

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 25 March 2015, 1930 - 2130

Venue: The SHED, Lions Youth Haven, Kambah Pool Road, KAMBAH ACT 2902

Helping Hands

Our March meeting presenter, Phil Colman, is the Coordinator of the Guild's Student Program. Along with other esteemed Guild mentors, Mike Cammell, John McKenna and David Dunnet, and with the ready assistance of Shed Boss, Terry O'Loughlin, Phil runs weekly tailor-made workshops for disadvantaged students during school terms.

Under the Guild's Licence Agreement we have an obligation to provide a community benefit, such as this Student Program.

The Program is specifically aimed at meeting the needs of disadvantaged students who have learning difficulties, or are from troubled homes. Phil's talk will focus on the regular Thursday workshops; how suitable projects have evolved; and in particular the skills required in teaching, mentoring and encouraging these students.



In the photo above, Phil is seen at right, in mentoring "uniform", along with one of his students and a school representative. The Bird Feeder proudly on display is a typical introductory project for teaching basic hand-tool skills.

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Please note that the opinions expressed in articles in this Newsletter are those of the authors alone, and do not necessarily reflect the views, or positions, of the Woodcraft Guild of the ACT Inc as an organization.

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PRESIDENTIAL PALAVER



Please read the first section below especially, and register to attend through the link given below.

Guild Planning Meeting: This important event will be held on **Saturday, 30 May, from 10.00 am until 4.00 pm**. I realize that there are other things going on, and that some people will have to miss most of the day, but even if you can only come for part of the day, you will still have the chance to contribute to the planning process. For those that can come along (and I hope that is most of you) the day will roughly follow this agenda:

10.00 – 10.05	Introduction and Agenda (grab Morning Tea beforehand)
10.15 – 11.45	The Shed — expansion; dust management; wiring; change of use
12.00 – 13.00	Equipment — additions; deletions; what is important, what is not
13.00 - 13.30	Lunch (Bring your own)
13.30 – 15.00	Five Working Groups as follows:
	1. Community Activities — shows, exhibitions, sales
	2. Website and Newsletter — managing public image
	3. Commissions — wood policy, safety, training
	4. Special Interest Groups — how many; what focus; affiliations
	5. New Members — training courses and workshops
15.00-15.15	Afternoon Tea
15.15- 16.00	Summary and Conclusion
16.00 – later	BBQ and Beer

All are welcome to the morning discussions, which will be in plenary session. The afternoon is just as crucial, but not everyone will have an interest in all of the matters for consideration, so please respond to the link below and nominate yourself for one of the five smaller discussion groups in the afternoon. We need to have at least 100 of our 300+ members present to make this all worthwhile – be sure that you are one of them. **Register to attend through this link:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SWRBZQ9>

Shows and Exhibitions

The Guild has been ‘on show’ recently, and there are more shows coming up. The Guild stand at the National Museum of Australia on Australia Day was very successful, both in displaying the skills of members, and in sales. The Canberra Show at EPIC more recently was less successful than expected — whether this was because of other competing Canberra entertainment, or lack of interest, is not clear, but the number and quality of entries into the Woodcraft Section of the Craft competition was particularly disappointing.

We have the National Folk Festival coming up at Easter – five days of music and entertainment, with the Guild again displaying and demonstrating woodcraft. Whilst sales of members’ woodwork are important — it is great having people go away with real wooden items, locally crafted by passionate woodworkers and Guild members — a more fundamental purpose of the Guild is to encourage, nurture, support, educate and inspire others (and each other) in the myriad ways of wood and woodcraft. The success of the Guild is largely because we achieve some of these objectives well — or at least I think we do. Yet we have relatively few members coming forward with competition entries...?

We know that there are great skills among the membership, and the ‘Show and Tell’ session last month was an opportunity for us to see on display items that normally do not come ‘out of the woodwork’. Some, like myself, are reticent about showing anything, given the intimidatingly high standards around, but overcoming this ‘fear of failure by invidious comparison’ is liberating, once achieved. So how do we encourage more of this? Well, another ‘Show and Tell’ session is planned for later in the year. In addition, there is our Annual Exhibition, in conjunction with the Timber & Working with Wood Show in September.

