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Remember, if I cannot break it, no-one can!

027 491 3868 Clive Wilson (Tutor)
Issue No 34 - Friday 20th October

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TT's TOP TURNING for this week



Another new turner making excellent progress.

Here is **SHAUN O'REGAN** looking very pleased with his macro wood rolling pin. Handle shape replication was the main challenge of this project and our Shaun managed the task with skill. Now the next challenge is to whip up a batch of scones using his new culinary gadget to see if it works OK.

Hawaiian Koa



Koa Wood is legendary in Hawaii. Not only is this amazing wood native to Hawaii but it is known for the deep rich colors and varied grain pattern. Koa has honored heritage in Hawaii and is highly revered and sacred.

Koa in battle. The word “*koa*” means “*warrior*” in Hawaiian. The warriors of King Kamehameha the Great, created [canoes](#) and weapons from a wood plentiful on the Big Island of Hawaii. This wood became synonymous with the warriors themselves, and it became known as koa.

Some of the early [Hawaiian weapons](#) were called “*lei-o-mano*.” These weapons were made of [shark’s teeth](#), marlin bills, and koa wood. They were often used for hand-to-hand combat and were highly effective with slashing and ripping the flesh in one cross-body motion, leaving the unfortunate victim eviscerated and an example of the power of the conquering warriors.

In the late 1700’s, King Kamehameha and his warriors traveled up the Hawaiian Island chain, uniting all the islands under his rule. Undoubtedly, koa wood played a significant role in the great king’s quest to bring the Hawaiian Islands together.

Koa for the masses. In years that followed, koa wood was already so highly regarded that it was “*kapu*” or prohibited for anyone to possess koa

wood except the Hawaiian monarchs and *ali'i* royalty class. After the great king's death, his *widow* *Kaahumanu* and son *Liholiho* abandoned the kapu system, thus allowing all Hawaiians to possess koa wood.



Due to its widespread availability throughout the Hawaiian Islands, koa wood was used for every aspect of early Hawaiians' life. Food was served in carved out **Koa bowls** called "*umeke*." Cutting and carving instruments for daily living called "*nihō 'oki*" were made from koa and shark's teeth. These instruments were used in the same way as today's x-acto knives.

The first surfboards were made of **koa**. More importantly, koa was used to make many Hawaiian outrigger canoes for fishing, sailing, and traversing islands.

In later years, "*malihini*" settlers from other countries introduced small stringed musical instruments that the Hawaiians called "*ukulele*," which were almost always made with **koa wood**.

Koa vs. Cattle. During the 1800's, land on the Big Island was gobbled up with enterprising ranchers hoping to use these wide tracts of land to raise herds of cattle. Unfortunately, large tracts of koa forests were eliminated to make way for grazing cattle.

North of **Hilo, Hawaii**, there is an area now called **umikoa**, which was once a **dense koa forest** owned by King Kamehameha the Great. Unfortunately, almost all the koa trees were eliminated for herds of cattle that roamed the region. Additionally, other livestock introduced to Hawaii, including pigs and goats, would graze on young koa seedlings before they had a chance to mature.



Here's a photo of me in Hawaii, taking a photo of me standing in front of a huge turning of Hawaiian Koa wood. **Wow that's big!** **Clive**



Carved Koa wood on sale for \$15,000.

Tough luck – I was short of \$14,995.00 and so couldn't bring it back to NZ

Very often, fences used to separate plantations on the Big Island were built from Koa. This was before westerners or "*malihini*" came to regard Koa as a beautiful resource.



Koa Continues. In spite of decades of without attention or regard, today koa continues to grow on all Hawaiian Islands, particularly the Big Island. The rich volcanic soil of this largest, youngest island yields koa that is particularly dark and red. The most beautiful koa wood as a wavy, fluttering cross-grain pattern called "curly," which is sometimes referred to as fiddle back. Only 10% of all koa is "curly."



Koa has never been regarded as an endangered species, and it is certainly far from extinct. Due to self-management and the partnership of private and State interests, there is more koa growing in Hawaii now than 10 or 20 years ago.

