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AUGUST 2001, NO 55 £3.25

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tests
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Foreword

Recently, I was asked by Andrew Lawton to open his new showroom (see the news pages), a task I was honoured to undertake as I have always been an admirer of Andrew's work. Andrew is a grass roots maker coming from Arts and Crafts influences and has learned his craft the traditional way, passed from one craftsman to another. Not many have that kind of opportunity today.

Many craftsmen work in one-person set-ups, and when they do need extra hands, they employ experienced makers on a casual basis rather than training full time. Most of their circumstances dictate that they cannot often afford the downtime that training an apprentice would take.

This creates two problems. First, where do prospective, keen youngsters go to get training and experience? Secondly, where do the small makers go when they are looking for craftsmen? The only route open to them is through the colleges. However, with many colleges turning towards industrial design, there are fewer offering courses in fine craftsmanship.

The workshop where I trained – I am pleased to say – is still training young people and last month carried an advert offering places. In fact, I would be interested in finding exactly how many colleges are running such courses. Please contact *F&C* if you are running one. I know of Gloscat, Leeds, Buckinghamshire Chilterns, Rycotewood and I know there are others, but it is difficult to keep track of what you are all up to, so please write.

There are encouraging signs at the moment, and our section of the economy seems very buoyant. There are a lot of makers out there. In my travels and while sitting at my desk I am constantly learning about more of you tucked away in almost every village it seems. It is worrying, however, to think that we could be in danger of losing the tradition of our craft training. I know there are many fine makers who are self-taught, but it is a hard road to go down.

Virtually the only route for someone looking to work in furniture making is an HND or something similar. Many people are going to these courses without the grounding in the basics. With the demise of wood-working in schools as a subject in its own right, there are few routes for gaining basic practical skills. I would be interested as well to hear of any school that is trumpeting the cause of furniture making at A-level or similar. I don't by any means have all the information at my fingertips.

Write to me on any of these areas as I think it is in the interest of us all to become more informed about this for the survival of our craft.

Colin Eden-Eadon

Woodworking is an inherently dangerous pursuit. Readers should not attempt the procedures described herein without seeking training and information on the safe use of tools and machines, and all readers should observe current safety legislation.

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Cover photo: Anthony Bailey. Startrite's Italian planer The Veba FS 300

Noticeboard

Write to us!

Is F&C all that you want it to be? Are we covering the topics you are interested in, and if so, are we doing it properly? What other aspects of the craft would you like to see reflected in our pages?

Tell us if we are hitting the spot. Taking up our invitation to write a letter for publication will provide valuable comment on the features carried, and should open up new channels for investigation.

The writer of each issue's best letter – the Editor's decision is final! – will receive a year's free subscription.

Write to:

Letters to F&C, *Furniture & Cabinetmaking*, GMC Publications Ltd, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN or e-mail: coline@thegmcgroup.com

Questions and answers

Don't be put off tackling a previously unmet obstacle – bring the problem to us. If Editor Colin Eden-Eadon, or Publisher Paul Richardson are unable to answer your question it will be referred to one of our many expert contributors.

Write to:

Q&A, *Furniture & Cabinetmaking*, GMC Publications Ltd, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN or e-mail: coline@thegmcgroup.com

Write for F&C

By no means all of the articles in F&C are written by experienced writers. The skill to make an interesting piece of furniture, coupled with the ability to enthuse about the project in writing, could put you on our growing list of contributors.

We are happy to receive submissions – make sure that you enclose an s.a.e. – and will be glad to discuss ideas. Projects should feature fine furniture.

Our Author's Guidelines provide advice on writing, photography and illustrations.

Write to:

Kate Taylor, *Furniture & Cabinetmaking*, GMC Publications Ltd, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN

Register of makers

F&C is compiling a register of small makers to whom cabinetmaking firms and interior designers can sub-contract work. We are building lists of those who require sub-contractors and those willing to undertake the jobs, and have already been able to put some in touch with each other.

For inclusion, send us your details and descriptions of any specialities, together with pictures of your work, if available.

Write to:

Colin Eden-Eadon, *Furniture & Cabinetmaking*, GMC Publications Ltd, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN or e-mail: coline@thegmcgroup.com



Contact Kate Taylor with news items, which must be received at 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN at least 12 weeks before publication cover date. Please include images wherever possible – transparencies preferably, or good prints.

Milan flair

You could be forgiven for thinking that you'd swung into a 'Sixties timewarp at this year's Milan Furniture Fair! Chairs with low backs, geometric cutouts, sharply angled arms and legs with wheels were the order of the day and Spanish furniture makers launched a number of new products.

Andreu World showed new additions to its recently launched Savoy range, designed by Nancy Robbins. The collection, seen for the first time at The Cologne Furniture Fair, has a distinctive square cut-out feature and a definite feel of the 'Sixties. The new additions included a barstool, chair and armchair. Andreu World also launched a low-backed square-framed chair named Olga and the new Momo chair designed by Jorge Pensi.

Carlos Jane Camacho (CJC) launched a new chair, called Symbios, from British designer Simon Quick. The chair is sumptuously upholstered in soft wool, as is a new sofa, Cocoon,

launched later at the Construmat Fair in Barcelona. CJC also launched Mai, a chair with more than a hint of Chinese influence, and Melanie, a chair with clean, lean lines.

Indecasa showed modern classics such as Eleana (pictured), with added wheels – which could be fun on a laminated floor! Its popular Aldara design gained new finishes and wheels, and new designs for Milan were Mar and Alu Uno.

Mobles 114 launched the all-purpose Icaria bench by Italian designer Enzo Mari, which can be an armchair or a bench, with or without backrest.

Perobell launched a 'Sixties style sofa, Moon, by Ferran Estela, and the extremely low-backed, upholstered chair JKR, inspired by the same era.

Do+ce offered its deceptively simple-looking Tiber sideboard in white natural sycamore. The sleek design hides a series of internal shelves and drawers behind a drop-down front.



Left: **Eleana** by Indecasa at Milan
Above: **JKR** by Perobell at Milan
Below: **Tiber** by do+ce at Milan



Open for business

Derbyshire-based furniture maker Andrew Lawton opened a showroom at his Grindleford workshop in the heart of the Peak District in May. An invited audience of clients and friends attended, among whom were fellow designer/maker Robert and Andrea Ingham. F&C Editor Colin Eden-Eadon gave a short speech officially opening the showroom, after Andrew had thanked all involved, including his father, Harry, who trained him. Andrew continues a long tradition of furniture-making in the village, begun by former workshop owner, the late Ben Coopland.

Andrew started making as a business in 1980 at the workshop, when it was two separate wooden buildings. It has taken Andrew two years, in between commissions, to complete the building, in the traditional limestone of the area, combining a hand-shop with his machine-shop and linking the two original buildings. The showroom will allow Andrew to keep a selection of pieces for prospective clients to view while discussing their requirements.



Above: **Andrew Lawton and Colin Eden-Eadon** outside the new showroom
Below: **Better than any paper portfolio**



Clear cut

Two contemporary furniture designer-makers have recently exhibited their work at the innovative new Study Gallery at The Bournemouth and Poole College in Poole. Simon Thomas Pirie Furniture and CDesign showed ranges of bespoke dining furniture, desks, occasional tables, cabinets, lighting, clocks and other accessories.

Both furniture-making workshops were set up in 1998, producing small batches and one-offs to commission. Their designs are quite different, but both aim to produce exclusive furniture which combine modern simplicity and exquisite craftsmanship, design and use of fine materials.

CDesign, based at Rempstone, near Corfe Castle, is the brainchild of Claire Talbot and Jason Cameron, who studied at the University of Central England in Birmingham. Set up with the support of the Prince's Trust, the firm produces highly individual contemporary furniture.

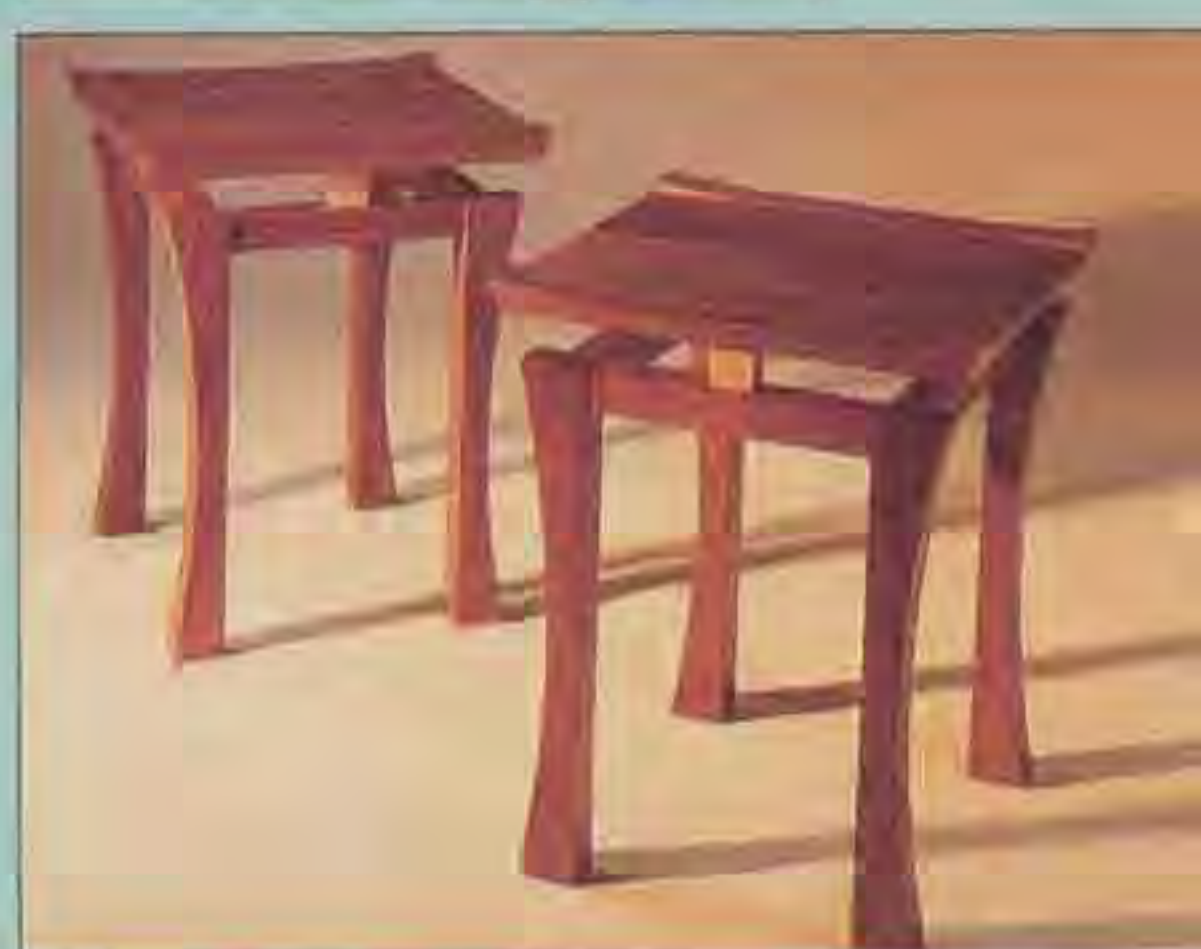
Simon Thomas Pirie Furniture, based at Slepe Farm Workshop, Slepe, near Lytchett Minster, offers contemporary classics: a fusion of crisp contemporary detailing and classically restrained elegance. Simon Pirie not only has a degree in sculpture, but studied at Hooke Park College, part of John Makepeace's

Parnham Trust, and has taught furniture design at Bournemouth University.

