



# TURNINGS

January 2007

WCWA, Pinelands Hobbies Club, Nursery Way, Pinelands

Internet home page [www.wcwa.za.net](http://www.wcwa.za.net)

AWSA home page: [www.awsa.org.za](http://www.awsa.org.za)

Central Ohio Woodturners (Sister club to WCWA): <http://www.biosci.ohio-state.edu/~awolfe/COW/cow.html>

## SCRIBBLES FROM THE SCRIBE

I have for some time been walking on the mountain on the weekend mornings and have been painfully aware of the authorities absolute denuding of that section of the mountain we usually frequent. I have also read many discourses in the papers of numerous scribes regarding removal of **all** alien things from the mountain. What has struck me most is that I have not seen any mention of the exclusion of the biggest invader in this matter i.e. man! There is talk of excluding dogs, restricting people to certain paths but no mention that the public has an entrenched right in law to carry on doing something he has been permitted to do unchallenged for centuries. Obviously some desk bound bureaucrat deciding what is good for the public.

Oh I almost forgot to mention, the plantations are being removed and not being replanted. Another source of harvestable useful commercial timber is being removed from the production chain. The already short supply of construction timber will be even greater in 20 years time.

When I originally sat down to write this newsletter it was six weeks to Christmas and before we I it we had celebrated New Year. Time for reflection on things past and those to come. The past year has been a busy one for most of us and if the politicians promises come to fruit there is another one in store for us this year. However achievement and success is always a product of ones own endeavour and hard work.

I trust you all had a blessed festive season with all the good things you wished for yourselves and your families and that you returned after the festive season refreshed with new vigour for the challenges of a new year.

Graeme Hill



## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The new year is already gathering speed but I would still like to take this opportunity to wish everybody a prosperous and rewarding 2007. May your lathes run smoothly and your tools

cut true. Our thoughts are also with those members who have been ill or are still in the process of recuperating.

This year will really test our mettle. The National Congress is looming for the second time and, because of the success of the previous conference, it will be up to all of us to ensure that we not only equal our previous performance but strive to improve on it. We owe it not only to ourselves but to our colleagues from all over South Africa to give them a good dose of Mother City hospitality and make their stay a worthwhile one.

The Organising Committee is busy getting their ducks in a row and will keep members posted as to progress. There may even be the odd request to assist with certain activities or do duty during the conference. I am sure that everybody will be willing to do their bit.

Juri

## COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

Juri van den Heever (Chairman)

[javdh@sun.ac.za](mailto:javdh@sun.ac.za); 887 1879, 082 406 8405

Graeme Hill (Vice Chairman) [graemehill@mweb.co.za](mailto:graemehill@mweb.co.za);

794 1639, 083 252 4642

Eric Thornton (Secretary)

[notinorth@mweb.co.za](mailto:notinorth@mweb.co.za) 531 1559, 082 465 4237

Hugh Scholtz (Treasurer)

[hascholtz@worldonline.co.za](mailto:hascholtz@worldonline.co.za) 913 0417, 082 895 0631

Mike Richards (PRO)

[leerichards@wam.co.za](mailto:leerichards@wam.co.za) 552 5572, 073 660 1282

## WCWA FAMILY NEWS

**Sally Parker** has had a spell in hospital recovering after an operation. We all join in wishing her a full and speedy recovery.

I have had word that Izak Cronje has been unwell but has now recovered and that Phillip Antrobus has a painful dose of Shingles.

Clive Shea writes

Well, I have now officially been on pension (medically boarded) since the 1<sup>st</sup>, but it hasn't quite sunk in yet. I guess it will hit me at the end of the month when I notice it on my pay-slip!

This note is just to thank you all very much for your support over the last two years, when I've been in and out of hospital about 5 or 6 times.

Without your help and support over this period I don't think I

would have made it. The odd phone call and email or word of encouragement has made the world of difference and has really helped to keep me going when I needed it most.

Thanks once again,

Clive Shea

## Ancient Wild Olive Tree

The attached photograph of an ancient wild olive tree, reputedly over 400 years old, was taken in the gardens of Klein Optenhorst. This is a small wine estate belonging to Naas and Jenny Ferreira in the Bovlei Valley, just beyond Wellington. Jenny is a sculptress and an artist and has applied her abundant artistic talent to the layout and planting of her garden, which is exquisite. She has the benefit of a stream from Bain's Kloof which runs through the property and she has made the most of it, both from the point of view of the aesthetics of the ornamental lake at the bottom of the garden and, of course, the irrigation of her flowers, shrubs and trees. She opens the garden to the public in spring and autumn, when the salvias are at their best, for the modest sum of R20 which includes tea and scones. It is well worth a visit next autumn, if only to see the magnificent wild olive tree.



