES	Express Shipping (Flat Group)	0		0.0	\$11.00	\$11.00
INSYES	Delivery Insurance Accepted (2% Value of Goods)	1		1.0	\$55.44	\$55.44

Invoice Total

Amount	GST	Total
\$2,838.48	\$256.94	\$3,095.42
Paid today:		\$0.00
Balance Due:		\$2,838.44

Bank Details: Timbecon
BSB: 086-008
Account: 12061379

Checked: All quotations are valid for 14 days from date shown above. To secure the quoted price please arrange a minimum 30% deposit.

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At the time of writing, (19 December, the last workshop for 2020), three of the bandsaws had been fitted with the new gates.



Around the Shed

Presentation by Michael Kevin to Danielle, Head of Technology and Applied Sciences Faculty, Ravenswood School for Girls, Gordon, of a skateboard deck that he had created for them to add the wheels and other hardware.

Photos of other interesting events and people in the Shed that I have captured over the last few months follow:





Chisels: Restoration, Repair and Sharpening

Experiments in the sharpening of bladed tools

By Visakan Thiruchelvam

When a chisel is sharp, its performance is second to none. It permits fine cuts, even across end grain because the edge has so much bite. It catches where it is placed, allowing complete control of the cut while paring off those whispers needed to get joinery perfect. It requires minimal force to push-cut, meaning you make the cut with both hands on the tool instead of one hand holding a mallet. This also leads to much improved control and safety. When there is minimal pressure behind a cut, there is minimal pressure behind the chisel if a cut goes wrong and threatens a body part. This translates to a minimal injury, which can otherwise be quite severe in a workshop.

It is very likely that many of you have dull chisels at home that have fallen into disrepair. These tools can be restored, repaired, and given a keen edge, before being put back into service, with regular spot maintenance.

I picked up a second-hand Stanley 5000 series chisel. It had some surface rust and the edge had nicks and dings in it, meaning that restoration required a repair phase in addition to a sharpening and honing phase.

After the first stage of repair, which involved knocking off the surface rust with steel wool and 600 grit abrasive paper, the second stage required an initialisation step, as in the preparation of a new chisel. That is the flattening and lapping of the chisel back. This is done once in the life of a chisel before its first use and is subsequently maintained with some light buffing.

For me, lapping begins on the diamond stones. They are flat and

stay that way for the life of the stone, if cared for properly. I work the back on coarse and fine stones until I achieve a consistent scratch pattern across the first few centimetres from the cutting edge (*fig 2*). This area is what references off the wood during a chop cut and drives the chisel in a predictable direction. It is therefore very important in the chopping of clean mortises.

Once I have achieved flatness, I move to my home-made lapping plate, which is, essentially, a flat piece of pool fencing glass about 12 mm thick. To its surface, I have adhered quarter-sheets of 14 different grits of SC abrasive paper, from 120 grit 7000 grit. There is a reason for using 14 grits instead of 3, for example, however the rationale for it is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say, the smaller the grit jumps, the shorter the time required to spend at any one grit. This translates to a much faster lapping. By the end of the lapping process on this plate, I am left with a flat and polished chisel back and that is for the life of the chisel.

The mirror polish achieved is not an aesthetic pursuit (*fig 3*). When an abrasive is applied, it leaves scratches. Essentially, it leaves the surface existing in two planes: the surface and the valley of the scratches, with the size of the grit representing the distance between the two planes. As the size of the grit diminishes, that distance also diminishes. At 7000 grit and upwards the scratches are imperceptible, meaning that the surface and valleys have approached as near to the same plane as possible, representing the truest level of flatness.

Sharpness is defined by the meeting point of two flat planes. By now we have the back flat. The sharpness will appear when its meeting plane, namely



Figure 1. Stanley 5000 series chisel prior to restoration. Image by author.

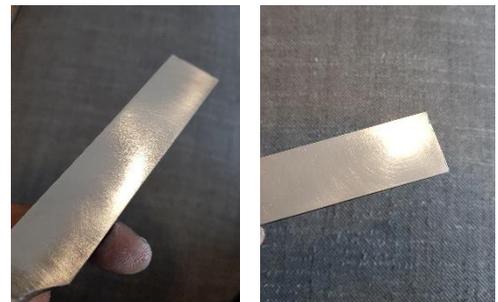


Figure 2. Chisel lapped to flat on a coarse and fine diamond stone (left) and on 180 grit SC abrasive paper (right). Image by author.