Contacts: CD Design, Tel: 01929 480030. Website: www.cdesign.co.uk. Simon Thomas Pirie Furniture, Tel: 01202 625725. Website: www.simon-thomaspirie.co.uk.



Left: Simon Thomas Pirie's dining set in English oak with black walnut details. Below: Toril side tables in black walnut with sycamore details by Simon Thomas Pirie.



Offcuts

Small is beautiful

Living and working in small spaces is a reality for many people around the world – and a real challenge for furniture designers!

This year's RSA Student Design Awards for furniture called for a smart storage solution for keys or shoes, at an affordable price. As a result, Andrew Shove of Buckinghamshire Chiltern University College came up with a blackboard key holder. Made from MDF and pine dowel, this small, wall-hung blackboard has chalk-shaped key pegs. Handy for messages and notes on the keys, the board is double-sided, so suits left and right-handed people. Andrew wins the IKEA Attachment Award, worth £5,000, and will undertake a six-month work placement at IKEA's Swedish HQ.

When in Devon

If you're going anywhere near Dartmoor this summer, pop in to see The Devon Guild of Craftsmen, founded by a small group of members led by Edward Baly in 1955. At the Riverside Mill, Bovey Tracey, Devon, you can see the Guild's showcase of best new work by leading designer-makers from the South West. The show includes furniture, ceramics, jewellery, textiles and clothing. Open daily until 16 September, 10am to 5.30pm. Tel: 01626 832223.

Win £10,000!

To celebrate its 50th anniversary as one of the City of London's guilds, the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers is inviting furniture designers to enter a competition to design a seating concept for the Wallace Collection's public rooms.

The Golden Jubilee Award is open to any designer working in the UK and will be judged by a prestigious panel of six leading figures from the design world, including Matthew Hilton, Robin Day and Aidan Walker.

The judges will look for a design which can be made in single or multiple seat formats in a variety of different materials and finishes to suit different areas. The winner will receive a prize of £10,000 and the Worshipful Company will fund production of the first pieces to be presented to The Wallace Collection. The museum will then purchase further pieces as needed. The winning seats will also be

marketed elsewhere, which could bring royalties for the designer.

Peter Keen, Master of The Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers, says, 'Our principal aim is to promote the design, manufacture and retail of British furniture. We hope the winning design will also be of interest to other museums and public buildings.'

The Wallace Collection of 18th century pictures, porcelain and furniture, is available to view in an imposing house in Manchester Square, London W1. The house has recently had a major extension.

For a copy of the competition brief and an application form, contact the Clerk of the Furniture Makers' Company, Painters' Hall, 9 Little Trinity Lane, London EC4V 2DB.

Tel: 0207 2481677. Fax: 0207 2481688. Email: clerk@furnituremkr.co.uk. Entries must be in by October 15 and the winner will be announced in December.



THE FURNITURE MAKERS COMPANY



Peter Keen, who became Managing Director of the family firm, bed manufacturer Hypnos, at an early age is this year's Master of The Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers. Mr Keen was officially installed as the new Master, taking over from the departing Simon Brown, at a dinner on 14 May, held at The Mansion House, London.

F&C Trade talk

Not so hard

Tracking down the right wood for the job is about to become easier. Timbmet, which specialises in selling hardwood, has launched a new offshoot, Timbmet Panels Ltd, to offer a one-stop-shop service to specifiers, contractors, buyers and end-users.

Panels will include exterior and interior grades, melamine and decorative veneer-faced panels, moisture and fire-resistant options, a selection of surface finishes and most constructional boards. The range will include brand names such as KronoSwiss, Medite and Nexfor. The firm aims for a two-day delivery service.

For a copy of the new Panels product and price guide and Swiss Melamine Selector, tel: 01865 860379; email: answers@panels.uk.com or visit the web-site: www.panels.uk.com.

Timbmet have launched a 'one-stop shop' service



Not green on paper

F&C heard recently from Alan Pendle, who drew our attention to some of the intricacies and possible shortfalls of the FSC or Forestry Stewardship Council labelling/accreditation scheme. Enforced by local authorities, and established to prove that imported timbers come from well-managed forests, the scheme, Alan believes, could have a huge detrimental effect on smaller businesses and craftsmen who use timber. Reclaimed and locally grown wood falls outside the FSC accreditation scheme.

Indeed, Pendlewood, Alan's company, recently lost a tender to business because even though their wood is 'green' it was not FSC-accredited. With the help of a local MP, Alan is hoping to bring this issue to the Government's attention so a clause to allow for wood with an authentic, provable origin might be included.

Double celebration

Daltons of Nottingham is celebrating – 100 years of supplying new and used machinery to the woodworking industry. For 45 of those years it has been the sole distributor of new Wadkin machines worldwide. Daltons has built up a reputation for high standards on the quality of its rebuilt second-hand classics from the best of the British manufacturers, like Wadkin, Robinson and Cooksley.

Recently we reported that Wadkin, one of the last survivors of these British manufacturers, had gone out of business. We are delighted to confirm that thanks to Daltons working in partnership with some of Wadkins management, the company is back in full production. The recent uncertainties and delays caused by the firm going into receivership are now over and under new ownership two

separate companies have been formed. This adds a very special poignancy to Daltons' centenary and a huge relief for all involved. Many people within the industry will be glad to know that a firm that is part of woodworking's heritage is to continue.

Wadkin Manufacturing Ltd will be responsible for the manufacturing of the entire range of machines while Wadkin Ultracare Ltd will provide an after-sales service for all types of woodworking machines and run a full tooling manufacture and supply department. As before, the Classical range of equipment is being manufactured at the Green Lane Works in Leicester and Daltons will continue its role as sole distributor. We wish every success to the new team.

Manifestly friendly

Timber is one of the most environmentally-friendly materials available, claims the Timber Trade Federation. It states that timber is renewable, biodegradable, non-toxic, energy efficient and is greenhouse gas friendly. So, now the Federation has launched its own manifesto outlining the environmental case for using more timber and calls on the Government to give greater priority to encouraging sustainable forestry.

The key aims of the manifesto include increasing timber consumption by 20 per cent in five years, encouraging forestry as part of a plan to reduce carbon dioxide and promoting timber as an energy-efficient construction material. It pushes for the revision of Building Regulations to promote energy-efficient buildings and presses for carbon to be included as part of a nation's carbon quota under the Kyoto Protocol.

Marketing of independently certified timber would also be made fairer under the manifesto.



Wadkin XE Planer/Moulder after rebuilding in the Dalton workshops



Daltons has come a long way since its early days in Canal Street (above) to the modern purpose built workshops in use today (left)

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Blade length 3185mm
Motor 1.5hp
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inc. VAT and delivery

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Motor 2hp
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F&C Diary

Your guide to forthcoming events

Please send details of diary events to Kate Taylor at *Furniture & Cabinetmaking*, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN at least 10 weeks before publication. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed here, readers are advised to check with the venue or organisation listed

July

Until 16 September *The Devon Guild of Craftsmen's Showcase* of 240 members' best new work at the Riverside Mill, Bovey Tracey, Devon. Leading designer-makers from the South West; furniture, ceramics, jewellery, textiles and clothing. Open daily, 10am to 5.30pm.
Tel: 01626 832223
Fax: 01626 834220

7 to 8 *Queen Elizabeth Country Park Show*, Solent Guild of Woodcarving & Sculpture members will demonstrate woodcarving. Open 10am to 5pm, off A3, two miles south of Petersfield. Entry, adults £4; seniors £3; children £2.

14 *Finishing* free demonstration by Jim Kitson at John Boddy's Fine Wood & Tool Store schoolroom, Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire, YO5 9LJ
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14 and 15 *The Great Eastern Woodworking & Power Tool Show* at the East of England Showground, Peterborough
Tel: 01733 314742
Fax: 01733 897151
e-mail: toolshow@hotmail.com

19 to 22 *Art in Action* premier four-day arts festival featuring many woodworkers and furniture-makers at Waterperry Gardens, near Wheatley, Oxford. *Postponed until 18-21 July 2002 due to the foot-and-mouth crisis.*
Tel: 020 7381 3192
www.artinaction.org.uk

20 to 18 November *Isamu Noguchi* exhibition, Design Museum, London. Major retrospective of the late internationally acclaimed Japanese-American sculptor and designer Isamu Noguchi. Sculpture, furniture, lighting design, landscape architecture and stage design. Open 11.30am to 6pm weekdays, 10.30am to 6pm at weekends. Entry: £5.50 adults, £4.50 students, £4 concessions.
Tel: 020 7940 8790
Website: www.designmuseum.org

21 *Woodcarving* free demonstration by Peter Berry at John Boddy's Fine Wood & Tool Store schoolroom, Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire, YO5 9LJ
Tel: 01423 322370
Fax: 01423 323810/324334

21 *DeWalt Power Tools Demo* at Isaac Lord, 185 Desborough Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2QN
Tel: 01494 462121
Website: www.isaaclord.com

27 to 8 September *Natural Choice* exhibition of furniture, wood and baskets. Contemporary Applied Arts, 2 Percy Street, London W1T 1DD.
Open Mon to Sat 10.30am to 5.30pm.
Tel: 020 7436 2344
Website: www.caa.org.uk

28 *International tool auction*, The Limes Hotel, Needham Market. The Tool Shop, 8 High Street, Needham Market, Suffolk IP6 8AW.
Tel: 01449 722992 Fax: 01449 722683
www.toolshop.demon.co.uk

28 to 29 *Fareham Model Engineers Society Show*. Solent Guild of Woodcarving & Sculpture members will demonstrate woodcarving. Open 10am to 5pm, Fareham Model Engineers Society premises, Segensworth Road, Fareham, Hants
Tel: 023 92253641

August

3 to 5 *Craft, Timber and Tool* show, The Good Craft Centre, New Creation Farm, Nether Heyford.
Tel: 01327 341137
Fax: 01327 341604
www.goodcraftcentre.co.uk

4 *Timber auction and sale of bowl turning blanks*. Wide range of timbers sold in small lots, from 11am. Send SAE for catalogue after 25 July to: Interesting Timbers, Wells Road, Emborough, Bath, BA3 4SP

4 *Woodturning* free demonstration by Marsden Howitt at John Boddy's Fine Wood & Tool Store schoolroom, Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire, YO5 9LJ
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A preview of work to be shown by The Somerset Guild of Master Craftsmen from 21 August: table by Martin Lane, cane chair by John Excell



21 to 30 *Sheer Craftsmanship*, exhibition by The Somerset Guild of Craftsmen, The Bishop's Palace, Wells, Somerset. Wide range of crafts, including furniture (pictured), canework (pictured), musical instruments, woodcarving, engraving and stencilling, from more than 40 members. Open 10.30am to 5pm (Sunday 2 to 5pm), entry to palace including exhibition: £3 adults; £2 senior citizens and groups of 10 or more; students and disabled £1.50; 12-18s £1; under-12s free.
Tel: 01278 652823

11 to 23 September *Onetree* exhibition, featuring a variety of items made from a 170-year-old oak tree at Tatton Park in Cheshire, at Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh
See www.onetree.org.uk.

