

## **A 20 YEAR HISTORY (1998-2018)**

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

1998	13 June	Meeting to establish the Triton Owners Club
1998	October	First donation of toys to the Salvation Army
1998	November	Incorporation of "Triton Owners Club (Oyster Bay) NSW Inc."
1999	October	First issue of "Sawdust and Shavings"
2002		First fine woodworking competition "Al Usherwood Award" held
2003		First annual "Plank Competition" held
2004		First delivery of toys to Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick
2007		First contact with Sutherland Shire Council and David Ackroyd, Council's Manager Communities Unit.
2010	December	Club name changed to "Shire Woodworking Club Inc."
2011	January	Council advice of the availability of the Lilli Pilli premises
2011	October	Lease of Lilli Pilli premises commenced
2011	Oct-Dec	Club members renovated the premises
2011	December	First donation of toys at Christmas to Shire organisations
2012	January	All Club assets moved to Lilli Pilli
2012	March	Official Opening of the Workshop at Lilli Pilli
2012	May	Additional equipment acquired (jointer, table saw, band saw, dust collectors, scroll saw)
2012		Implementation of detailed operating procedures for each machine and member training (or refresher)
2012	November	Recognition in State Parliament and Hansard, courtesy Mark Speakman SC MP
2014	March	Full size model MRI machine made for Children's Hospital
2014	April	Front of premises levelled and paved
2015		Implementation of accreditation program for use of machines
2015	August	Installation of centralised ducted dust extraction system
2017	March	Kitchen replaced
2017	July	"Swish ball" table made for Vision Australia Caringbah
2017	November	Club nominated for SSC annual "Community Group of the Year" awards
2017	December	Purchase of two "Saw stop" table saws

The Shire Woodworking Club had its origins in 1998. A meeting was held on 18 April 1998 when 18 members of the Southern Region Woodturners at the Cubby House at Oyster Bay held a meeting to discuss the formation of a new woodworking club. The Triton company had offered to assist the new club, promising a Workcentre, router table, jigsaw and superjaws. They also offered to assist the new club financially with insurance, rent to the woodturners and costs to incorporate the club. At this meeting Alf Jordan and Alf Pandoleon were elected as inaugural Club Convenor and Club Secretary respectively.

On 13<sup>th</sup> June 1998, a further meeting was held where it was formally resolved to form a Triton Owners Group. 92 prospective members attended including still current members Fred Seligmann and John Lischeld. A number of operating procedures were established, including:

- Richard Elrick was elected as Treasurer
- Annual fee to be \$10.
- “Demo days” would be held bi-monthly on the second Saturday of the respective month.

The Triton company assisted the Club over the next few months with setting up the donated equipment and initial training.

The Club’s first project was to make toys to be sent to Papua New Guinea for tidal wave affected children. Each member was given a piece of timber in August 1998. Items presented two months later in October ranged from small animals to a billy cart. These were to be distributed through the Salvation Army. Fred Seligmann recalls the project had a sad ending as the Papua New Guinea Government had a ban on imported timber, and he believes that the toys were all burnt.

An Application was submitted to the Department of Fair Trading in November 1998 for the Incorporation of the Club, and included the following information:

- The objects of the proposed Club were “to promote better use of Triton workshop equipment”.
- The principal activities were to be “conducting meetings of Triton owners”.
- The likely income was “\$500 per annum” and likely to be derived from “annual subscriptions”.
- The likely expenditure was “\$500 per annum”.

The Application was approved and the “Triton Owners Club (Oyster Bay) NSW Inc” was incorporated the same month.

At the end of 1998 the Club had funds of \$569.46.

The new Club seemed to very quickly become involved in Community activities, either on its own or in conjunction with the woodturners.

Some examples from 1998-2002 include:

- The toys for Papua New Guinea as above.
- The Working with Wood Show
- Heritage days at the Cubby House
- Cubby House events variously called “market days”, “Charity days”, “arts and crafts shows” etc.
- Toy making for donation of toys to the Salvation Army to distribute at Christmas.

### **During the first few years:**

- Minutes of meetings show the new club was very focussed on training and the safe use of equipment.
- The Triton company provided additional equipment including two height winder kits, bevel attachment, random orbital sander and various small items. Triton representatives frequently attended meetings to continue demonstrations and training.
- Rent to the woodturners for the use of the Cubby House was \$450 pa.
- Lunches were provided on "Demo days" at a cost of \$5 and rotated between meat patties and sausages.

### **1999-2000**

- On 13 February 1999 Peter Mott became the "raffles king" - a position he still holds today.
- The first issue of "Sawdust and Shavings" was published in October 1999, edited by David Harrington.
- From January 2000 a "Mini day" was added to the program on the alternate months to the "Demo days". This meant in 2000 there was one meeting a month.
- At the end of 2000 the Club had funds of \$958.50.
- Discussions were held in 2000-01 to change the Club's name to Triton Woodworkers Club because the existing name gave the impression one had to own Triton equipment to join. This did not proceed because of the assumed costs involved to change the name.