This is also the Guild's Annual Competition, where we, as a group, show the community what we can achieve as a product of our Special Interest Groups. The trick now is to get going in planning and executing pieces to put in the Competition — without fear; with the expectation of good feedback; and with a sense of excitement, as well as achievement. 350 members? 350 entries would be cool! No matter what your skill level, be in it! Let's make it more exciting than ever. Help is needed in the organisation of this — I will be tapping shoulders!

Other News:

Monthly Meetings: Speakers and happenings for monthly meetings are being bedded down, and a full program for the year will be available shortly. We will be mixing local and interstate speakers; how-to sessions; and reintroducing quick and dirty competitions involving wood, not just attendance (remember the longest shaving). We will also be starting a tour around various timbers each month — a five-minute timber-watch. Other ideas for the monthly meetings are welcome — email me!

Workshops: Thankyou to all of you who responded to the Workshop Survey. It was most helpful, and we have started mapping out workshops for the next 18-24 months. This will give everyone time to lock workshops into their diaries well ahead of time. We are planning beginner, intermediate and advanced sessions in a range of woodcraft areas. You may be advanced in one area of woodcraft, but less so in another, so some beginner workshops should appeal to seasoned woodies, as well as novices.

Plant and Equipment: The new router and router table is up and running — it seems to be much in demand, and well used. New router bits are being purchased, and will add to the collection available for use. The purchase of additional battery-powered drills will lessen the waiting frustration when they are in general use.

Our thanks to David Dunnet, who has overseen improvements to electrical supply around the shed, mainly by splitting some over-extended circuits. This has made some things easier and safer to use, but we appreciate that it may not have solved all of the problems. The Planning Day will determine the directions we take with further improvements in this domain, so please come along and put in your two bob's worth!

Graham Reynolds, President 0413 053 978 president@woodcraftguild.org.au



The Dark Side

or

Why we hate acrylic pens!

(sorry, Jim)

EDITORIAL EFFLUVIA



“It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things.”

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

(Couldn't have said it better myself, Nicco ...)

Editor

COMING EVENTS

Internal

Next Monthly Guild Meeting:

Wednesday, 25 March 2015, 1930, at the Shed. Speaker TBA.

External

Next Triton Club Meeting:

Wednesday, 01 April 2015 – (For further information, visit the club's website at <http://www.tocact.org.au>)

National Folk Festival:

02~06 April 2014, at EPIC – Once again the Guild will feature among the “Tradition-Bearers” at this prestigious national event, and you should have already volunteered to folk the Guild stand (**NB: exhibitor passes will, however, be very limited**). An excellent woodcraft sales opportunity, especially for anything “folksy” — **Dan Steiner** will be coordinating Sales for this event, and can be contacted on **0415 133 606**, or at dansteiner1@gmail.com ; and following Bill Hodgett's unfortunate illness, **Owen Stewart** is now coordinating volunteers, and can be contacted on **0412 468 292** , or at owen@owenco.com.au

ERRATUM

In my Mallet article in last month's “Shed Notes”, the word “shot” somehow sneaked in after “lead” in the section on weighted mallet heads [*Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa ... Ed*].

So-called “lead shot” is **not** a good form to use, because of the wasted space between the pellets of shot, and because it is no longer made from lead, and is lighter. [*Non-toxic shot is now made out of bismuth, tungsten, or other elements or alloys with a density similar to, or greater than, lead. Ed*]

Stick to **safely** making your own lead plug, as described in my article. It's more fun, anyway.

Alan Casimir

RAFFAN RECOMMENDS

Something **completely** different from Richard this month:
[and I must speak to Liz about the time he spends on the Internet ...Ed]

https://www.youtube.com/embed/pD_yQZ4iNjY?rel=0

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) REPORTS

(SIG Coordinators: please note the deadline for newsletter input: **2nd Friday of each month.**)

Miniatures & Mandrel (aka Pen) SIG: Last meeting, by popular demand, Jim Venis once again demonstrated the turning of a very nice acrylic pen [*aka The Dark Side. Ed*]. I will admit to being impressed by the different colours of pens that Jim had to show us. I was especially taken with two he had that were made up of “leftover” bits glued together — they reminded me of my quilting days! Actually, I was so impressed that I acquired some acrylic blanks so that I too could make some “quilt” pens. This, by no stretch of the imagination, means that I have converted away from wooden pens — God (and Rod) forbid!