14 *Tools Workshop* – free demonstration by Draper, and *Upholstery* – free demonstration by Pauleen Keenoy, at John Boddy's Fine Wood & Tool Store schoolroom, Riverside Sawmills, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire, YO5 9LJ
Tel: 01423 322370
Fax: 01423 323810/324334

27 *Emsworth Show*. Solent Guild of Woodcarving & Sculpture members will demonstrate woodcarving. Open 11am to 5pm, Emsworth Recreation Ground, Emsworth, Hants
Tel: 023 92253641

27 to 8 September *Natural Choice* exhibition of furniture and other crafts at Contemporary Applied Arts, 2 Percy Street, London, W1T1DD
Tel: 020 7436 2344
See website: www.caa.org.uk



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F&C Readers' gallery

Welcome to the *F&C* Readers' Gallery page. Here's where you have the chance to exhibit work made in your own workshops – we look forward to receiving your submissions

Portuguese inspiration



Jonathan Higgins studied at Sheffield and says this oak and oak veneer corner wall cabinet was made as part of his C&G course for which he gained a distinction. "The glazed front was actually inspired by my regular trips to Portugal. The design of the glazing is based on the traditional windows you see in some of the smaller villages in the Algarve. This particular one is from the small market town of Alte. I have to say that the effect of the sun on the coloured glass is somewhat more attractive than the light in my Sheffield dining room. "The glass shelves inside now store my collection of Portuguese coffee cups. Further trips, I am sure, will give me inspiration to work on more designs.



My favourite thing about this piece is the spalted beech I used for the cabinet. This was against the advice of tutors on my C&G course. I am glad I stuck with it as the contrasting colours are lovely, and so far no problems – touch wood! The base is in ash and again I like the effect of the lighter and darker woods. It is perhaps the moderate drinker's drinks cabinet with space for two or three bottles and a few glasses!

Part of a dining suite in maple with bird's eye maple back slat



Lady's writing desk in West African mahogany with jarrah knobs

Little and large!

Richard Archer has been making furniture in South Devon for many years and has a full order book for the next three months. "After completing a traditional five-year apprenticeship on leaving school, I worked for some four or five different firms, each one teaching me a different approach to the design and making of fine furniture. I decided to take the plunge and set up on my own about 18 years ago, then relocated to Devon from Kent where I had been previously based.

"My work ranges from the smallest jewellery box right through to a complete room scheme. Influences range from the Arts and Crafts movement in my training days to the contemporary work of today. There is always emphasis on traditional methods of construction and using native timbers wherever possible, some of which are cut and dried by me at the workshop. "Predominantly, I use English hardwoods, although if imported woods are used they are from sustainable stocks and are usually selected because there is no native wood of the correct colour or characteristic.

Send examples of your work to

The Editor, Furniture and Cabinetmaking magazine,
86 High Street, Lewes, BN7 1XN, East Sussex.

Please include any necessary information/biographical details along with transparencies or good quality prints of the work itself.



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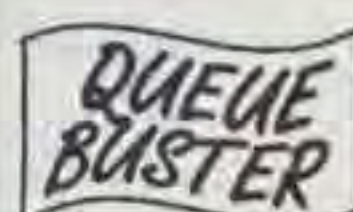
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East Sussex or e-mail: coline@thegmcgroup.com

Veneer of excitement

Q I intend to make the Kevin Ley corner cupboard (F&C 50), but my bandsaw is not up to deep sawing veneers. I note that Bob Waring used 3mm (1/8in) oak-faced ply in his Cabinet Sauvignon, but the faced ply I have used (mail order) has been bland. In any case, I want to have book-matched, or at least well figured, doors, as this seems central to the design. Can you please advise me of a supplier or producer of book-matched or well figured 2mm (5/64in) veneer who would accept a small order suitable for this project? Alternatively, does anyone produce attractively figured veneer ply, who would also deal in this quantity? Do you have any other suggestions you think may help?

VH Bell
Harpswell Road,
Lincoln



Specialist companies are happy to post small parcels of veneers

A For good veneers there are several companies in the classified sections of this magazine. Here are two who cater for small amounts. It is probably harder to buy small amounts of plywood, but veneer can be sent in the post. You are more likely to get some interesting figures this way as well. There are specialist veneered board

companies, but I don't know any who would have small quantities. If you are offered offcuts, these would tend to be at the ends of boards and so not too exciting. I would buy an offcut from a local supplier and veneer it using Scotch, or cold press it in a homemade caul, which is simple to make using plywood or blockboard and battens.

J. Crispin & Sons has been providing veneers for cabinetmakers since 1900. The staff are always helpful and will be quite happy to take small orders. Tel: 020 7739 4857, or visit the www.jcrispinandsons.co.uk. You could also try Art Veneers. Tel: 01638 712550, or e-mail: sales@artveneers.co.uk; and SL Hardwoods, which offers sheet materials and veneers. Tel: 0800 731 6345; www.slhardwoods.co.uk. All of these companies offer mail order.

Colin Eden-Eadon

One-sided debate

Q I'm a student about to embark on making a cabinet for my major project. I'd like to know if I really do have to veneer both sides of the MDF? What would happen if I veneered only one side of it? I'm not going to be showing both sides of the stuff and would like to save time and expense.

Jenny Leasdorta, by email

A Your question is of the 'how long is a piece of string?' variety so the answer is, of course, 'it depends'. But on what? One of the accepted rules of veneering is that whatever you do to one side of a piece of wood, you must do to its obverse; otherwise the difference in tension, one face to the other, will result in distortion.

Having initially accepted the truth of this, as a restorer I couldn't help noticing

that craftsmen who had gone before me hadn't always followed the rule, and many pieces of period furniture remain in good structural shape despite their component parts being veneered on only one face. This prompted me to carry out some experiments, my (unscientific) findings being: if a piece of wood is largely restrained by being a jointed part of a construction – for example a drawer front which is held flat by the dovetails to the drawer sides, or a carcass side which is corner-jointed to its fellows – it may be veneered on one face only, provided that: a) This is done after assembly, and b) Drying is inhibited so that it takes place slowly. I have since veneered many pieces of furniture in this way, using Scotch glue and the traditional hammer method. One bizarre but effective trick that I have used successfully, is that if hand-veneering one face of an unrestrained workpiece – a table top prior to fitting, for example – it will remain flat if it is allowed to dry slowly, face down on newspaper.

Why does this work? I haven't a clue, but the still-unrestrained mahogany top of a 1,370mm (54in) diameter snap-top table, veneered on one face with rosewood and allowed to dry as described above, is still in my family's possession and flat as a piece of float glass more than 10 years later. I have found, however, that the groundwork's ratio of area-to-thickness makes a big difference: a large area of thin groundwork is considerably more prone to distortion than a small area of thick material. Thus, there are a lot of ifs and buts to be considered, which can only be informed by experience.

Having said all this, if you are using synthetic glue and a press of any kind for veneering, then you can't carry out the procedure post-assembly, and controlled drying is irrelevant. In this case I think it would be false economy to veneer one face only; use a cheap backing veneer that will seal in the solvents within the MDF. Otherwise, plain MDF releases a whiff of formaldehyde and so on for years.

Paul Richardson

F&C Letters

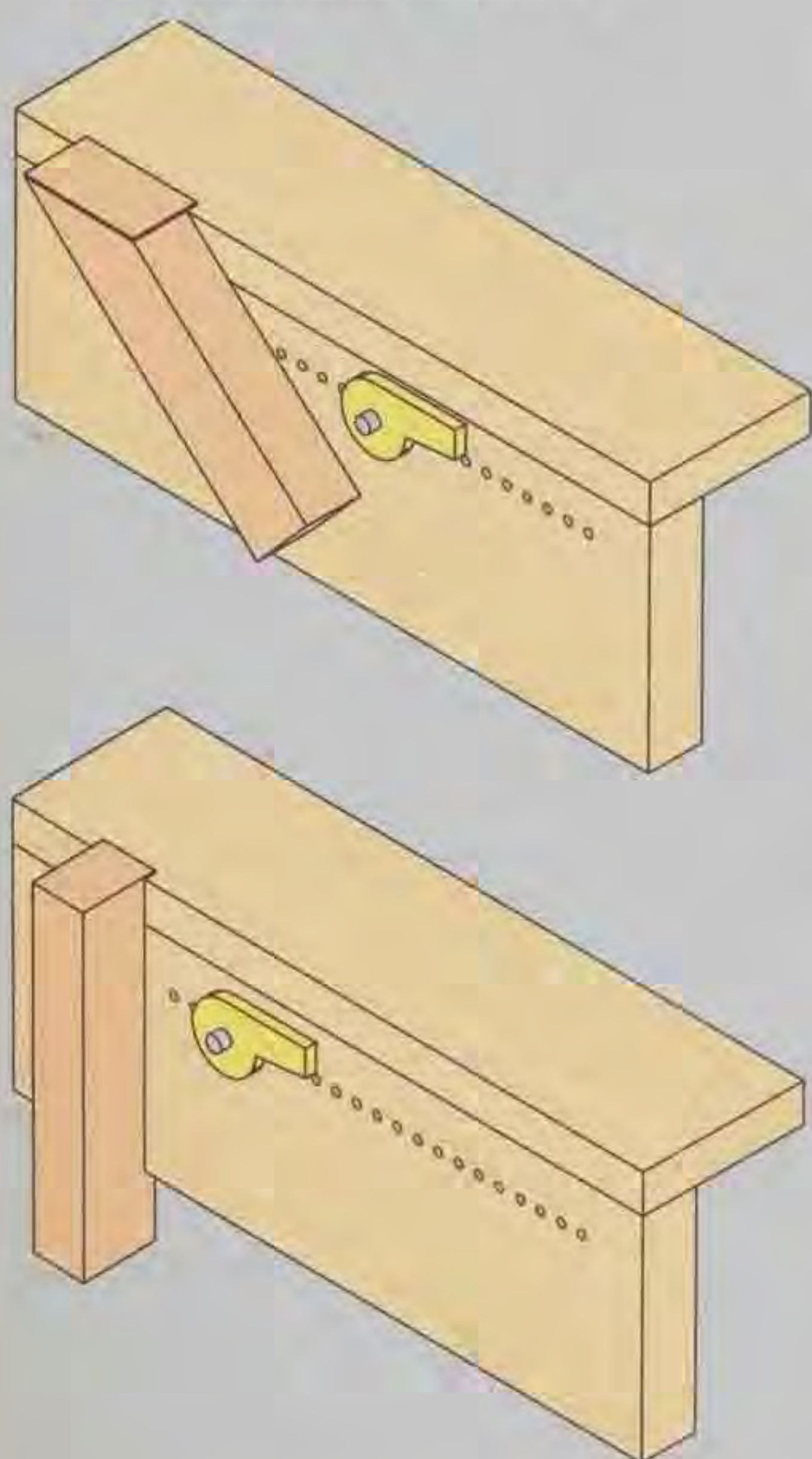
The F&C team welcomes letters on all aspects of the magazine. Readers' views are sought on projects featured, design issues, and technical matters. Write to: The Letters Page, F&C, GMC Publications Ltd, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XN or e-mail coline@thegmcgroup.com

Thank you

I want to pass on my thanks to Robert Ingham for his design of a shooting board (in F&C No. 45 and No. 47). I'm one of those who had indifferent results with horizontal shooting boards, even when I made up Robert Wearing's improved design from *The Resourceful Woodworker*.

