



Underwater timber harvesting.

It has been estimated that through the fifties to the seventies some 300 million trees were submerged during the construction of large dams around the world. These dams are mostly part of hydro electric schemes and in Australia we have also constructed quite a few. In particular in Tasmania. Over the years some of this timber has been salvaged but the volumes have been relatively small. Now a Tassie company, SFM Environmental Solutions has obtained some funding to kick off a project called Hydrowood which will salvage this lost resource on a large scale. They plan to design and construct a special harvester fitted with a telescopic arm capable of operating down to a depth of 40m. This unit will be mounted on a purpose built barge that will be constructed in a Tasmanian shipyard. The project is set to create some 20 new jobs and will hopefully bring to the market some very much needed craft timbers such as Huon Pine and Blackheart Sassafras. This new machine will be fitted with cameras and sonar, sending images back to the operator up on the barge. The Tasmanian forest industry has historically been a major contributor to the economy but with changing policies, the exit of Gunns and the closing of the Triabunna chip mill our smallest state has been doing it pretty tough for a long time. This project won't fix their problems but it will shine a bit of light on them if it is a success. The other beneficiaries will be us; users of these fine timbers so it could be a win for all. We will keep watching this one.

Student visits.

We have always been happy to assist students to learn more about timber and in the past couple of months we have had visits from a number of institutions. These have included the Canberra School of Art Wood Workshop, CIT Interior Design, Cootamundra High and Marist College. Depending on the group we usually have a chat about timber, a tour through the workshop and a look around the racks. It is great to see what some of these guys are up to with various projects and rewarding for us to be able to

pass on some knowledge we have. If you are a teacher and would like to bring a group over just give me a call and we can arrange it.

Workshop happenings.

Last week we had Andy Lofthouse from Marist college visit, for the whole week!! This isn't the first time, Andy came a year or so ago as part of his "return to industry" requirements. Teachers have to spend some time in a workplace every few years to keep up to speed with things in industry. On Andy's first visit we worked together on a serving tray project and this time round the project was another tray constructed in a completely different way. When I say we worked together I came up with the general design and concept and Andy took off from there and produced the prototypes. This collaborative approach has been successful in producing a product that we hope will appeal to students and other woodworkers looking to purchase a project in kit form. There is still some work to go producing plans and instructions but we are making progress. Thanks Andy for your assistance and valuable insights into the education system. Stay tuned for developments with these products.

Low to ground decks.

A few months back we discussed the issues surrounding a deck constructed low to the ground. Just recently I had a call from a guy who had a deck built a couple of years back and it has failed miserably. It is a wide board that is flush with the surrounding garden and grassed areas and has almost no provision for ventilation. Drainage has been addressed but I suspect the efforts here have been inadequate. As a result this guy now has a mess and a builder unwilling to fully rectify the problem. To avoid being the builder, the designer or even the owner of such a problem please contact us for info about this type of structure. We can supply independent literature from a number of sources that will hopefully guide you through the process.

New Stock. Kauri Pine, Camphour Laurel, Ash aagh no room!

That's all for another month. *Cheers Shaun*

We have some new stuff on our Facebook page. Check it out now.

If you have anything of interest you would like to show us please jump on Facebook and share it.