I forgot to mention at the last meeting that the April SIG (scheduled for 04 Apr) won't be on, because of the National Folk Festival that weekend and the unavailability of someone else to open up. So to all the new pen turners out there who are chomping at the bit, you will have to wait until the 02 May meeting, or come along to any of the other three turning sessions available to you during the month.

Gai Simpson 6231 4139 mandrel@woodcraftguild.org.au

Furniture SIG: The SIG met on Saturday, 14 March, starting with a demonstration / discussion of the Lee Valley shooting plane and shooting board, and a hand-made version. Alan Walker then demonstrated the use of the Tormek wet-stone grinding machine. Members then proceeded to work on their own projects.

The next meeting will be on Saturday, 11 April, starting at 1pm. A simple router jig for producing mortices will be demonstrated at the start of the meeting.

Mathew Klein 6231 0475 furniture@woodcraftguild.org.au

Saturday Turning SIG: Another gentle reminder: the Saturday Turning SIG now meets on the **third Saturday of each month**, so in March that will be **Saturday 21**, commencing at **10.00am**

Colin Parkinson has kindly agreed to do a presentation for us on segmented turning, as he outlines below:

“I have been asked to do a presentation on segmented turning, which covers a number of styles and their required techniques, as well as your normal turning skills.

At the SIG I propose to talk about segmented turning, styles, what interests me, and where I hope to go. This will be accompanied by a selection of jigs and demo samples of some of the processes. I hope to make this a joint discussion, as I know that there are a number of members looking at segmented turning, or who have made pieces in the past, so bring along any that you have for a show and tell, no matter the condition.

Also, last year I had the opportunity to attend the Segmented Woodturners Symposium in Texas, USA, which showcased, in the instant gallery, a collection of some very inspirational pieces— I have some photos I would like to show you.”

We will have the shed open by 10:00 for the first turning session; Colin's demonstration will be from 11:30 until the lunch break at 12:30; turning will resume from 13:00 until the normal clear-up / clean-up time of 15:30; and the shed will close at 16:00

All members interested in turning are very welcome.

Satnam Singh 0481 004 674 & Mark Hoare 0424 952 255 turningsat@woodcraftguild.org.au

Between Centres Turning SIG: Only a small group witnessed the turning demonstrations at Jim Reid's workshop on 14 March, but there was no lack of interest among those present, as Jim demonstrated two quite different turning techniques.

The first was a burl paper-weight, with a rather old penny as an insert. This demonstration was completed quite quickly — turned, sanded and polished in a matter of 15 minutes (something to do with the skill of the operator, it should be said). The photo at right shows the proud owner of the burl, Peter Croker.



The second demonstration was a continuation, from an earlier SIG, of a gable finial suitable for apartment housing decoration. This was larger and more complex, but Jim showed how a pattern could be used to lay out the design, and then proceeded to turn a piece, with the utmost skill, from a large billet of treated pine, as shown below.



An interesting and instructive SIG for those who took the time to enjoy the drive out to Jim's factory workshop. For those who are interested in attending the Between Centres SIG, the directions are as follows:

Take the **Barton Highway** out of Canberra, past Hall; before reaching Murrumbateman and a little way past a horse stud-farm on the right, turn right into **Gooda Creek Road**; continue one kilometre and turn left into **Goldfields Lane**, at the end of which (about 100 metres or so), bear right into Jim's property, "Waroonga". Drive through past the house to Jim's workshop at the rear.

Jim Venis 6241 1465 turningbc@woodcraftguild.org.au

Scrollsaw & Marquetry SIG: Our February meeting was well-attended. 17 members made a great start on scrollsaw-made animals, with plans provided by John Jervis and materials prepared by Ian Fitzpatrick and Scot Fitzsimons — our thanks to them. Some very creditable animals turned up at the March meeting.