I was about ready to try a dedicated shooting plane, one of those with deep box-like sides, but at the price asked, it would have to be home-made. So, when I saw Robert's design it kindled fresh hope and was 'fast-tracked'. I used what material I had – some 19mm (¾in) chipboard faced with melamine on both sides made the body. I cut two pieces, skimmed off one face on the table saw and laminated them,

Robert's lateral approach to shooting boards proved to be the answer



finishing with a piece about 32mm (1¼in) thick and again faced with melamine on both sides. A third piece of the same material formed the top with enough melamine cut away to provide a gluing surface.

Robert uses a separate bar carrying the adjustable end stop attached to the stock face. I made my stock from three thicknesses of ply: 12.7mm (½in), 6.35mm (¼in) and 12.7mm, with the middle ply just a few short sections, leaving a slot for the adjustable stop. I made the stock long enough to reach almost to the floor and kept everything straight and square. I haven't yet made the adjustable stock; if I do it will fit in front of the fixed stock as I made the top quite a bit longer than Robert's. I had some suitable Perspex-like material for the cam clamp, but my first trial was a failure. It wouldn't hold on a test piece of wood. I had deliberately made it oversize in case it needed adjusting so I marked the maximum length of arc over which it would work and filed this to be like a section of a 'snail cam'. It now holds properly and I have to be careful not to crush soft wood.

When I finished the job I put it away until some end-grain planing turned up, then turned to my next job. I needed to square a piece of ply for another jig I was building and went to roll out the table saw. Then I realised it would be an ideal test for my new shooting board and probably quicker. Within seconds, it seemed, the board was in place and fine shavings were coming away until the plane was in full contact with the top of the shooting board and cutting stopped. Just as it was supposed to, but never had before!

I'm a retired hobbyist, although in the few weeks that have elapsed my jig has been used every time I'm in the workshop. For any job where I might clamp on a temporary fence to guide a chisel or a plane square to a face, I now use the jig.

Thanks, Robert!

Derek Thomas
Australia

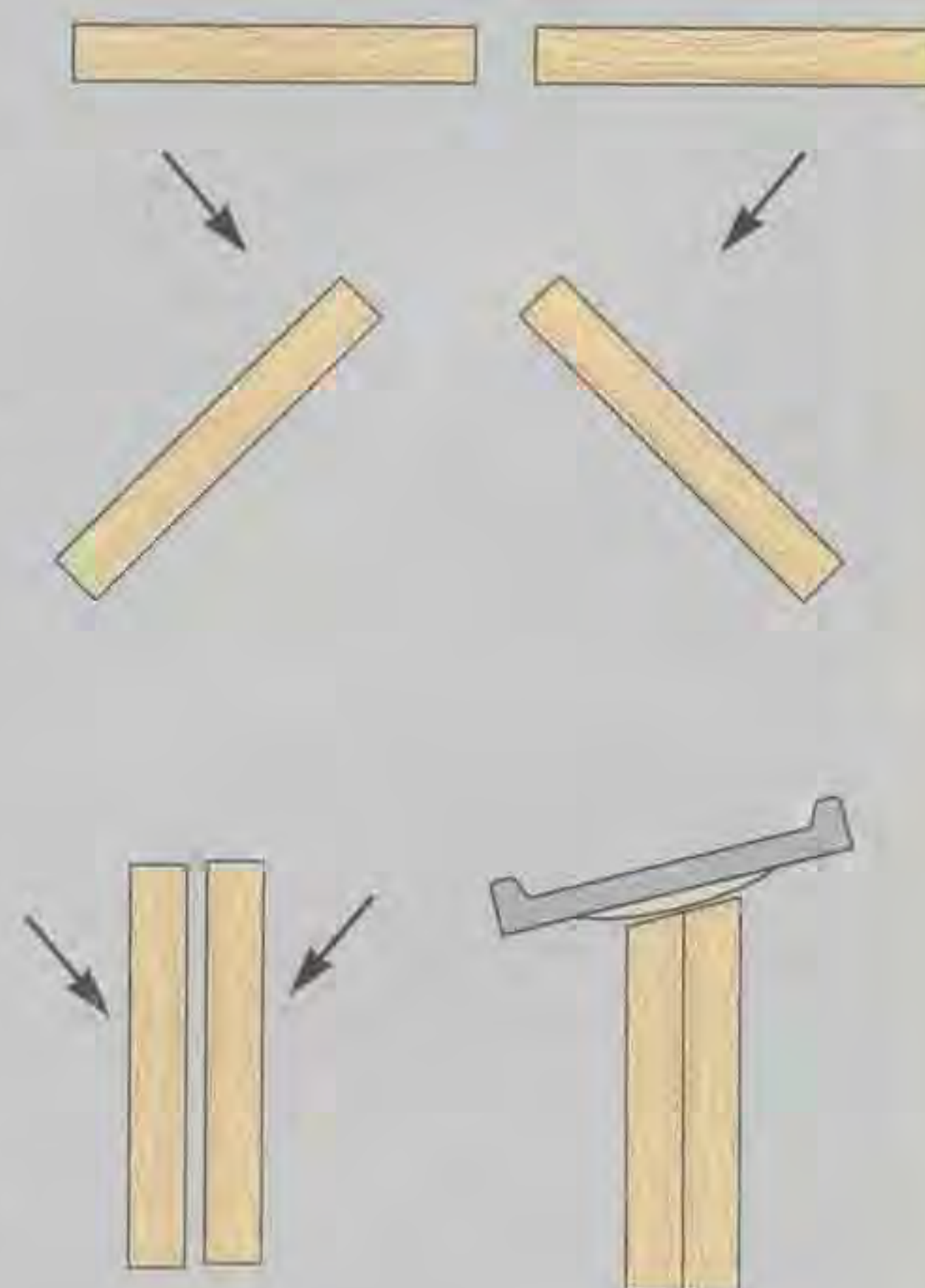
Why be square?

I enjoy David Charlesworth's articles on hand tool techniques, and 'The Method' of edge jointing (F&C No. 52) was good and informative. However, I don't understand the need and bother for a square edge. Far more important are two edges that complement each other. To that end, I take the two edges that I want to join, and 'close the book', and plane both edges together. It doesn't matter what the angle is or even if the angle wanders.

When you 'open the book' again the two angles will complement each other to 180° which is the real goal of edge jointing.

Walt Swanson
Cumbria

I spoke to David about your point and he agrees entirely. I expect it is just his sense of perfection – just habit. Ed.



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Gordon Fry studied restoration and furniture making with Bruce Luckhurst and shared a workshop with John Lloyd before starting his own business in West Sussex in the late 90s

Read all about it!

Gordon Fry relives the making of his F&C competition 2000 entry based on 18th century aesthetics and characteristics

From the outset, the brief was clear. My client wanted a piece of furniture to complement the traditional Georgian dining table and chairs I had built for him the previous year. The client wanted solid wood construction in order to achieve the same characteristics and aesthetics found in original high-quality Georgian pieces.

We started by looking through antique furniture books such as *British Antique Furniture* by John Andrews and several others so that I could establish what the client was hoping to see in terms of design. I have found that conveying design ideas is often best done through the use of illustrations and sketches to assist the thought process during the meeting. It was most important at this stage to understand the location and dimensions for this commission.

Once our thoughts had created a rough idea of design I went away and drew up a preliminary sketch of the intended commission. During a subsequent meeting sketches and modifications were ironed out. I then produced a scale drawing of the piece. Finer details, such as mouldings, lippings and string linings would be considered as the project progressed.

Timber preparation

The next step was to gather all the materials needed for the project. I like to prepare two cutting lists; one for a rough-cut at the timber yard and another for accurate cutting when back at the workshop. There is no point in worrying yourself about the final cut of a rail when you're standing in the middle of

After hours of searching through antiques books this rich imposing design was arrived at







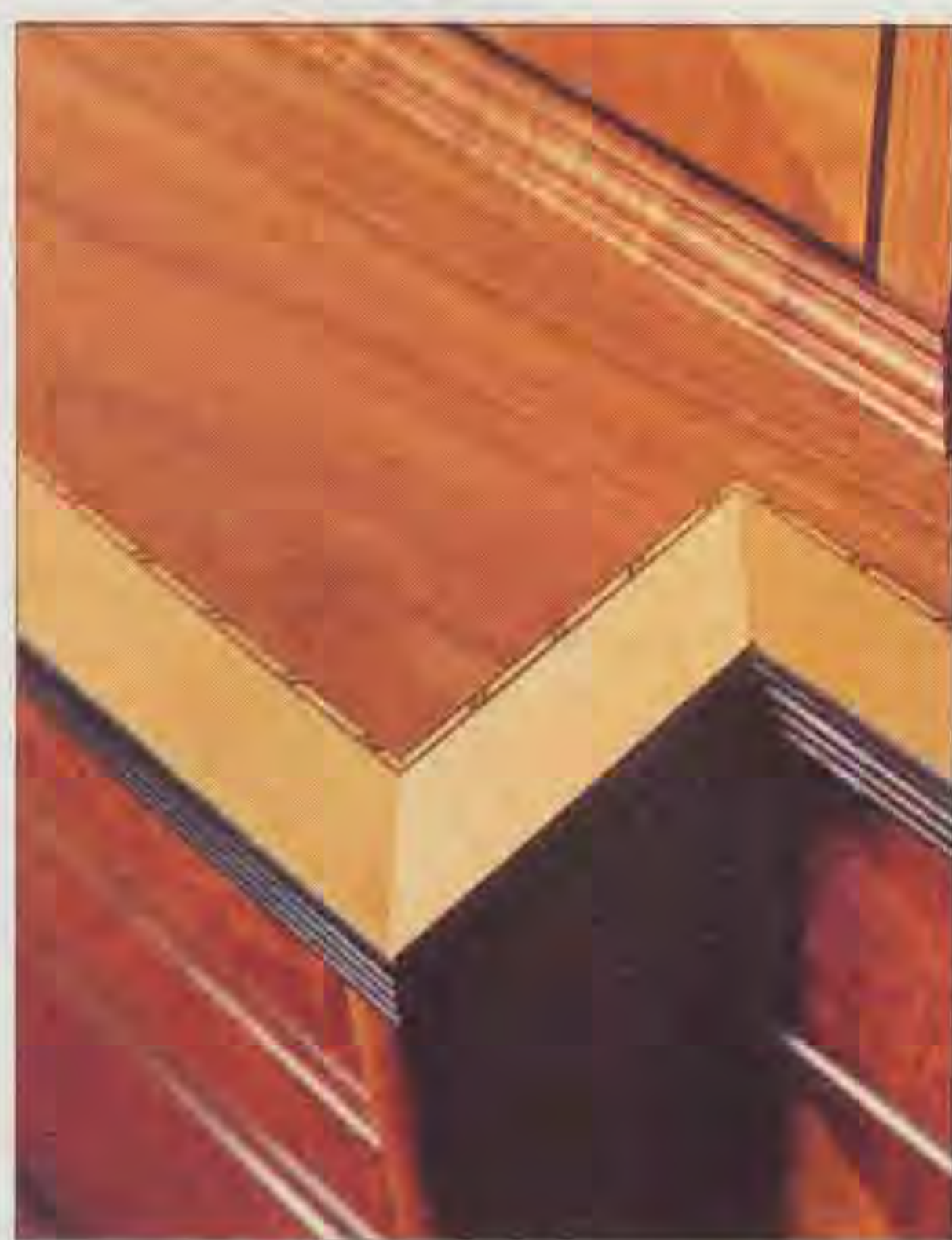
Tools of the trade, all the carcass work is on solid grounds, not often used these days



Main carcass complete



Sliding dovetail on drawer divider



Sycamore crossbanding and ebony mouldings add to the opulence of this piece

◀ the awesome sight of cube upon cube of planked timber.