### **2001-2003**

- Annual fees were increased to \$25 pa in August 2001.
- The "Al Usherwood Award" was established in 2002 to encourage members to enter an item of "Excellence". The first winner was Trevor Nicholson who entered a miniature chest of drawers.
- By the end of 2002 the Club's equipment included at least two Triton Workcentres and saws, planer attachment, extension table, router table and router, biscuit joiner, jigsaw, superjaws and Gifkin jig, together with the usual small accessories. A note at that time indicated that "the equipment has expanded way past the kit supplied by Triton and there's not a lot more we need, or could find room for".
- In January 2003, Bill Lewis made a workbench from timber recycled from the Elizabethan Bowling Club in Rockdale. This bench is still in use today.
- In September of that year, Barry Gardner was elected as Newsletter Editor.



- A "Pallet Competition" was first established in 2003, which was the forerunner of the very successful "Plank competition" which has continued to this day. I cannot find any reference to the entries or the winners in that first year, but the winner in 2004 was Les Noble who made a letterbox and a couple of small pull-along toys.

The Club from the outset appears to have become focussed very quickly on two major issues, namely excellence in woodworking (which includes emphasis on safety and training), and the production of toys for donation to charitable organisations to assist disadvantaged children. These ideals still exist to this day.

## **2004-2010**

- During the first decade of the 2000s, the Club continued to thrive, continuing with its primary aims and objectives. The “Demo days” were renamed maxi days and held monthly. The mini days were also held monthly, so there were three days per month when the Club occupied the Cubby House, for Committee meetings and maxi and mini days.
- A high priority was given to ensuring members were trained in the use of equipment and understood their safety obligations.
- Woodworking competitions continued, with a Plank Competition and Al Usherwood Award, both being judged in the second half of the year.
- Significant new equipment was purchased, including four ceiling mounted dust filtration units, bandsaw, larger linisher, scroll saw etc.
- In 2007 the Club first made contact with the Sutherland Shire Council and was fortunate to meet with David Ackroyd, Manager Communities Unit. David has been a very strong supporter of the Club since then.
- The Club continued with its support of charitable organisations, by making and donating toys for distribution to disadvantaged children. Organisations to benefit from these donations include:
  - Children’s wards at Sutherland, Westmead and Sydney Children’s Hospital at Randwick
  - Salvation Army
  - Make a Wish Foundation
- The Club was also involved in community activities, including:
  - Timber and Working with Wood Shows in June each year
  - Senior’s Festival of Arts and Crafts at the Sutherland Entertainment Centre, run by the Sutherland Shire Council (SSC) in September
  - “Jazz and Blues” at Hazlehurst by SSC four times each year
  - Coffee @ Peace in Peace Park at Sutherland by SSC in July
  - Craft weekends at the Cubby House

## **2010**

The Club Executive had for some time been considering a name change to better reflect the overall Club activities. This was hastened when in 2009 Triton’s parent company was liquidated and as a result, availability of Triton equipment and spare parts became very limited. Following approval at a meeting of members, the new Club name “Shire Woodworking Club Inc.” was registered by the Department of Fair Trading on 15 December 2010.

## **2011**

- By 2009 the Club had outgrown the Cubby House premises, with limited opportunity for the acquisition of additional equipment, storage of timber stocks and for additional days’ use each month.
- In conjunction with Council we had been actively looking for alternative premises, so early in 2011 we were delighted to be informed by David Ackroyd, the Council Communities Unit Manager, of the possibility to lease a scout hall at Lilli Pilli. This had not been used by the scouts for many years, was almost derelict, and was about to be demolished by Council.





- After consideration by the Club Committee, an “Offer to Lease” was provided to Council on 7 March 2011. Following further discussions a Lease was signed with occupancy to commence on 1 October 2011.
- In the ensuing three months to Christmas 2011 the Club members contributed significant hours of voluntary labour to totally renovate the premises and bring them to an acceptable standard. The hours were recorded up to 950, but eventually would have exceeded 1,500. The Club was very appreciative of the Council providing a generous grant to assist with the upgrading works.
- Significant assistance was also provided at this time by tradesman from the Cronulla Lions Club who donated their expertise to assist with the renovations
- The Club assets were moved to Lilli Pilli in January 2012, and the Club has operated from these premises since then.

The Club had been donating toys every year to the Salvation Army. In December 2011 the Club contacted three organisations in the Shire which provide comfort to disadvantaged families and children, as we wished to include some local organisations as well. We are still supporting these organisations today.