David McEwan launched our ongoing diorama of an Aussie Country Town Between the Wars. Members are being encouraged to make individual pieces, and we hope to have a completed scene in time for the Annual Exhibition. Bev Bayley has undertaken to paint the ground canvas, supplied by Roger Gregerson, on which we will place buildings (like Robert Hogg's petrol station; Trevor Roach's church; David McEwan's house and hotel), and scenery (such as windmills by Robert Hogg and Ray Farmer; road and stream by Karen Holt; trees and animals by Alison Bloomfield). I'll have a go at 'fencing' (ta da!) [*We get the 'point', David — perhaps it's best to leave the dreadful puns to me ... Ed*]

Our March meeting turned into a 'chain gang' — wooden chain, made principally using the scrollsaw, was the order of the day, with Gai Simpson being the leader of the pack, having successfully produced a length of links by the end of the day. This was some compensation for the sad carving attempt she had shown at the last monthly Guild meeting.

Don Rowland's 'show and tell' included fine examples of stack-cutting in marquetry, with a set of coasters that used contrasting light and dark veneers.

We enjoyed the company of new members Karen and Bland Holt, Patrick Grierson, Satnam Singh and Chris Zoppou. A happy and productive time was had by all.

David French 0428 121 934 scrollsaw@woodcraftguild.org.au

THE FRONT BENCH

The Front Bench at the February meeting was the venue for "Show and Tell" by members with a wide range of interests, ranging from fine furniture crafted by Graham Reynolds and Fred Buckley, to a carved wooden chain by Gai Simpson, and turned stops for a barrel organ by David Dunnet. [*I forgot to take notes of all the presentations at the time — apologies to those I have omitted — and no-one was forthcoming with photos of the offerings, so that's the best I can do.*]

Editor

Feature Article

BUILDING A THIEN BAFFLE

Michael Still

For a while now, I've been meaning to play with making a Thien Baffle for my garage workshop. The motivation is that, while I have a quite nice 3HP dust extractor (for those in the market for such a thing — don't spend \$1,400 with some retailers — I am super-happy with my \$500 unit from Leda Machinery), I want to keep the number of times I change the bags to a bare minimum. I see the dust extractor as a way of controlling potentially dangerous very fine dust, whereas some of the machines in my workshop create a lot of very large shavings — the thicknesser seems like the most obvious culprit here. It would be cool to divert these larger shavings into a bin, where I can just use them as garden mulch, and then save the dust extractor bags for the fine and more dangerous dust.



At left you can see my 3HP dust extractor in its soundproofed box. The bag on the left shows the strata of large shavings from a typical thicknessing session.

So, what is a Thien Baffle? Named after Phil Thien, who developed it initially, a Thien Baffle is a way of building a cyclonic dust separator from pretty much any cylindrical container. Phil's website explaining his invention can be found at <http://www.jpthien.com/cy.htm>, although he has also kindly set up a discussion forum, where people building baffles can talk. Unfortunately for the Sunday afternoon woodie, Phil believes that everyone should tweak their own design for the baffle, so you won't find something simple like a SketchUp plan, or cut list, on his site.

The photo at right shows a Thien Baffle "sighted in the wild" (the image was borrowed from the discussion forum mentioned above). Mattias Wendell has also shot a good video of his hybrid Thien Baffle that he uses in his home-made dust extractor. This does show a plan, but is integrated into his whole dust extractor system, which is a bit further than I wanted to go.



Undaunted by the lack of a plan, I decided to build a prototype, to see how hard it could be. Mine is built from a metal garbage bin I was already using for woodturning shavings, which I decided could be repurposed for the baffle when I was using the thicknesser. I chose metal because it is more robust, but also because I am hoping it will reduce the amount of static electricity that the dust causes in the bin. I'm not too worried by explosions, but I theorize that static build-up could cause the fine dust to cling to the bin, instead of continuing on into the dust extractor bag.

I happened to have a couple of smaller sheets of 9mm marine ply handy. Most of the people online that I've seen have used thicker materials, but this is what I had on hand as the result of a previous failure to measure accurately, and it seems to work fine. I needed to make two wooden circles from these sheets. The first fits about 140mm down into the bin, and the second sits at the top of the bin (mine ended up being about 20mm down from the rim). For both of these, I measured the diameter across the bin at the right depth using a tape measure — this was made a lot easier because the metal bin has two seams for me to align with.

This measurement was then used to mark a circle on the ply using a circle-marking thingie I bought from Bunnings a few months ago, when my 12-year-old came home and announced that he had to build a working hydro-electric power station over the weekend, with zero notice (that's a whole other story and rant, but let's just say that we got it done.) I cut the circles out with a jigsaw — I would have used a bandsaw, except I don't have one. I've also seen people use a router to make these cuts, but that seemed like overkill for the task at hand.