After a few hours of looking through many logs of cut timber, I finally felt comfortable with my selection. This consisted of quarter-sawn mahogany, quarter-sawn European oak, American walnut (crown cut) and Cedar of Lebanon (quarter-sawn). After shipping my timber back to the workshop, I went to my next port of call to select the ebony I needed, then on to find the burr walnut veneer and the string linings I required.

General construction

Although the finished piece looks imposing, the bookcase is actually made up of a set of square carcasses. The project can be broken down into four sections: base carcass, top carcass, drawers and doors, and swan neck.

When constructing a base of such size it is imperative to retain a level floor to ensure the piece is square. This will help in the later stages when hanging doors, installing drawers and squaring up to give you the final look.

The carcass sides are made up of solid

mahogany which is cut into sectional pieces of about 50-65mm (2-2½in), then laminated together to create side panels 920 x 610mm (36¼ x 24in) and bases 735 x 610mm (29 x 24in). Walnut lip-pings are applied to the face edge. All panels are made over-sized to allow for squaring-up and final cuts.

Next, the panels are planed to 16mm (¾in) thickness. With the use of my 12 in Sedgwick planer thicknesser, I am able to bring the panels to size quickly. Unfortunately, some of the panels are too large for my current machinery to handle, but this is overcome by the use of a sander-thicknesser belonging to a fellow cabinet-maker. Any imperfections, that is, dents, knots and cracks are located and subsequently filled. All work is sanded and ready for veneering.

Once panel sanding is well underway, I am able to start flattening the veneer in an air-press. Those of you familiar with the workings of a vacuum press will undoubtedly be aware of the monotonous loud tone it produces, until the automatic cut-off valve puts a welcome end to the noise.

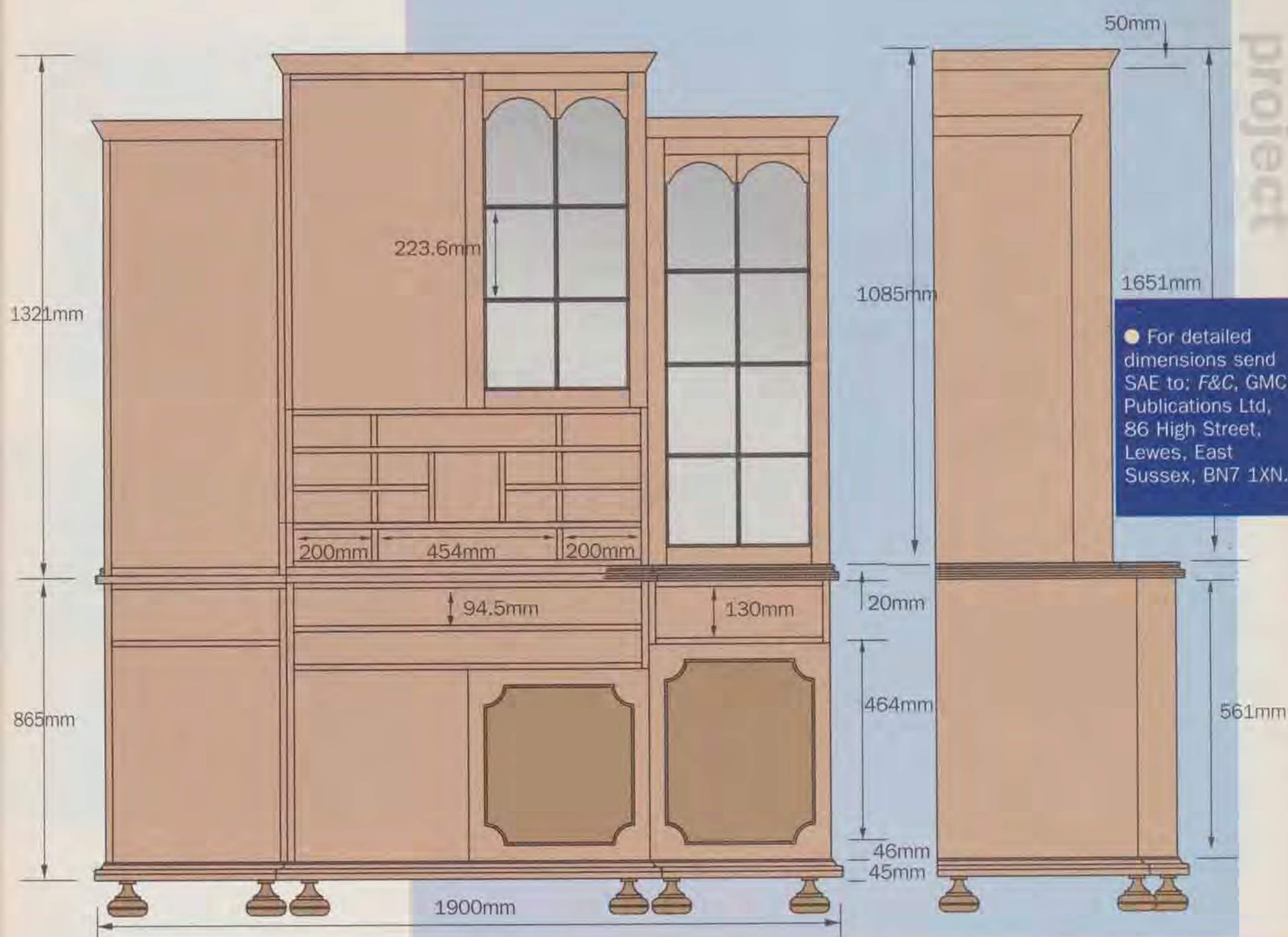
The veneering process

In a perfect world I would retain the burr walnut veneer on both sides, although, with the increasing prices of veneer in today's market, the cost of doing this exceeds the working margins of this project. To combat the problem, I find the following method works well.

First, veneer across the grain with crown-cut walnut on one side and burr on the other, then finish the veneer process using straight grain in the same direction of the ground work. The burr walnut is quarter-veneered except on the drawer fronts where it is book-matched. It is helpful to use a couple of mirrors to create the visual effect of the intended layout of the quartered burr veneer.

Carcass build-up

I begin by building the base carcasses. In keeping with tradition, I use hidden dovetail construction throughout. The centre section of the base incorporates two drawers and two cupboard doors underneath, while the side sections comprise one drawer and one door each. All panels have 8mm (⅝in) rebates to the



inside edge at the back to allow for plywood backs. Drawer runners and rails are made up as single frames by using mortice and tenon construction.

I also create a groove within the frame to allow for dustboards. Once the frame is assembled, I produce grooves in the side of the carcass to house the frame. As the carcass is made from solid timber, the frame will only be glued at the front edge and screws are fitted into slots to hold the back of the frame to the carcass. This will allow for shrinkage within the carcass sides. Three rails hold the top of the carcass together and therefore act as kickers to the drawers.

Solid walnut is used for the front rails and mahogany for the rear as they will not be on show. All joints are now ready for dry assembly, followed by gluing. Once all carcasses are glued together, they can be assembled to form one base unit. Measurements can be taken now to create the plinth. This is made from mahogany; all joints are mortice and tenon. I create the plinth in one frame for stability and alignment purposes. Traditional bun-feet are turned and fit-

ted to the frame using dowels. The rear feet are designed not to protrude beyond the back of the cabinet so that it can be placed flush against a wall.

The top of the base is constructed in a similar way to the side panels. Ebony lippings are created with a scratch-stock and then cut and glued into place. Next, the top is veneered with crown-cut walnut. Sycamore cross bandings are fitted around the edge. Box and ebony string-linings are then cut in.

Drawer assembly

The drawers are made up from quarter-sawn oak, using cedar of Lebanon for the bases which was traditionally used to give a pleasant aroma and to ward off pests such as moths. The drawer runners are made from oak to help prevent wearing. Despite all the effort put into the piece as a whole, it seems good drawer dovetailing is the sole mark of a cabinetmaker worth his salt!

Drawer fronts are planed to a thickness of 16mm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in). Sides and backs are planed to 8mm ($\frac{5}{16}$ in) thickness. All work is over length and width.

Drawer fronts are now planed to fit exactly into the openings for which they are intended. The completion of this process allows me to make the rest of the components. Once I have made the drawers they are dry assembled. The drawer fronts can now be book-matched veneered. The drawer front is scribed with a marking gauge which stops the veneer fibres from splitting. A rebate is cut for the beading at the front of the drawer with the use of a router mounted in a table. Ebony beading is fitted not only as a decorative effect, but also to give protection to the veneer on the drawer fronts. Traditionally, a cabinet-maker would have used either D-mouldings or cockbeading, but in this instance as the ebony has been planed flat to give it the decorative effect referred to above, it was felt by the client and myself that a D-moulding would blend itself well with the cross-grain mouldings.

While the drawer is in component form, I can cut in the locks. Once this has been done, the drawers can be reassembled and glued together. A true test of good hand-cut dovetailing is the



Traditional materials abound – oak and cedar for the drawers



Top carcass veneers and details



And on the other side!



Crown cut veneers on the drawer fronts



Cornice moulding



Crossbanding on the doors

- minimal amount of glue required. For more detail on drawer construction, please refer to *Making Classic English Furniture* by Paul Richardson (GMC Publications).

Doors and top carcass

Doors are constructed from quarter-sawn American walnut, again using traditional mortice and tenon joints. They are made oversize enabling them to be cut down to fit. Shaped corners are created on each door. Panels are made up from 5mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) MDF with quarter-sawn burr walnut veneer applied to both sides. The framework of the doors is veneered with walnut cross-banding and ebony beading applied around the inside arris of each door of the base unit.

The top cabinet is constructed and veneered using the same methods as the base unit. Due to the height of the side carcasses a fixed shelf is fitted. This is dovetail-housed into the side panels. The other shelves are made of 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) glass as the client wanted it for display use. The glass shelves are adjustable using sockets and studs. Another of the client's requirements is

for low-voltage lighting in the shelving area.

The doors are constructed from American black walnut, once again made oversized on the outside edges, using traditional mortice and tenon techniques. Glazed doors in the upper section were most popular during the 18th century and served to protect valuable books from the soot of open fires. The glazing was often decorative and intricate in design incorporating glazing bars which served a practical purpose as large sections of glass were difficult to make at that time: 4mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) glass is used here.

Glazing beads are made from walnut, tenoned into the sides of the door styles and then half-jointed at the intersections. Finally, ebony beading is applied on top. The pelmets are an integral part of the door rails which are created by cutting the shapes out of a piece of walnut 460 x 73 x 15mm (18 x 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ x $\frac{1}{2}$ in).

A template is made for the shape of the curves required and are marked onto the walnut. These shapes can now be cut with the bandsaw, then spoke-shaved to clean up the saw

marks. The shaped component can now be laminated to the existing door-rail. At this point, the tenons can be cut for the door-rails. In this instance two tenons are used to each side due to the size of the rails.

Drinks cabinet

The fall-flap of the drinks cabinet is made from MDF as it is essential this surface remains perfectly flat. The main unit is constructed in the same style as before but this time it needs a base frame to sit on. In order for the fall-flap to open flat, it is necessary to cut a rebate into both the backs of the fall-flap and carcass base so that it can roll under the main carcass.