Figure 3. The chisel is lapped and polished on a home-made lapping plate. These are the results of lapping on 1000 grit (left) and 3000 grit (right). Image by author.

the bevel, is also flat and meets the back plane at the cutting edge all the way across the width of the chisel. To ensure that the bevel is also flat, and square, I prefer to use a honing guide. There is a counter-culture of free-hand sharpening a bladed tool, which is admirable. It is a skill to be learned and respected. However, I find that even the finest muscle memory fails to produce a flatness or a squareness of a grind that is comparable to that produced with mechanical assistance. A honing guide is essentially an angled clamp that holds the chisel or plane iron square to the abrasive during grinding. It has a wheel that rolls freely on the abrasive surface. It also varies the angle of presentation of the bevel to the abrasive, by the protrusion of the chisel past the edge of the guide. In my guide's case, when the chisel protrudes past the edge of the guide by 40 mm, it will ensure the bevel is ground at 25°. If the chisel protrudes 30 mm, it will grind the bevel at 30°. There are many styles of guide. The cheaper ones are commonly available and can be fraught with squareness issues which can generally be compensated for with technique. Premium retailers have now come on the market with expensive, complicated, guides which are nevertheless a much superior product and provide unmatched perfection in the sharpening process.

The third stage of repair is the establishment of the primary bevel. This can be done on carborundum oil stones, diamond stones or grinders if there are edge defects to repair. Otherwise, my personal preference is aluminium oxide (AO) impregnated waterstones.

In this case, since the edge was damaged, I applied a heavy grind, alternating between extra coarse and coarse diamond stones (*fig. 4*), when one stone bottomed out in the grind. Alternating like this, speeds the steel removal as you are not wasting work when the grit has bottomed out and steel cutting efficiency has plummeted. In my case, I had to remove almost one millimetre of steel to get beyond a deep ding the edge. This stage established a primary bevel at 25° by its completion. While macroscopically flat, it had coarse grit scratches in it. If this bevel had been allowed to meet the polished back it would have resulted in a serrated edge that would not have cut effectively, as only the tips of the



Figure 4. Establishment of the primary bevel on coarse and fine diamond stones. Image by author.

serrations would have been sharp. This meant that I had to move to the sharpening stages which are concerned with establishing a micro-bevel. The first stage of sharpening is to create and polish the micro-bevel that will produce our cutting edge. It is achieved by applying the now relatively flat primary bevel to a 4000 grit abrasive at a presentation angle of 30° (*fig. 5*). My preference is for AO waterstones. The 25° primary bevel has a less substantial tip so it will structurally suffer in hardwoods or cuts with heavy pressure. The creation of a micro-bevel of 30° bulks up the tip making it more impervious while also flattening out the serrated portion of the bevel that meets the back, to give our cutting edge.

It only takes a few seconds of work to create the micro-bevel on 4000 grit, after which it is polished by applying it to a 16,000 grit waterstone. If one cannot find an abrasive in this grit one may leave this step and move onto the next part of the sharpening stage, the honing step.

When steel is ground on a flat abrasive, as we have been doing, the process leaves a burr on the opposite edge. This is steel that, when ground so thinly, bent upwards instead of remaining rigid and being ground off. It can be seen in most cases and felt on the opposite edge. When the burr spans across the whole edge, one can be certain that the abrasive has ground a plane that spans the width of the chisel. The burr itself, however, is a problem. It obscures the cutting edge keeping the chisel dull. It cannot be stripped off as it is firmly attached to the very thin steel edge you have created, and aggressive pulling will avulse microscopic chunks of thin steel out of your edge, leaving dull spots. Dull spots appear exponentially faster because of the heavier pressure required behind the cut to compensate for reduced performance.

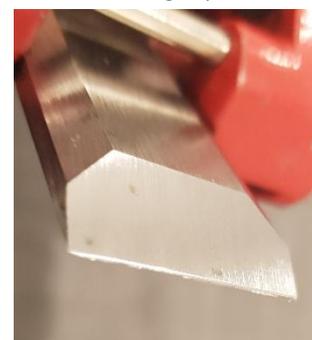


Figure 5. Establishment of the secondary bevel on aluminium oxide impregnated waterstones. Image by author.

