

# TURNOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NORTHERN TURNERS INC.

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## Northern Turners Exhibition at Burnside

Once again, Northern Turners has mounted an excellent exhibition at the Burnside Atrium through December and January. Twenty-four members have presented their work, each exhibitor with a table of their own. The quality of the work is outstanding and sales better than ever before, perhaps thanks to our Facebook connections, and the list of purchasers from previous exhibitions at Wayville and Burnside who are kept informed of upcoming events.

Graham Reed, Robert Edge and others have perfected our EFTPOS facilities which now account for the majority of purchases (another reason for improved sales), and an excellent accounting program which allows all relevant details to be recorded. This ensures that all financial matters can be documented accurately and data collected.

Congratulations to all those involved, especially new exhibitors, for a job well done. These exhibitions promote Northern Turners, and with this exposure, we attract new members and alert the general public to the beautiful work which can be created using a lathe, imagination and skill.

Tim Smeaton

President of Northern Turners



### Northern Turners Committee

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### Send all articles to

[turnout@woodgroupsa.org.au](mailto:turnout@woodgroupsa.org.au)

### Your Northern Turners

- *Seeking Excellence*
- *Encouraging Individualism*
- *Fostering Creativity*
- *Teaching Skills*
- *Providing Support*

Editor's Note: An article I received from Gordon Best

It only occurred to me this morning to look in Trove for possible newspaper reports of what was happening in woodturning in the old days, which could help expand a history of woodturning in Adelaide -- another little project of mine. Turns out there are quite a few articles -- looks like 100 pages of hits, 10 per page, and I've only looked at the first page so far

Anyway, I reckon any NT member would have been proud of having made this inkwell in the 1930s -- I had the idea that all they were making in those days was finials and veranda posts until the 1970s, when they imported that guy from North America who taught Vic Wood. And all with carbon steel tools

Here's the newspaper report

News, Adelaide, Fri 9 Nov 1923 page5

## **AUSTRALIAN TIMBERS**

### **Hidden Beauty Revealed**

#### **WOOD TURNING EXHIBIT**

*From forest to drawing room is a far cry, but it is a matter of minutes when Mr. Albert J. Wiley, the speciality wood worker, begins operations. It is impossible to realise the peculiar beauties of Australian native timbers and their decorative value until one sees them worked up into useful household ornaments.*

*South Australian timbers, both in natural and finished condition, will be well represented at the Empire Exhibition. At the request of the Government Mr. Wiley has prepared an exhibit of wood turning which will bear comparison with anything of a similar nature from any other State. It is possible that this exhibit will be the only woodturning display from Australia. It will be a fine advertisement for South Australian timbers in Great Britain. Mr. Wiley's exhibit contains 60 articles made from 30 different timbers gathered from all parts of the State*

*It is a pleasure to visit the workshop at Prospect, where Mr. Wiley exercises his talent. The singing of the motor, the whirring of the pulleys, and the buzz of the work in the lathe, bedded in concrete and revolving at the rate of 1,500 revolutions a minute, are music to his ears. What looks like an ordinary piece of firewood is hammered into the chuck, the motor starts, and a steady hand, sensitive touch, quick brain, and keen eye quickly moulded a beautiful ornament*

*It is only by being thus dealt with that the peculiar markings of the native timbers are revealed fully. Red gum, stringy bark, acacia, sheoak, mulga, myall, sandalwood, peach, apricot, almond, lemon, and mulberry - each contains a beauty in the grain which is brought out by the lathe*

*From all parts of the State timber other wise useless comes to be "worked up." From the far north comes the fire tree, so called because the red tint in the bark makes the tree appear to be on fire when it catches the glint of the sun. There are lancewood, blackwood, and an infinite variety of timbers, little known, but which grow in profusion.*

*The variety of articles which emerge from the lathe is almost as great. It comprises workboxes, fruit, salad and nut bowls, cake stands, walking sticks, candle sticks, stud and jewel boxes, puff boxes, and hair tidys, cruets, serviette rings, egg cups, presentation cups on pedestals, ash trays, vases, and many other useful and ornamental articles.*