The front rail of the base frame is hollowed to receive the swing of the fall. To create a hollow, a router table with a cove-cutter is used. This enables the leading front edge to remain so that the cross grain moulding can be applied around the base of the unit.

Cross grain moulding

Groundwork is made up from a length of pine and then cut to an angle of 120°. This enables the process of lami-

Swan neck detail



nation using segments of walnut about 70 x 50 x 10 mm (2 7/8 x 2 x 3/8 in). Mouldings are created in lengths of 1.5m. This is to allow for any problem areas at each end. Once laminated, I can then proceed to strike the moulding. Sometimes a fairly severe tear-out can occur on a spindle-moulder when striking such a moulding. This is not to say the spindle-moulder is no good, it merely means I would use it to get rid of waste material. I have discovered that you cannot beat hand-finishing using traditional hand moulding planes for the final cuts

Swan neck

The swan neck is optional to the bookcase, but my client was keen to commission this finishing touch and we both felt it would enhance the overall visual impact of the piece.

My first task is to construct an MDF template around which I can scribe onto a piece of walnut, 920 x 300 x 25mm (36 1/8 x 12 x 1 in). The shape is then cut out using the bandsaw. The top moulding of the swan neck is created by laminating 4mm (3/16 in) pieces of walnut together by using a male and

female former. Cascamite is utilised here as it has an extended working time. The two formers are clamped together and left to dry. Next, the edges and sides are squared up. The use of a router and several cutters facilitates the formation of the shape. The finish of the scrolls can only be achieved by using carving chisels.

The central block is laminated to the main construction. Then with the use of marquetry, the client's initials are created. Finally, the cross grain moulding is applied around the central block.

Brasswork and finishing

All brasswork should be fitted in advance of finishing. I chose locks and hinges from a wide range at Martin & Co. Handles, plates and escutcheons were better suited from Marshall Brass. Care should be taken choosing sympathetic brasswork and positioning on the piece. Also extreme caution should be applied when fitting, a mistake at this stage could be very costly!

The entire piece is rubbed down with 360 grade garnet paper. A weak solution of Danish oil is applied all over, then increased to full strength oil for a

Suppliers

- Timber yard: W. L. West & Sons Ltd. Tel: 01798 861633
- Ebony: Timberline. Tel: 01732 355626
- Burr walnut veneer and the string linings: Heritage Inlay Design. Tel: 01273 506080
- Handles, plates and escutcheons: Marshall Brass. Tel: 01362 684105
- Locks and hinges: Martin & Company. Tel: 0121 2332111

Further reading

- Further reading: *Veneering – A Complete Course* by Ian Hosker £14.95 ISBN 1 861108 046 8; *Making Classic English Furniture* by Paul Richardson, £16.95 ISBN 1 86108 153 7; and *The Veneering Book* by David Square, £16.95 ISBN 156158 093

These three books can be ordered from: Mail Order Department, GMC Publications Ltd, 166 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XU. Tel: 01273 488005. Fax: 01273 478606

further two coats. Each coat is left to dry for a day. Then it is rubbed down with 400 grade silicon paper. Several coats of shellac polish are then applied to enhance the finish. Waxing is the final process and this is continued until the desired effect is achieved.

Summary

Since taking delivery of the bookcase, the client has remarked on several occasions on the attention to detail and the vast amount of work involved in a piece of this size and complexity.

From my point of view, it was a luxury to work with solid timbers, but at times it felt almost criminal to conceal good-quality mahogany with veneer when most ground work today is made from MDF or block-board.

Finally, I was grateful to the client for allowing the bookcase to be entered into an exhibition at the Axminster Show in November 2000 which allowed many people to view the piece. After many a long hour toiling away, hard efforts can often go by unnoticed as in its final resting place it will be viewed only by a select and privileged few.

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All boxed in!

Some of the most innovative box makers from around the world will be taking part in a new touring exhibition, as **Peter Lloyd** explains



Celebrating Boxes is a first for the UK. Come to think of it, I think it might be a world premiere! Andrew Crawford and myself have spent the last two years looking for boxmakers from around the world. A selection process took place in February 2000 and around 80 of the most outstanding and innovative designer/makers were chosen.

The exhibition which opens September 2001 in Tullie House – Carlisle's Museum and Art Gallery – will tour nationally and internationally. There's a book to go with it too, which includes work by most of the makers selected for the Celebrating Boxes touring exhibition: artists from Britain, USA, Europe, Australia, Russia, Denmark, Canada, Israel and New Zealand.

To coincide with the opening of the exhibition, there will be an International Box Conference, a forum where makers and designers, or anyone who is interested in the box as an art form or as a piece of craftsmanship, can meet, learn and be inspired by one another. This is another first!

Speakers will include David Charlesworth (well known to F&C readers), Andrew Crawford (author of two superb books on boxes), Roger Gifkins (one of Australia's finest boxmakers), Robert Ingham (the master designer/maker) and Po Shun Leong (maker of dramatic boxes from the US). There will also be practical demonstrations from Woodrat, Gifkins Jigs and Leigh Jigs who are sponsoring the event.

Peter Lloyd, UK: Dales Box

Peter Lloyd UK

"It was during my time as a craft design and technology teacher that I was given some planks of burr oak. While I didn't know it at the time, the seeds of my box-making career were sown. I didn't want to waste a bit of that burr oak and it was that single fact more than any other that influenced the design of my early boxes. I found myself using all the little waney-edged pieces – they were just too good to burn. Making something was one thing. Selling it was something else. But somebody actually wanted to buy it!

"The thrill of that greatest compliment of all – an open cheque book – lives with me still. I remember vividly my first article in a local newspaper and I clearly remember the first time my name appeared in a woodworking magazine. I was so proud. I'd been reading these magazines for years, there was such good stuff in them, and there I was – amongst it!"

A celebration of work

Wooden boxes encompass so many possibilities. They can be finely sculpted or carved, functional or fanciful, immaculately constructed and veneered, or just hollowed out. Box makers from the UK, New Zealand, Australia and America talk about their work.

Andrew Crawford UK

Andrew didn't start his professional life as a box maker. His original training was as a musician studying flute at the Royal College of Music. An interest in woodwork was always there, and following a period working as a freelance musician, lorry driver and cycle courier, an offer to share a workshop in 1986 presented an opportunity to use his woodworking skills to real benefit. Boxes were well suited to the practicalities of a cramped, shared workshop and he has been making boxes ever since.

"I enjoy light woods such as sycamore and maple, bright colours, natural-edged veneers and curved shapes, and try to combine these elements to create individual, colourful and joyful pieces. The results are neither traditional nor radical but, like good folk music, I try to blend past and present practices while still nudging a barrier or two."

"I share my time between making, writing, demonstrating, performing and teaching. Music and wood are what I love and I wouldn't dream of giving any of it up."

Charles B. Cobb USA

"Boxes are wonderful things; in fact people collect them. There is only so much space in somebody's house for tables and chairs."

When asked if he prefers to make larger pieces such as cabinets, chairs and tables, or boxes he replies: "I just like to make stuff. It's all basically an exercise in creating something I like to look at. I strive to make a unique-looking object that also functions. A lot of people get hung up on the functionality of an object and their concept of design falls by the wayside. That's not necessarily bad, but you can design something really unique and wonderful and it can still function as a chair or table or something."



Andrew Crawford, UK: detail of large jewellery box, burr maple veneer, dyed veneer decoration



Charles B. Cobb, US: Chubby Leg Boxes



David Trubridge, New Zealand

David Trubridge, New Zealand

"Like the footloose sailor I need variety and constant movement. Jumping different scales and media feeds my creativity. I also design houses, another form of box, that is the personification of craft."

New Zealand is now home for designer/maker David Trubridge, but it used to be Britain. In 1982 he exchanged the wild, open moors of Northumberland for the ocean. New

Zealand became too attractive to leave.

"Design is the most important issue for me. Craftsmanship is a means to an end, not an end in itself. I try to create interesting, but strong and simple forms for boxes. If they aren't too complex to make, I have time to spend on a point of focus or visual detail. Landscape and flora are an important part of New Zealand identity and I have made series of boxes that are designed around rock or leaf motifs."

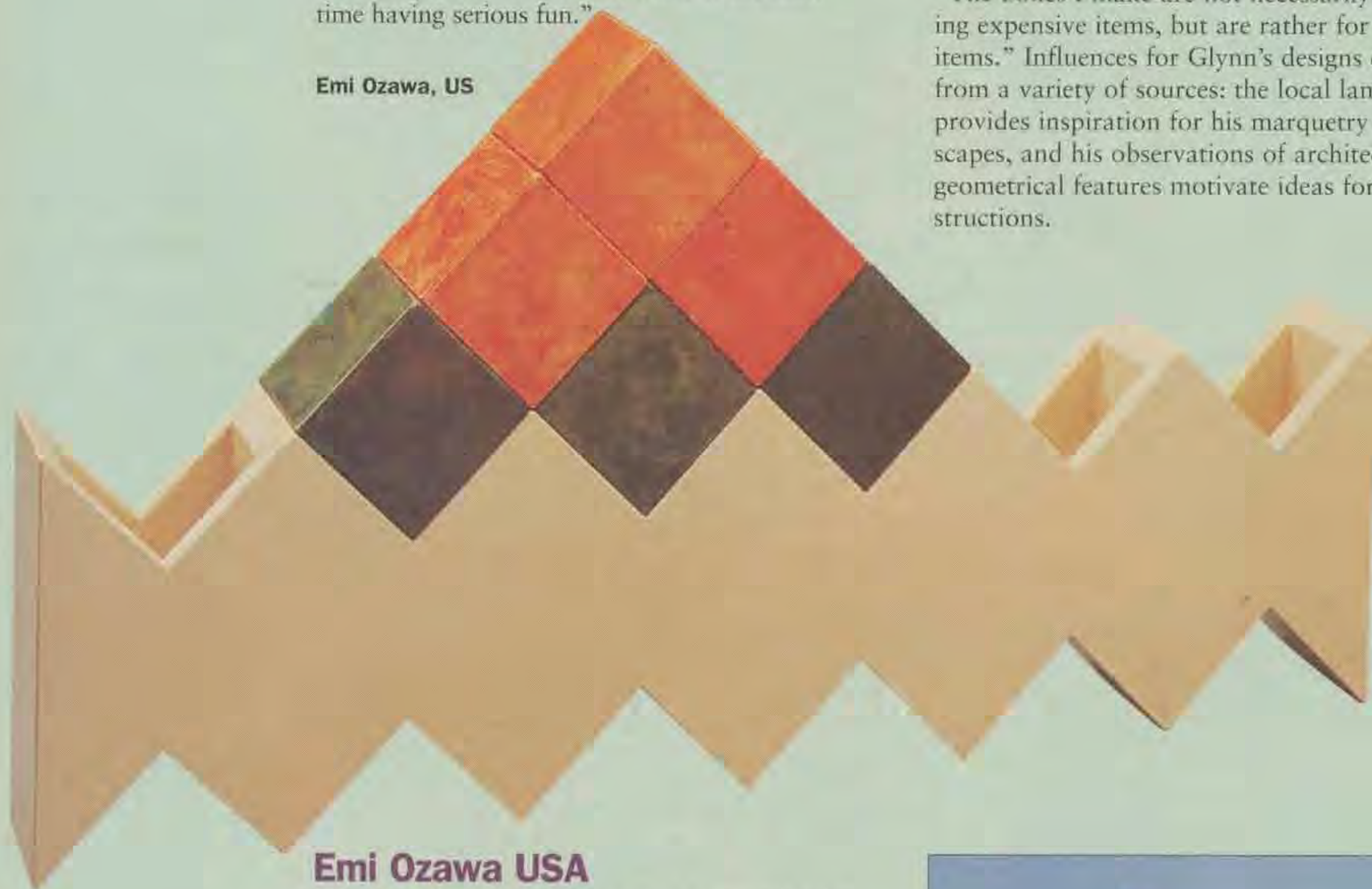
Edward L. Love USA

"My work is strongly influenced by Occidental aesthetics. By definition, the art boxes I make are stacking containers (not hinged), similar in style to those used in China, Japan and Korea.