Honing is the process of performing an ultra-fine grind on a leather strop, coated with 30,000 grit chromium oxide buffing compound. It helps tease the burr off by soft grinding that film of steel from both sides of its attachment to the edge, until it is so thin it falls away, leaving a pristine edge (*fig. 6*). If one omitted the polishing step of the micro-bevel on 16,000 grit, then this step is even more necessary. This honing step also puts a mirror polish on your two meeting planes meaning that the edge formed is as close to razor sharp as possible by hand.

Once you have a nice sharp edge on your chisel you will notice how much more easily it performs smooth cuts. From this point, ongoing maintenance is regularly achieved by a couple of quick passes on a high grit abrasive (between 4000 and 8000 grit) that sits beside your work, followed by a few passes on your chromium oxide-coated strop. This will keep the edge honed and prevent the chisel from falling into such disrepair that warrants the full restoration process described above. Eventually, with good maintenance, the constant honing of the micro bevel will extend it further and further up the primary bevel. At some point you may wish to re-establish the primary bevel and follow the steps from there.

The process of restoration and repair can be time consuming. The process of maintenance can be completed in 30 seconds. It is well worth the investment, and your enjoyment of woodworking, not to mention the quality of your work, will reflect the care given to that all important cutting edge on your bladed tools.

Visakan, or Visa, as he calls himself, only joined the Shed in February 2020. As you can see from his article, he is passionate about the sharpening process. When I asked him about sharing his knowledge with fellow Shed members, he replied: "As for helping the shed members, I would consider it an honour to do so in any way you see fit."



Figure 6. Freshly sharpened chisel after the removal of the burr by stropping. Image by author.



Figure 7. Testing the sharpness of the new edge by paring a translucent shaving off mahogany end grain. Image by author.

Report from the US - the Harsh Realities of Being A Wedding Photographer During COVID-19

While this story is not related to woodworking, it does relate to the horrific attitudes about the risks of COVID-19 in the U.S., much discussed at lunch-time in the Shed.

Published Dec 17, 2020 DPReview, Gannon Burgett

A recent report out of South Texas, reveals the harsh reality of being a wedding photographer in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. An article, shared by *Texas Monthly*, reporter Emily McCullar, tells the story of a wedding photographer who was diagnosed with COVID-19 after it was revealed the groom of the party had tested positive for COVID-19 and didn't inform the wedding photographer.



The photographer, who remains unnamed throughout the article, was informed of the groom's positive diagnosis by a bridesmaid in the party. But not before the photographer had spent 'an hour or two inside the unmasked wedding party' taking photographs. The photographer said '[the bridesmaid] was looking for me to be like, "Oh, that's crazy," like I was going to agree with her that it was fine.'

That wasn't the case though. The photographer suffers from asthma, a serious comorbidity factor that can increase the risks of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. Additionally, the photographer has three kids and a husband at home that she didn't want to infect, should she end up COVID-19 positive.

After discovering the groom's secret, the photographer and her assistant left. *Texas Monthly* notes 'her exit was tense.' 'The wedding planner said it was the most unprofessional thing she'd ever seen [...] Bridesmaids accused her of heartlessly ruining an innocent woman's wedding day.' The photographer even recollected a bridesmaid telling her 'I'm a teacher, I have fourteen students. If I'm willing to risk it, why aren't you?'

After leaving, the photographer 'cancelled her Thanksgiving plans with family, sent her kids to relatives' houses so they wouldn't get sick, and informed the brides of her upcoming weddings that she'd be subcontracting to other photographers,' says *Texas Monthly*. Sure enough, a few days after the wedding, the photographer started feeling symptoms and eventually tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

The photographer said the couple whose wedding she was photographing 'didn't care' about the diagnosis and 'didn't offer to compensate her for the test, nor did they apologize for making her sick.'

This incident is far from an isolated one. There appears to be little regard for the protocols suggested for mitigating the spread of COVID-19, a disease that's confirmed to have [killed over 302,000 individuals](#) in the United States alone.

A report details statements from other photographers who share their experiences of trying to shoot weddings throughout the pandemic. A reoccurring theme is a lack of masks, proper social distancing and little means of sanitation options, such as hand sanitizer.

Author – Philip Hirshbein

Editor – Tom Gait