The smaller of the two circles needs a channel cut in its side (you can see this detail in the photo above). The characteristics for this channel aren't well-documented, I think because it varies, based on the amount of airflow you can achieve with your extractor, as well as the size of the bin. I ended up going with a

channel that has a radius 34mm smaller than the circle, and had the channel cover 230 degrees of arc. Again, I marked the circle with the circle-drawing thingie, and then cut it out with the jigsaw.

These two circles are separated by rods. Thien used threaded rods, but I'm much too lazy to cut a rod to length and then file it so the thread still works — instead, I used 150mm bolts from Bunnings. So that the bolts keep the circles apart, I used some pieces of electrical conduit I had lying around to make spacers. Now would have been a good time to drill the holes in the two circles for the bolts to go through, though I did this step later. The first bolt has its holes drilled separately in each piece, with the holes being in the centre of the circles as marked by the circle-drawing thingie (I'm going to have to call it a compass eventually, I suppose). Then you can insert that bolt through both circles, and use it to align the other bolt holes.

I placed four other bolts through the two circles (a total of five bolts), spaced at approximately 90 degrees apart around the circumference of the bottom circle. That's probably overkill, and you need to be careful to avoid the places where you're going to mount 100mm PVC pipe connectors. That's mostly why I left the bolts until later, but it would be much easier to drill the holes first, when the PVC isn't in the way. Its up to you, really.

Now I just needed to place the PVC connectors. The inlet has a 90 degree elbow on it, and I went as far as to trim the corner off the end of the elbow, so that it was shooting the incoming air against the side of the bin. I have no idea if that was overkill or not, but I did get to use the big scary cutoff saw, so that made it worth it. The inlet is aligned so that it fires the air over the part of the rim of the smaller circle which has not had the channel cut out. The outlet is then placed behind the inlet, so that air travels around the entire circumference of the bin before being removed to the dust extractor. The basic idea here is that as the air travels around the circumference of the bin, the larger particles build up some momentum and continue in a spiral down the side of the bin, whilst the air and finer dust is removed to the extractor bag.



The photo at left shows my finished Thien Baffle.

Finally, I wanted to do a test run, so as shown at right, I hooked the Thien Baffle up to my thicknesser with some “Frankenplumbing”, and ran some pine through it.

I know at the beginning I said this was a prototype, but frankly the first attempt worked so well, I don't think I will make another. Check out the shavings in the bin! Also, there was no noticeable dust in the extractor bags after this thicknessing session.



Overall, I'm super-pleased with this little experiment. It only took an hour or so to build, and will significantly reduce the number of times I have to change the bags on the dust extractor.

Michael Still

OFF-CUTS

Miscellaneous Items of Interest

TIMBER SUPPLIES

There is still a fair bit of Cedar available, and plenty of turning blanks. As I have been away, I will prepare a more detailed summary of timber stocks for next month's issue.

Robin Cromer timbersales@woodcraftguild.org.au

TURNING COMPETITION—REMINDER

As mentioned previously, to be in the competition to win a Turner's Smock you have until the Saturday Turning SIG on **21 March** to produce a turned object (at least 80% lathe work) from timber drawn from the Turner's Shed. This object must be suitable for sale on behalf of the Guild at sales events; quirky and clever will probably enjoy an advantage.

Sturt Summer School participants and staff are not eligible to enter, nor are SIG Coordinators, or turning prize-winners in the Annual Competition — we would like this challenge to encourage some of our newer fledgling turners to have a go, and not be overawed by the old hands.

Dan Steiner, Rod Tier & Satnam Singh

REMINDER:

WORKSHOP ON SCROLLSAW AND FRETSAW MARQUETRY

As advertised in the February Newsletter, the Scrollsaw and Marquetry SIG will be offering a **two-day course in Marquetry at the Shed on two Saturdays, 23 and 30 May 2015, from 10am to 4pm**. The workshop will include training in double-bevel sawing, to produce high quality marquetry with no gaps between pieces. Participants will be able to work on several practice projects over the two days, and will be provided with instruction sheets, plans, veneers, saw blades and other materials. The registration fee (to be advised) will be based on the cost of materials, saw blades and the use of the Shed. Information about what to bring to the workshop will be sent to participants closer to the event.