Historically, the use of these stacking boxes frequently included ceremonial/ritual actions. Likewise, many of my boxes require the use of both hands to open as well as space to spread the successive tiers and their contents. The act of opening one of the boxes I create is designed to be an integral part of the art experience.

"My work is about defining and understanding the process and exercising control of my goals as an artist, while at the same time having serious fun."

Emi Ozawa, US



Emi Ozawa USA

For a lot of makers making a box starts with the contents, the decoration or even the hinges, but with Emi, it's how it will be opened!

"I like to make objects and furniture that suggest playfulness and mobility through form and colour. The box is one of the objects I am interested in making. People often ask me: 'What is it? What do you put in it?'"

"Sometimes my boxes have very little room inside. What and how much they can hold is not the most important concern for me when I make boxes. My focus is on how they can be opened. I form the shape of the box as I develop a way of opening it. I would like to evoke a child's pleasure in playing with a toy in the moment of raising the lid. If the boxes make people curious, I will be pleased."

Edward Love, US: Jock Box



Glynn Sheppard UK

"The boxes I make are not necessarily for storing expensive items, but are rather for valuable items." Influences for Glynn's designs come from a variety of sources: the local landscape provides inspiration for his marquetry landscapes, and his observations of architectural and geometrical features motivate ideas for new constructions.



Glynn Sheppard, UK: Ring Box, sycamore and ebony



Kim Kelzar, USA: Fleabee

Kim Kelzer USA

Kim started making boxes about eight years ago, and loves to experiment with any type of paint and anything that leaves a mark. At first her boxes were rather complicated, but then she started making some that had simpler parts that could be treated differently.

"This led me to simplify things further by basically making fancy bandsaw boxes; these required few tools, little joinery and went together much faster; that is until I started to manipulate texture and paint. The bulk of my boxes are done this way."

Tom Rauschke and K. Wiken, USA: Cloud Forest



Tom Rauschke and Kaaren Wiken USA

Tom is a highly-skilled woodturner who refuses to leave it at that. Beautifully turned pieces are only the first step in the process. With cutting, carving and sanding, Tom takes a simple turning into a world of imagination. Each piece exhibits a depth of detail and concealed surprises guaranteed to delight the viewer.

Often, pieces have additional miniature turnings or carved marquetry accessories. Most also contain Kaaren's embroidery. Working with single strands of embroidery floss, Kaaren blends colour into vivid tiny images of the world around and within. The embroideries can often be removed from Tom's pieces and worn as jewellery. There's always something new and fascinating to be discovered in their works.

William McDowell USA

"Perhaps it's the intimacy and the freedom to experiment without a huge risk in time and materials, or the selfishness of relative immediate gratification. Boxes exclude space as well as contain it. While I choose to make the interiors of my jewellery boxes extremely practical, the exteriors are as free of restrictions as any other art form.

"Is it the challenge of that, the bit of mystery that all containers hold, that keeps me coming back to the box as my primary object of expression? It's a little of all of that." ■



Contact details

For more details on The International Box Conference contact Peter Lloyd, The Old School House, Hallbankgate, Brampton, Cumbria, CA8 2NW. Tel: 016977 46698. E-mail: Peterlloydboxes@btinternet.com

"The act of opening one of the boxes I create is designed to be an integral part of the art experience"

Bill McDowell, US: box from the Art-Tekno-Deco Series

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**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL
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Colin Eden-Eadon tests the latest offering from Startrite – the Veba FS 300, a not-so-ordinary planer from Italy

PHOTOS: GMC

User-conscious design – Italian style; other manufacturers take note

Viva Veba

For those who are disciples of cast iron, I am glad to say that there is increasingly more to choose from. Manufacturers other than the traditional ones, such as Sedgwick, Startrite, and bigger ones such as SCM, seem to have taken on board at last, that having substantial cast beds is a good thing. This has always been the case of course in the more expensive, larger professional ranges. Now, it is filtering down into the medium size ranges aimed at smaller makers and within the reach of some amateurs. Elektra Beckum is developing more of its range with them and Scheppach has just launched an entire new range with cast beds.

One thing, however, that seems to have passed most of them by – here I go again – is fences. There is still a preponderance of lightweight fences. Most manufacturers have got saw fences sorted. OK, they might still be made with the 'A' material, but they have substantial mountings for them.

All about fences

In the case of planers, there are some pretty dodgy affairs out there. The biggest thing that seems to let them down is the fence-mounting bracket. Not all of them are centrally mounted and some have flimsy construction. One thing that drew my attention to

this machine is its fence, hence the reason for my preamble. Someone, bless them, has been thinking like a woodworker. What do we all need the most? Straight bits of wood. What do we need to achieve this fairly straightforward operation? Solid square fences. Veba has done it with an extremely solid fence backed up by an equally solid adjustable bracket. A neat addition is a sprung pin that locks positively at 90°. Simple, brilliant! Other angles are marked out on a dial; I would probably not go by this and would set up to whatever I was cutting. The nice thing about this fence is its generous proportions. It extends to



Apart from being a nice solid lump, the fence has a sprung pin to lock it square to the bed



Simple, neat and time saving parallel lift tables



Look – everything stays put, including that lovely fence

most of the surfacing bed's length. The bridge guard is fairly standard. This is a light alloy, yet the adjustment mechanism is attached to a gas strut, making it easy use.

General construction

There is no plastic anywhere on the Veba, which is so good to see at this level. Some manufactures have taken to shielding various parts of machines such as the cutter block housing in plastic; this is not good in my opinion. Not even the controls on the Veba are housed in plastic. The main stand of this machine is the modern folded steel casing, but it does feel and sound more substantial than many.

Surfacing

The tables are 1,400mm (55in) in length and are an unpolished grey cast iron with a planed finish, which is less inclined to cause friction problems. To adjust the infeed table unlock the sensitively set ratchet handle and lower or raise the depth of cut with a lever. Because the tables lift for thicknessing, the outfeed table is also adjustable and this is achieved in the same way. The controls are placed sensibly in a thin column at the right height with the emergency stop within easy reach of either end of the machine.

I tried some fairly interlocked walnut and achieved an excellent result with the three-knife block considering the figure. I would probably do a David Charlesworth and re-hone if I knew I was planing a lot of interlocked grain. A Torsa block is available as an optional extra. Using the fence was a delight. Knowing that it was absolutely square

and rigid was great. This is what we should expect as standard. Extraction is via a folded metal hood located permanently on pivot pins and supported by the table.

Thicknessing

Most planer-thicknessers these days have lift-up tables. On some you have to take off the outfeed table in order to set up for thicknessing. The trouble with most of these is that you have to take off the fence – sometimes the bridge guard as well – then set up the extraction. This is all a bit of a bother, especially if you suddenly remember you've forgotten to surface an important component.

Instead of the more common separate lifting tables, the Veba has parallel lift

‘If I was looking for a planer this size, which is ideal for most small makers, this is the one I would be having a hard time trying to find a reason not to buy!’

tables with a simple locking lever. Unlocking requires lifting up the lever using a bit of ‘oomph’, and grabbing the handle that braces across the tables using the tables lock at 90°. No need to take off the fence or the bridge guard; everything can stay set as you left it. The extraction is simply flipped up from the surfacing position and locked in place; another sprung pin ensures it stays there.

The rise and fall is a nice finely threaded wheel and the table is a centrally mounted column. It always seems to be the case, in my experience anyhow, that thicknessing produces even cleaner results. I guess that this is because the feed is more evenly controlled. The result was free of tearout.

Conclusion

Startrite has done its homework and is to be commended for sourcing this product which admirably complements its own fine range of bandsaws. All the things that I have been wittering about for ages have been considered here and an excellent product is the result – nothing flashy, just good design.

Someone has thought about the end user and applied good solid engineering such as the parallel lift tables. Veba is not the only manufacturer to do this, but I don't think anyone else does it at this price which is very competitive.

The entire machine is easy to use or adjust, just like the tables. If I was looking for a planer this size, which is ideal for most small makers, this is the one I would be having a hard time trying to find a reason not to buy!

As for the fence... excellent. Well done! Viva Veba!



In thicknessing mode



Neat locking pin on the extraction

Facts and figures

Veba FS 300

Price	£2,467 including VAT
Surfacing tables	1400 x 300mm (55 x 12in)
Cutter block	3 knives, Torsa available
Speed	5,400rpm
Power	1.5kW (2hp)

Thicknesser

Table	500 x 300mm (19 ³ / ₄ x 12in)
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Screen test

Gordon Wight designs one marquetry screen for two different rooms. How does he do it? Read on to find out

PHOTOS: GMC

This delicate screen (adult side) won highly commended in the professional class at ATME 2000 in the F&C competition



One of my best clients was expecting her first child and wanted to partition her study to include a nursery area. The initial brief was simple. The study side was to include marquetry showing a nature scene. The only stipulation for the nursery side was that it should be 'different'. Interestingly, I had been considering making a screen as a speculative piece for some time and had already formulated some clear ideas. Therefore, this was almost an ideal commission – lots of creative freedom, a piece I really wanted to make and a clear mental picture of one of the key design elements – the shape.