*Mr. Wiley has an extensive knowledge of Australian timbers, and his constant alertness for odd stumps which have value as souvenirs has earned him the name of "the timber missionary." The Adelaide City Council, among others, has been presented by him with souvenirs of stumps of trees dug up in the streets of Adelaide. One of his best efforts is a mason's mall made for a presentation. It is constructed of 283 nieces of wood, not more than four pieces being of the same kind. Inlaid and turned, it is a remarkably beautiful piece of work. It is among the articles that are going to London.*

And the (copyright free) picture of the inkwell came from Museum Victoria. Here are the accompanying words from MV

#### **Summary**

*Oblong shaped piece of mulga wood with the centre cut out for an inkwell. The Mulga wood ... was patented by Albert J. Wiley of Adelaide in 1932. A.J. Wiley had owned a woodturning business in Adelaide at least since 1902. By the 1930s Wiley had become a specialist in mulga wood ornaments.*

*Wiley inspired Fred Eaton, camp missionary at Nepabunna, to install lathes at the mission in order to teach the Aboriginal people under his care woodturning in 1938.*

#### **Physical Description**

*Oblong shaped piece of mulga wood with the bark left on the top side. The centre has been carved out and there is a plastic insert for the inkwell. On one side there are two metal hooks upon which a pen would rest. On the reverse is stamped in gold the maker's mark of a map of Australia, missing Tasmania and the face of a bearded Aboriginal man*



EDITOR'S NOTE: I received this link from Gordon Best about River Red Gums and have only copied a portion of the site.

Reference:-<https://www.weekendnotes.com/big-red-mullinger-swamp-conservation-park/?sb=1&i=1&j=2&k=3&wemid=89785&wuid=551457&ap=SaQX8wxZLt>

### **Largest Living Red Gum in the SE of SA**

Big Red is a tree. It was named the largest living River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) in the south-east of South Australia in a competition in 1996 conducted by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in association with Greening Australia. The competition was run to publicise the importance of the species and to also highlight the need to protect our continent's old trees and to plant new ones.

The river red gum is unique to the Australian bush, growing throughout the country. They are magnificent - typically growing up to 35 metres high with a circumference of (usually) 1 to 3 metres. Big Red's circumference was measured to at a massive 11.6 metres with the tree soaring skyward at 39 metres. The tree is a giant in a landscape of gigantic trees. The second-largest tree recorded is literally steps away from Big Red. Just 110 metres away, the other tree has a trunk girth of 11.22 metres.

Big Red, aged at somewhere between 800 and 1000 years old, was burnt out at the base way before European settlement to the area. The hollowed trunk can fit several people standing up. It was most likely used as housing or storage. In more modern days, it was used as a change room for those wanting to swim or paddle in the adjacent waters of Mullinger Swamp.

Mullinger Swamp Conservation Park is a protected area near the township of Kybybolite, approximately 25 kilometres from Naracoorte in South Australia. The swamp is a popular spot for nature lovers, geologists and bird watchers. There are picnic tables and information signs, but no toilets, no drinking water and no other facilities

The tree was measured again in 2008 and showed that it was still growing. The girth was measured at 12.2 metres and a height of 42.0 metres and it is thought that this tree has the largest timber mass of any of its kind in Australia. Experts hope that this majestic tree will still be alive and standing in 50 years time. But, it may not survive another 100 due to climate change's higher temperatures, lower rainfall and soil moisture. The depletion of groundwater for

irrigation could also impact the longevity of our mighty River Red Gums. The twigs that lay at the tree's base are most likely hundreds and hundreds of years old! To lose these bush skyscrapers would be tragic. ...

Big Red is the region's best kept secret tourist attraction. You'll find it near the entrance to Mullinger Swamp. There's an information sign that points you in the right direction. The tree is on private property, but visitors are very welcome to enter and take some time to visit with this mighty tree. Please remember to shut the gate



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