#### **2012-2018 - General**

- The Official Opening of the new premises was held on 23 March 2012. Official guests included:
  - Cr Carol Provan, Mayor of the Sutherland Shire
  - Scott Morrison MP Federal Member for Cook
  - Mark Speakman SC MP State Member for Cronulla
- The new premises immediately attracted favourable comments from the Community, which had seen them deteriorate over the preceding years.
- The Club also established excellent relationships with its commercial neighbours, namely the Lilli Pilli Public School and the Lilli Pilli Football Club.
- Because of the excellent public exposure, the membership grew by 21% in the first year at Lilli Pilli. Since then it has grown a further 18% so that today the Club has 80 members – the highest number ever.

#### **2012-2018 Health and Safety**

- One of the Club’s major activities as per its Mission Statement is to ensure the health and welfare of its members, bearing in mind that a significant proportion are retired. This includes providing a space for both men and women to meet, enjoy the company and friendship of others and engage in worthwhile woodworking activities.
- The Club places strong emphasis on its ability to involve older persons, empowering them to lead an interesting and active life and develop and maintain links with the community. We understand members’ needs, particularly welfare based, and appropriate support is provided as necessary.



- In 2012 the Club completed a detailed compendium of Work Health and Safety (WH&S) policies and procedures for the use of its powered equipment, and instituted formal training sessions for the members. These documented procedures were also required by the Club's public liability insurer as evidence of each member's competence.
- Safety was also highlighted as a separate item on the agenda for each monthly Committee meeting.
- In 2015 the Club instituted a new accreditation system, requiring all members, both new and existing, to undergo a personal training session with a Club Executive, before they were permitted to use (or continue to use) the power equipment. Separate sessions were established for each piece of equipment, with documentation verifying that the training had been undertaken.

### **2012-2018 – Woodworking equipment**

- The Club has continued to purchase new equipment when funds are available. To this end a substantial number of good quality new machines have been purchased during this period.
- In 2012, with funds provided by the State Government, a large table saw, jointer, bandsaw, 3 dust collectors and scroll saw were acquired.
- A fully ducted dust extraction system was installed in 2015. This was funded by grants from Council and IMB Bank Community Foundation, with the Club providing \$5,434 and voluntary labour to assist with the installation. This enabled the Club to dispose of the individual dust collectors and has made a very significant improvement in the air quality within the Club premises.
- The most recent purchase in late 2017 was for two "saw-stop" table saws which as the name implies stop the saw instantly if moisture from a finger is detected. These offer significant safety features over the older machines.
- The Club does not use particle board type timber (eg MDF), but only solid timbers. We are fortunate to have received many donations of quality timbers over the years from local individuals and small businesses.

### **2012-2018 Woodworking competitions**

- The two annual woodworking competitions have been retained and prove very popular with members. The Plank Competition attracts over 20 entries each year. It was split into three categories a few years ago to ensure newer members were not daunted by the entries from longer-term members.
- The Al Usherwood Award was renamed Excellence Award in 2015 and is the major annual competition for Excellence in woodworking.
- As well as making toys and other items for various organisations (see below), members are able to make anything they wish for themselves. The variety is extensive, the most popular items in recent times have been a variety of cutting boards and boxes. There is no limit on what individual members can make.

### **2012-2018 – Hospital and Community Support**

The Club's major activity is in providing music and other therapy items, and toys, to the Child Life and Music Therapy Department of the Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick. The Club has supported this hospital for over 10 years and since moving to Lilli Pilli has provided 7,075 such items. Over the years the Club has also provided 17 sets of children's tables each with four chairs, and five furnished doll's houses. A number of toys have also been provided to the Children's Wards at the Wollongong and Royal North Shore Hospitals.



The Club continued its support of local organisations which distribute toys and gifts at Christmas to families with disadvantaged children or children subjected to family violence.

We have supported:

- Sutherland Shire Family Services
- Project Youth (formerly Shirewide Youth Services)
- John Franklin Christmas Lunch
- Kingsway Community Church

by providing 901 toys and knitted items since moving to Lilli Pilli in 2011. We have also provided these organisations with cutting boards for their kitchens, table and chair sets, doll's houses and a coffee table cum sand tray.

The Club also undertakes "one-off" projects which assist the hospitals and local community organisations.

**Examples of these for the hospitals include:**

- 3 MRI simulators – one small and one full size (for children) to the Sydney Children's Hospital. One full size (for children) for the St. George Hospital. Feedback indicates these have saved the hospitals significant administrative time and over 80% of the times in use of the main MRI machine, as the children are aware of what will occur.
- Three "Hope" trees for both the Children's Hospital and Royal North Shore Hospital, where children can hang messages of "Hope".
- A Santa's letter box for the children to post letters to Santa.