### BANKING DETAILS -

#### **Western Cape Woodturners Association**

Bank: **Nedbank**  
Savings Account Number:  
**2204012882**  
Branch Code: **120405**

#### **Important Note**

When making out a cheque, please make it payable to

**“Western Cape Woodturner’s Association”**

(And not just the initials “WCWA”) It costs the club money if it’s incorrect since the bank will no longer accept it.

### CLUB NEWS

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due and should be paid to the treasurer ASAP. The date when your name falls

off the mailing list is drawing near- this is the last edition for those in arrears. Subscription rates are as follows

WCWA subs year ending 2006-2007	R 240.00
AWSA dues	R 80.00
Family membership of WCWA per person	R 195.00



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### **THE MARKET PLACE**

We run commercial adverts in our newsletter. If you wish to advertise, or know of a company or person who might like to advertise, please contact the editor or treasurer. Rates for an advert placed in the monthly newsletter, are R350 per annum. The adverts are rotated monthly to make it fair to all.

### **MENTOR PROGRAMME**

We must extend our thanks to Thys for suggesting the above and making the initial offer of mentorship. The goal of the programme is to increase the number and assist with raising the standard of entries at the twice- yearly Club showcases. Members present at the meeting who offered to assist with mentoring are Thys Carstens, Gert Ferreira, Bert Parker, Peter Nicolle, Steve Bull and Graeme Hill. Other members who are willing to be mentors should contact one of the committee to have their names added to the list. Those wishing to avail themselves of the scheme should contact one of the above directly.

## **WOODTRADERS**

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### **COMMITTEE NEWS**

Lathes for sale

Pinelands Hobbies Club has 2 lathes for sale. These are offered as is on a closed tender basis. Louis van Niekerk is in charge of this process.

Open Workshop evenings please check with Eric Thornton or Mike Richards.

Monday 8 January 2007 Committee meeting 1930

### Wednesday 17 January 2007 Club meeting 1900

Gert Ferreira to show us his techniques of making Candle Sticks

### Wednesday 21 February 2007 Club meeting 1900

Louis van Niekerk has agreed to share with us some of his workshop tips and tricks

### Wednesday 18 April 2007 Club Annual General meeting 1900

This is a vital meeting for all members to attend and participate in. Your committee encourages and cajoles you most earnestly to give thought to who you wish to lead the Club in the new year to approach your choices and nominate them for office. Nomination forms will be available with the February newsletter.



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## TREES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Barking up *Podocarpus*.

#### NAMES

*Podocarpus* from the Greek *podo-*, foot and *carpos*, fruit; referring to the fleshy fruit-stalks in some species. The Podocarpaceae is the most diverse family of conifers and is concentrated in the southern hemisphere and the genus *Podocarpus* is the largest in that family, with 107 species of which four occur in Southern Africa. Recent genetic analysis proposes that some species in the genus *Podocarpus* be placed in a separate genus *Afrocarpus*, changing *Podocarpus falcatus* to *Afrocarpus falcatus*. The work also raises questions about the delimitation of the species pair *Podocarpus henkelii* / *Podocarpus ensiculis*.

*Podocarpus elongates*, "Eng. Breede River Yellowwood / Afr. Breederivier-geelhout".

*Podocarpus falcatus*, "Eng. Small-leaved Yellowwood, Common Yellowwood, / Afr. Outeniequa-geelhout, Kalander, / Z. umsonti, umgeya, umhlelane / X. umkhoba".

*Podocarpus henkelii*, "Eng. Drooping-leaved Yellowwood / Afr. Henkel-se-geelhout / Z. umsonti, abanqongqozi / X. umkhoba".

*Podocarpus latifolius*, "Eng. Broad-leaved Yellowwood, Real Yellowwood / Afr. Opregte Geelhout / Z. umsonti, umkhoba / X. umkhoba".

The vernacular name "Geelhout" was in use at the Cape in Van Riebeeck's time for *P. latifolius* but the vernacular name was (unfortunately!) also applied to other trees of which the timber had a yellow colour. Thunberg (1773) recorded the name as alternative for "Small-leaved Saffron / Kleinblaarsaffraan" (*Elaeodendron zeyheri*), "Oldwood / Ouhout" (*Leucosidea sericea*), "River Bushwillow / Riviervaderlandswilg" (*Combretum erythrophyllum*) and "Wild Tamarisk / Abiekwasgeelhout" (*Tamarix usneoides*). Numerous other vernacular names exist in the four languages used here as well as in other African languages.