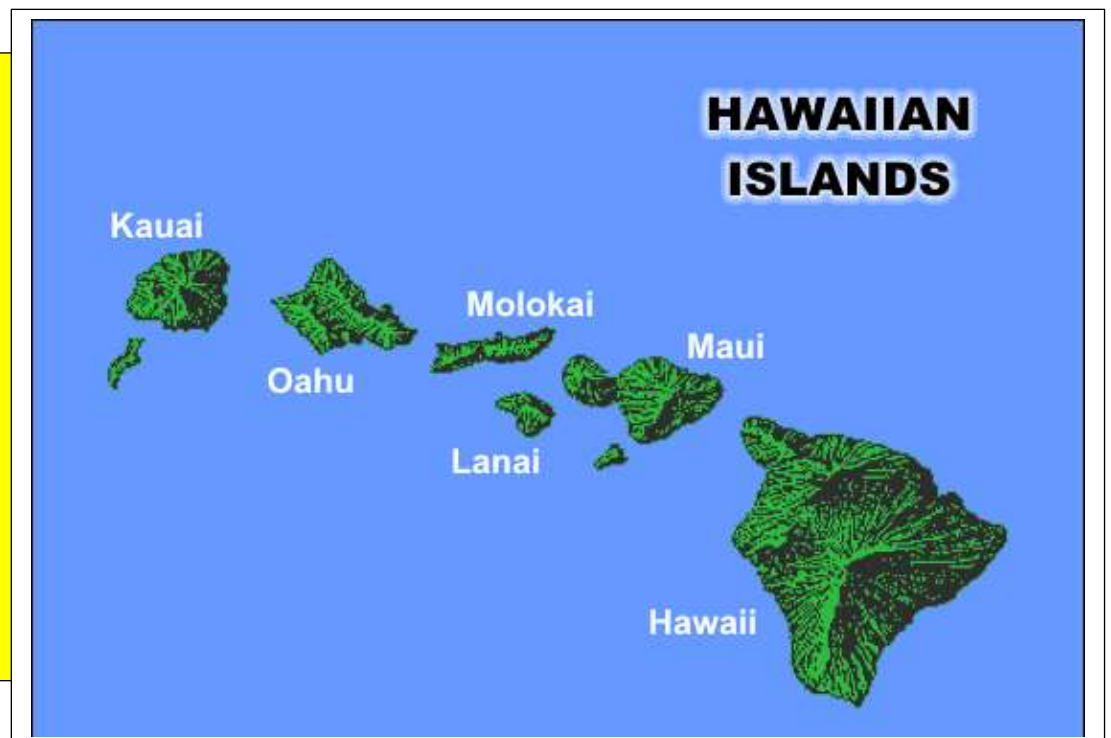
Green and Growing. Koa trees have a natural life cycle of about 50-80 years due to the natural rot and decay that occurs to the trees over time. If you ever have a chance to visit the mid-elevations on the Big Islands, you will see that the circle of life continues as new koa trees are growing amidst trees that have naturally died and fallen.

Big Island landowners today do not cut down any live [koa trees](#). On the contrary, when dead koa trees are removed from the mid-level elevations, new koa seedlings are quick to sprout. Today, the fences keep the cattle and pig out of the areas where new koa trees are growing. Ironically, the fences once erected to keep cattle within boundaries are now erected to keep the cattle out of the areas where young koa trees are growing.

Today, the biggest user of koa wood is [Martin & MacArthur](#), a local company that has been making fine [koa furniture](#) and home accessories in Hawaii for over 50 years, longer than any other company in the history of Hawaii. (www.MartinandMacArthur.com) Owners of the Oahu-based company regularly go to the Big Island to hand-select the koa wood used for their gracious furniture. All the wood comes from previously dead and fallen trees. In fact, Martin & MacArthur is the leader in reforesting Koa for future generations. The company was also one of the first to support the farming of Koa in the very area north of Hilo that was once the koa forest of King Kamehameha.

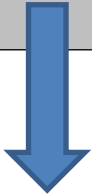
Koa has a rich history in the heritage of Hawaii. Fortunately, koa will remain a vital and thriving resource in Hawaii for future generations to enjoy.

*Acknowledgement:
Michael Tam, a local
Hawaiian writer and proud
supporter of the
reforestation of koa in
Hawaii.*



IMPORTANT DATES

to put in your diaries.



Saturday 4th November 9-12noon

WORKING BEE at the clubrooms to sort and process wood, lathe servicing and general tidy up

Sunday 3rd December 11.00am - 3.00pm

Christmas function at the Wiseley residence.

Saturday 21st October

TERRY SCOTT demonstration day at the clubrooms .

8.30am mobile shop operating

Demonstration starts about 9.15am

(Might be a good idea to bring a camp chair with you in case we run out of seats)



GIDEON's CORNER

Guess who has been busy again this week.

The pyrography work is a bit special too!

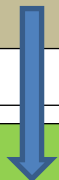


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