**And for the wider community:**

- A "Swish ball" table for Vision Australia at Caringbah so vision impaired people can enjoy table tennis.
- Providing stakes and supports for the 431 poppies displayed at Cronulla Beach for Anzac Day 2015.
- A specialised small table with folding legs plus bed supports for a severely disabled young girl.
- Two display boxes for firemen's helmets for the Menai Rural Fire Service.
- A storage box for the Council's Senior's Activity Unit for storage of Christmas lighting and cables.
- A fund raising donation box for the Knights of St. George Heart Foundation.
- Wheels for Lilli Pilli Public School F1 gala racing day.
- Speaker boxes for the Bundeena Community Band.
- Possum boxes for WIRES.
- *Note: the Club provided all materials and labour for all of the above at no cost to the organisation concerned. In a couple of instances the Club received a donation in gratitude.*
- Numerous smaller projects at the request of individual members of the local community, some provided free, some where we received a small donation in thanks.
- Some boards with particular geometric shapes for ANSTO for use in the children's educational tours.

### **2012-2018 – Care of Premises**

Since occupying the premises in 2011 the Club has greatly improved them as follows:

- The building was completely renovated in 2011 inside and out as mentioned on page 5.
- The area in front of the building to the footpath alignment was levelled, paved and turfed in 2014 and a native shrub garden established in 2017.
- A large garden shed was funded by the Club and installed by Club labour in 2016 to store excess timber, as there was no further opportunity for additional timber storage inside the building.
- A new kitchen was installed by Club members in 2017 with financial assistance for materials from Council.
- Council has donated pavers ex Joseph Banks Garden, which will be used later in 2018 to create a path to provide safer access to the dust collector and garden shed on the western side of the building.

### **2012-2018 – Participation in Shire events and fairs**

The Club is very involved in local fairs and events. Over the years we have participated in:

- Council's Senior's Festival
- GyMEA Village Fair
- Cook Community Classic raffle and Carnival at Cronulla Beach
- Hazlehurst market days
- Waterbrook Fair
- Caringbah library for senior's week activities
- Community BBQs at Bunnings Caringbah
- SSC Senior's Week events

In August 2016 we presented the Council with a large scale model of a garbage truck, in appreciation of Council's support for the Club over the years.

### **Membership Statistics as at 13 June 2018**

Number of members	80
Youngest member	15 years
Oldest member	97 years and 1 month
Average age	69.6 years
Median age	71.7 years
Members<60	14
60-64	5
65-69	16
70-74	17
75-79	16
80-89	9
>90	3



## **Community Appreciation**

In November 2012 Mr Mark Speakman SC MP moved in the Legislative Assembly of the NSW Parliament as follows:

“That the NSW Legislative Assembly:

- a) congratulates the Shire Woodworking Club on the exceptional standard of its members’ woodworking skills,
- b) congratulates the Club for delivering more than 800 toys so far in 2012 to the Sydney Children’s Hospital Randwick, and
- c) thanks the Club for their ongoing community work.”

As a consequence our Club’s name is recorded in Hansard in perpetuity.



The Club was nominated by two people as “Community Group of the Year” in the 2018 Sutherland Shire Australia Day Awards, which was deservedly won by the Relay for Life. Photo shows President Ian Rudd accepting a Certificate of Recognition from Shire Mayor Cr. Carmelo Pesce.

Our members have been awarded certificates for their community service with Local Achievement Awards from Mark Speakman SC MP and Cook Awards from Scott Morrison MP.

## **In conclusion**

The Club exists for its members and could not function without them. The photo below shows a number of members in September 2017 when the Club was fortunate to have a visit by Shire Mayor Cr Carmelo Pesce and State Member for Cronulla and Attorney General Mark Speakman SC MP. The Federal Member for Cook and Treasurer Scott Morrison MP unfortunately had to leave before the photo was taken.



The Club acknowledges with thanks the support from the Southern Region Woodturners for providing the Club with the opportunity to sub-lease their premises at Oyster Bay during the Club's formative years and up to 2011.

The Club could not be in the situation it is today without the financial support by way of grants to improve the premises at Lilli Pilli and purchase good quality equipment. The Club acknowledges the support from Sutherland Shire Council, Federal and State Governments and IMB Bank Community Foundation for their financial assistance by way of grants from time to time.

The Club is indebted to, and very grateful for the continuing support from:

- ✚ Sutherland Shire Council Mayors and Councillors from time to time, the Council Management and staff with particular mention of the support from David Ackroyd, formerly Manager Communities Unit at the Council over the past ten years. Particular reference must be made of the Club's appreciation for the Council providing the premises that we call the "Workshop".
- ✚ Scott Morrison MP, especially for printing services each month for our Newsletter.
- ✚ Mark Speakman SC MP for his continuing interest in and support of the Club's activities.
- ✚ IMB Bank for funding grants over the recent past.

Graham Ethell  
Secretary  
13 June 2018