The tutor will be Don Rowland, whose marquetry has appeared in the Guild's annual exhibitions over many years. The workshop is intended for beginners, but some previous experience in cutting wood with a scrollsaw, or fretsaw, would be an advantage. The Guild has only a few scrollsaws, and most participants will need to bring either their own scrollsaw, or a fretsaw. Fretsaws with a 10 or 12-inch (254 or 305mm) throat are the most suitable, and can be obtained on the Internet, but order early as some suppliers are overseas and stocks run out. The SIG has four fretsaw tables for use at the workshop, but it would be better to make your own (a plan of a fretsaw table was included in the February Newsletter). If you expect to bring your own scrollsaw, please be aware that single-speed scrollsaws, and those that take only pinned blades, are **unsuitable for marquetry**.

Places are limited to 10, and registrations close at the end of April. Expressions of interest may be sent to scrollsaw@woodcraftguild.org.au, with "Marquetry Workshop" as the subject. Places will be allocated on the basis of the order in which expressions of interest are received. Participants need to be financial members of the Woodcraft Guild ACT.

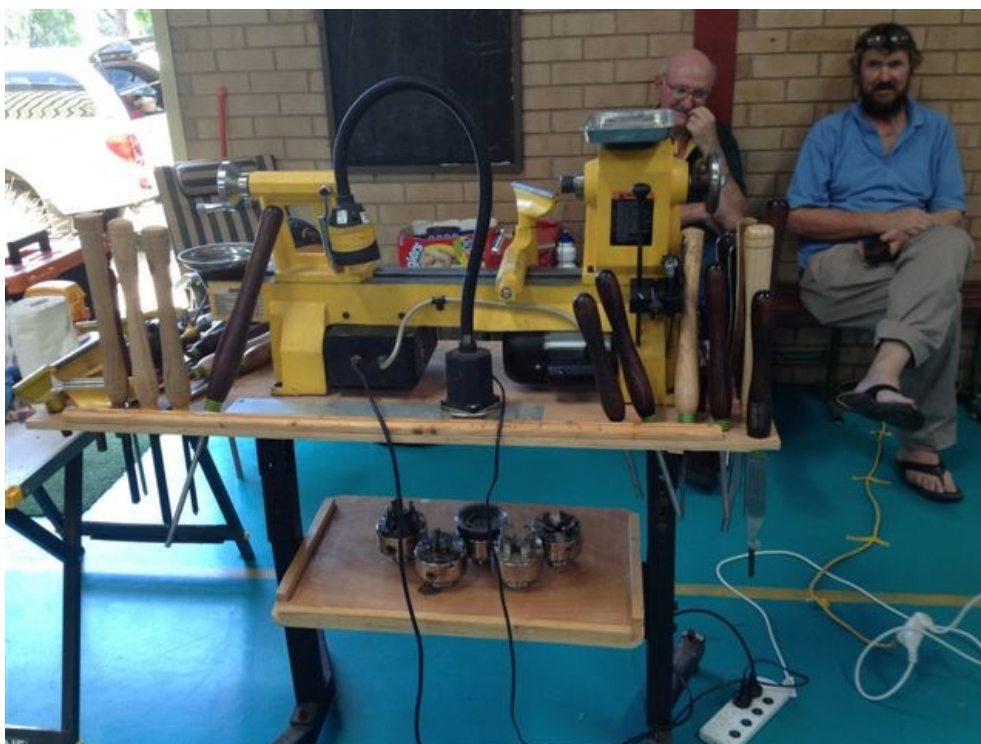
Don Rowland

WAGGA WAGGA TURNABOUT

Herewith some snaps from the Wagga Turnabout, held on the last weekend in February, and attended by a stalwart bunch of regulars, including Scott Fitzsimons, Peter Croker, Roger Gregerson, Chris Rumley, and Richard "Nutty" Nutt from Jindabyne (thanks to Nutty for the snaps):



Roger threatens something dramatic, while Scott and Peter look unconvinced.



*Scott and Peter are still thinking about their next move
(you can't rush these things ...).*

The Guild wishes to thank our Sponsors, in particular for their support of our 2014 Exhibition



WOODCRAFT GUILD-ACT



