

This week's TUTOR'S TIDINGS



Week 9
Friday 1st April, 2016


COCOBOLO
(Dalbergia Retusa)

BEAUTIFUL WOODS of the WORLD
(No 3 in a series of 10)

Cocobolo is a tropical hardwood of Central American trees belonging to the genus *Dalbergia*. Only the heartwood is used; this is typically orange or reddish-brown in color, often with a figuring of darker irregular traces weaving through the wood. The sapwood (not often used) is a creamy yellow, with a sharp boundary with the heartwood. The heartwood changes color after being cut.

The heartwood is dense; some cocobolo has a specific gravity of over 1.0, and will sink in water.

Because it stands up well to repeated handling and exposure to water, a common use is in gun grips and knife handles. It is very hard, fine textured, and dense, but is easily machined, although due to the abundance of natural oils, the wood tends to clog abrasives and fine-toothed saw blades, like other very hard, very dense tropical woods. Due to its density and hardness, even a large block of the cut wood will produce a clear musical tone if struck. **Cocobolo** can be polished to a lustrous, glassy finish.

| Cocobolo Tree: | Lumber & Grain Pattern: |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |

Oil content

Cocobolo heartwood contains oil. This oil lends a strong, unmistakable floral odor even to well-seasoned wood and occasionally stains the hands with prolonged exposure. The high natural oil content of the wood makes it difficult to achieve a strong glue joint and can inhibit the curing of some varnishes, particularly oil-based finishes. Acetone may be used to remove surface oils before gluing. The oil can induce allergic reactions if inhaled or exposed to unprotected skin and eyes. A dust collection system, coupled with the use of personal protective equipment such as respirators, is highly recommended when machining this wood.

Cocobolo is yielded by two to four closely related species of the genus *Dalbergia*, of which the best known is *Dalbergia retusa*, a fair-sized tree, reported to reach 15–25 meters in height and one foot in diameter; this is probably the species contributing most of the wood in the trade. Because of the high value of the timber, the trees yielding it have been heavily exploited, so they have become rare outside of national parks, reserves, and plantations. Only relatively small amounts of this prized wood reach the world market, and it is expensive.

USES: Besides its use in gun grips and knife handles, cocobolo is favored for fine inlay work for custom high-end cue sticks, police batons, pens, brush backs, and musical instruments, especially guitars, drums and basses



Some woodwind instruments, such as clarinets, oboes, and bagpipes, have been successfully made using cocobolo instead of the normal grenadilla (African blackwood). Further uses include veneers, bowls, jewelery boxes, pens, duck and goose calls, and other expensive specialty items.

My favorite turning wood!



Beautiful, rich, red-brown grain colours of COCOBOLO

CLUB NEWS

The current wood turning courses are drawing to a close and new courses are about to begin.

The next **TUESDAY daytime course starts on TUESDAY 12th April. BRIAN DALY** has advised he wishes to take up a spot behind a lathe once again so we look forward to his return. We have vacancies for this course so any past member wishing to re-activate his/her creative skills should definitely come and join us.

The next **THURSDAY evening course starts on Thursday 7th April.** I have reserved places for two members who have given prior notice they intend to return - **MAURICE BOWKETT and PAUL DOWSETT.**

CLUB FUNDRAISER



Here's a shot of toolmaker **DAVID MOLLEKIN**.

Many thanks to David for his generosity in donating of a set of two excellent turning tools.

These snazzy items will be auctioned to raise funds for the club.

Picture left shows two specialist chisels made by club member **DAVID MOLLEKIN** who donated the tools to the club as a fundraiser. Many thanks to you David.

As per your request, the chisels were offered for auction during the Tuesday and Thursday sessions and the highest bidder was **DONAL LYNCH**. Thanks to you too Donal.

The top one in picture is a **finisher** tool fitted with a **round tungsten cutter**. These tips are so sharp they cut through wood with relative ease.

The lower chisel is a **roughing tool** that is fitted with a **square tungsten cutter**.

WAIKATO SHOW 2016

This show starts next Friday and runs for three days. Our club will have a stall operating featuring turning demonstrations and displays of turning projects for sale.

Members wishing to offer turnings for sale should ensure the wood is named and priced. Those volunteers attending our stall will then sell on your behalf with 10% of the price being retained for club funds.

If you wish to sell items you should bring these to the workshop **no later than next Thursday evening** during the usual Thursday club night.

What's happening in our workshop?

A great mixture of Kauri wood, resin with embedded paua shell, lots of patience and turning skill. The raised inner rim gives this bowl an appearance of one bowl holding another bowl.

*Superb embellishment **CHRIS***



JAN makes steady progress with her block of pin oak. Jan has created a great shape and design for her bowl.

This wood responds particularly well to the use of a scraper.

***DAVE** meets the challenge of drilling a long horizontal hole which will become the cavity for his pepper mill.*

A new, specialist tool was used to turn a couple of beads top and bottom along its length.





***DAVID R** has another go at inlay resin work but this one will be done in two stages. The centre will be removed and filled with more resin and then the creative fun begins.*

I can't wait to see the finished project.

*Two club members **GRANT** and **RICHARD** take a break to share turning ideas.*



***CHRIS** has put his resin inlay bowl aside and launches into making a pepper/salt mill using a length of rich, brown Kauri.*

Thursday session capers



Our Celebration Shared Supper



An old tradition dating back to the Avalon campus days.

The final night of a 10-week course is celebrated with a shared supper.

This year the evening included the display of items made during a whole-club challenge project.



**Thursday session members
MISSION NOT-IMPOSSIBLE
PROJECT**

All wood blocks were donated to those members opting into the challenge. The only stipulation was that all completed turning projects had to feature any form of embellishment on the wood.

Pictures above show the excellent outcomes of members' creative and turning skills.

That's it for this week.
Have a safe and productive weekend.
GO THE CHIEFS! *Clive*