#### DISTRIBUTION

*P. elongates*, is confined to the winter-rainfall areas of the Western Cape especially in sandy soil along streams and rivers but it also occurs on exposed mountainsides.

*P. falcatus*, is found in moist forests of the Southern Cape, coastal swamp forests of KwaZulu-Natal, wooded ravines and mountain forests of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal as well as escarpment of the Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces.

*Podocarpus henkelii*, prefers the moist, evergreen mountain forests of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Free State but also occurs in the coastal forests of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

*P. latifolius*, is found in evergreen forests and mountain forests from the Western Cape, through the Southern and Eastern Cape into KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Free State and the escarpment of the Mpumalanga and the Limpopo Provinces as well as the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe.

## APPEARANCE

*P. elongates* is the smallest of the South African species at 3-6 m and on exposed mountainsides they are often stunted, almost prostrate. The grey to brown bark peels in narrow, longitudinal strips and the elliptical grey-green leaves are usually crowded toward the ends of the branchlets. It can be confused with *P. latifolius* but it has grooves on the undersides of the leaves, visible to the naked eye, containing its stomata.

*P. falcatus* is medium sized to large being 20-60 m with a thin, rather smooth, greyish brown to dark brown bark, flaking in round or rectangular pieces. The leaves are small and dark green, often with a greyish bloom and are sometimes slightly sickle shaped (falcate) in a spiral or whorled arrangement. This is the famous "Big Tree" of the Knysna forest.

*P. henkelii* reaches 20 m or more and has yellowish grey, brown or dark grey bark, fissured in large specimens and peeling in long, narrow strips to expose the reddish brown underbark. The leaves are dark green, shiny, long, slender and drooping.

*P. latifolius* is a large tree of 20-30 m in forests but often barely 2 m on open mountainsides with yellowish brown, greyish brown to dark brown bark that flakes in vertical strips. The leaves are thick, tough, dark green, narrowly elliptical and borne more or less horizontally.



## USES

*P. elongates* is not used regularly as its size and general shape probably limit usage of the timber.

*P. falcatus* has been used extensively for furniture, especially table tops. In the past it was also used for the topmasts and yards of ships and is apparently highly esteemed in boat-building even today. In traditional Zulu medicine the bark is burnt in the kraal as a charm to prevent cattle from straying.

*P. henkelii* is used for making furniture and in the past it was highly rated by wagonmakers as well. The bark of the tree is used as a love potion in Zulu medicine. It is chewed and spat into the wind while repeating the name of the loved one.

*P. latifolius* is widely used in the furniture industry and in the past supplied the wood for the floors, ceilings, doorways and window sashes of many old Cape Dutch homesteads. Amongst the woodmen

working in the South African forests the sap of *Podocarpus* species has the reputation of being a cure for chest ailments.

In 1886 the tariff for standing yellowwood trees at Knysna was three pence per cubic foot of sound wood (stinkwood was one shilling) and the Superintendent of Woods and Forests reported that the great difficulty in preparing yellowwood was to overcome its excessive tendency to warp and crack when dried. At that time nearly 50% of the total yield of Colonial, high timber, forests consisted of two species of yellowwood (*P. falcatus* and *P. latifolius*) and these species were regarded as the "Colonial pine". Successful trials with creosoted yellowwood sleepers (1877 to 1883) on the Cape main line showed that yellowwood readily absorbed creosote and could resist the various shocks and strains to which a railway sleeper was subjected, more effectively than the Baltic Fir then in use. In 1883 and 1884 respectively, £83 000 and £44 000 was spent importing sleepers so, to save money, the Government purchased a saw-mill at Gouna and erected a creosoting apparatus to turn out yellowwood sleepers for the whole Colony.

## TURNING

The only information I could find on the actual wood was for *P. falcatus* and *P. latifolius*. Information on the other two does not appear to be available. The wood of *P. falcatus* has a uniform light yellow colour although the heartwood sometimes shows different shades of brown. The transition between sapwood and heartwood is generally barely visible and growth rings are not easily distinguished. The wood has no characteristic odour and contains no resin. The wood is not durable and has therefore to be treated. The wood texture is very fine and even and the density is 560 kg/m<sup>3</sup> at 10 % moisture content. The wood of *P. latifolius* is slightly darker than that of the former species but otherwise the same comments apply. It is impossible to distinguish between the woods of the different *Podocarpus* species macroscopically. I have never turned yellowwood so I am unable to comment on specific aspects regarding turning.

### *Anobiom*

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### **For sale**

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