Cascading foliage

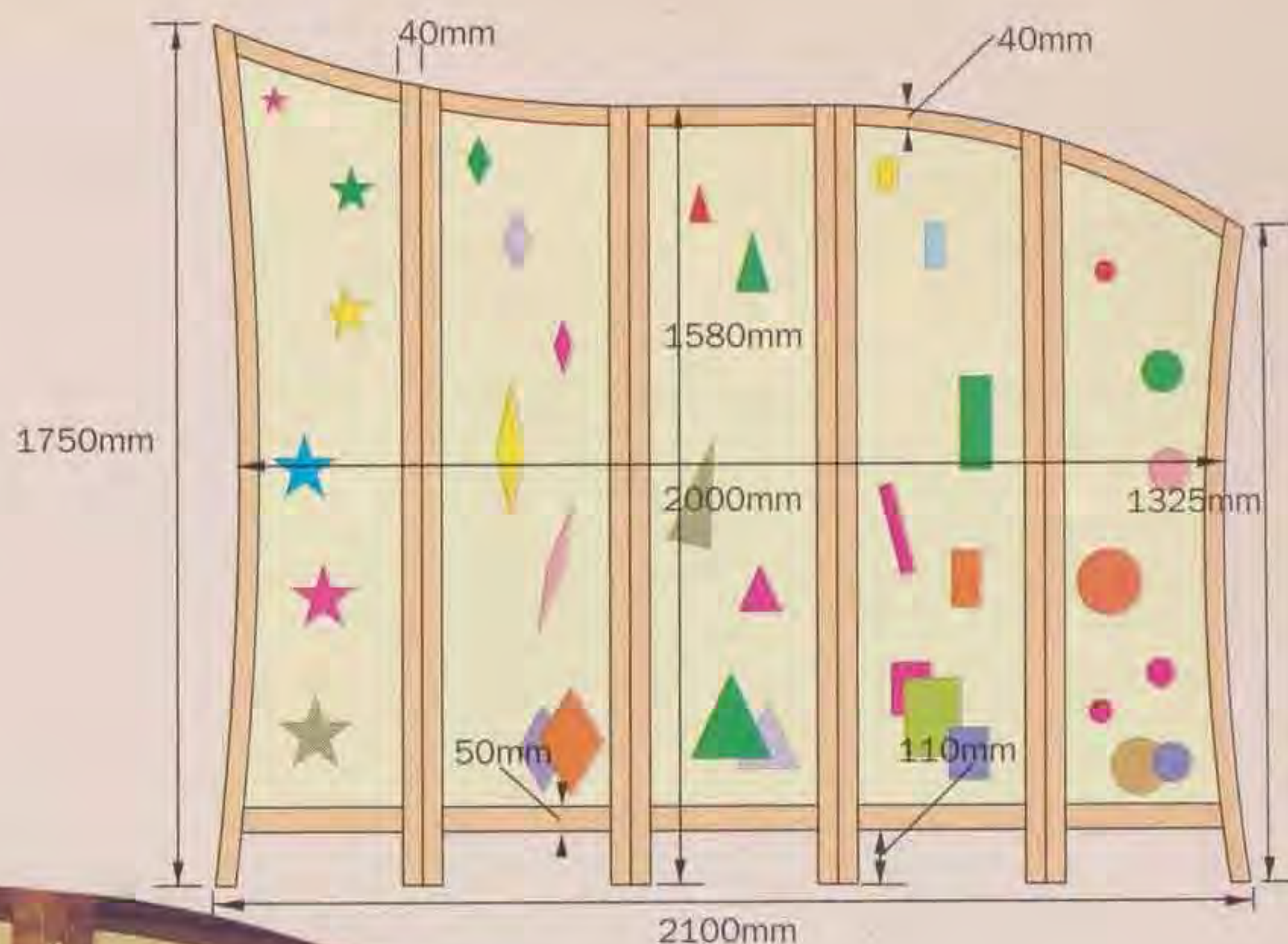
I wanted to create a strong sense of flow

and movement and the shape was a key design element in achieving that feeling. The cascading foliage adds to this effect by suggesting delicate stems and leaves swaying in a breeze. On the reverse side the spatial arrangement of the geometric shapes also reinforces a sense of rhythm and motion.

The shape fulfils an important secondary function. This is a large screen standing 1,800mm (70in) at its highest point and is the same width. This reflects its primary function as a room divider and the fact that both the client and her husband are tall and wanted a high structure. However, the study is not a large room and it is important to try and ensure that the screen doesn't physically overpower the room space. A sig-

nificant reduction in height towards the back helps to lighten the visual impact of the screen without compromising its function. A rectangular screen at this height and width would look massive. Using five narrow panels rather than four wider ones, and the fact that the predominant wood tone is light, also help the visual illusion.

Not surprisingly, in view of the long gestation period when I had been developing a mental picture of the screen, the final shape is remarkably close to my first outline sketch. However there was still a significant amount of further development work involving simple, folded models in card, a full-scale mock-up of the frame in softwood, and both scaled and full-



The children's side of the screen

sized drawings of the artwork.

Models were important in exploring the effect of breaking a continuous curve in a two-dimensional drawing, into a broken zigzag shape in the three-dimensional folded screen. They were also used to experiment with the number and size of the panels and enabled me to have full confidence in the design before I started making it.

Even without considering the cost, I had insufficient amounts of both cherry with good colour and sympathetic grain for the frames, and sycamore sufficiently wide for the panels to allow for any significant changes in design throughout the making process. I wanted a warm reddish cherry frame to complement the deeper red brown of the padauk leaves.

All faces of the frame are on display and therefore I wanted both faces free of sapwood.

Preparation and construction

With a freshly sharpened set of planer blades I set to work. Some boards came out silky smooth. Others lived up to the reputation I had hoped had been exaggerated – torn grain a few millimetres deep even in areas where the grain did not appear to be that difficult. A commonly suggested remedy is to modify blade sharpening and there are a number of possibilities. I chose an intermediate approach and increased the front bevel from 40° to a much sharper 25° and added a 15° back bevel.

The net result is that the total sharpness angle of the blade stays the same at 40°, but the angle at which the blade attacks the wood is steeper so that you get more of a scraping action – similar to the principle of a scraper hand plane. Well it didn't work! OK, maybe tearout was reduced but there were still deep pits on the faces of my cherry frames. Fortunately I was still a comfortable distance away from final thickness. I put a rip blade in the table saw and reduced the timber to about 0.5mm over the final thickness. I finished taking it down with a very sharp, finely set hand plane, carefully reading the grain and reversing the direction of attack as appropriate along the board. The depth and lustre of cherry straight from a ➤

Marquetry panels

The marquetry was fairly straightforward in terms of technique, although with 600 leaves and over 15 metres of stem to cut, it was certainly a severe test of endurance. For the nature scene the sycamore background veneer was cut before the padauk or walnut fill. The dangling stems need to be thin (less than 1mm wide) in order to convey a feeling of delicacy and movement. Cutting this thinly while maintaining a reasonably uniform width and keeping to a nice flowing undulating line over a length of up to 1.75 metres is difficult. The knife has a tendency to follow the line of least resistance in the grain rather than the direction you want.

I made a double-bladed knife to cut the thin stems and I don't think I could have cut this marquetry to an acceptable standard without this simple tool. The fill material for the stems was produced in bulk by using a normal scalpel to cut straight thin strips at the correct thickness. These are thin enough to easily bend into the curved shapes needed for the stems. Backing the walnut with plastic electricians' tape helps keep the veneer from splitting along the grain and holds everything together until it is safely taped in place in the sycamore background.

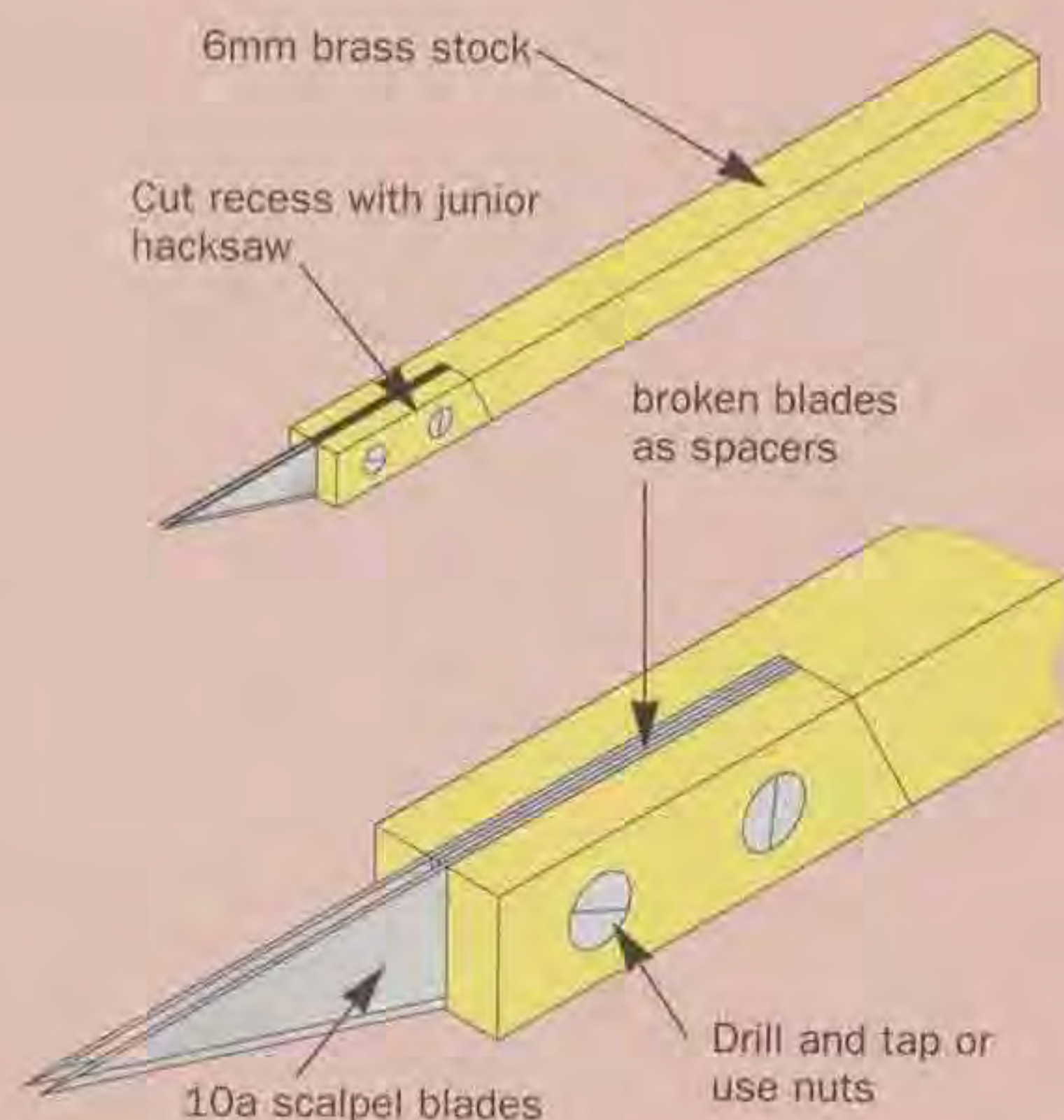
With the stems in place, the holes for the leaves were then cut from the sycamore. The sycamore was then used as a template to cut out the leaf shapes from the padauk. The padauk blank was fixed to the face side of the sycamore during the cutting process using electricians' tape. The tape not only holds the padauk veneer firmly in place during cutting, but also helps to hold the final leaf shape together without the problem of missing pieces, especially where there is short grain.

I find that I get a slightly cleaner and tighter fit if I cut from the back towards the front rather than the other way round. After cutting, the fill piece is inserted into the sycamore opening, the tape is removed and the piece held in place with medium tack Sellotape applied to the front face.

The marquetry for the abstract side with the regular geometric shapes was approached in a different way. Instead of starting with the sycamore background, I first pre-cut the shapes in the dyed veneer. This allowed me to fine-tune the design by experimenting with size, colour and the positioning of the pieces on the sycamore sheets to produce a balanced overall effect. It also meant that I did not waste any of my expensive, wide sheets of sycamore.

The abstract artwork was a new challenge. I had worked with stylised images before but nothing as abstract as this. Here, it was important to show a sense of movement and to achieve a blend and balance of colours and shapes. I also tried to find a way of having a design that would appeal to all age groups and would be equally valid in a wide range of settings, not just a study/nursery situation.

When the design was finalised, the pre-cut pieces of dyed veneer were held in place on the back of the sycamore panel with a few small pieces of double-sided tape and used as cutting templates. Some of the shapes have acute corners with short grain and in these cases you can avoid a great deal of frustration and gnashing of teeth if you secure any short grain corners with a piece of tape before you start cutting.



Marquetry this fine requires much time and patience



The padauk leaves add a warm subtlety to the screen

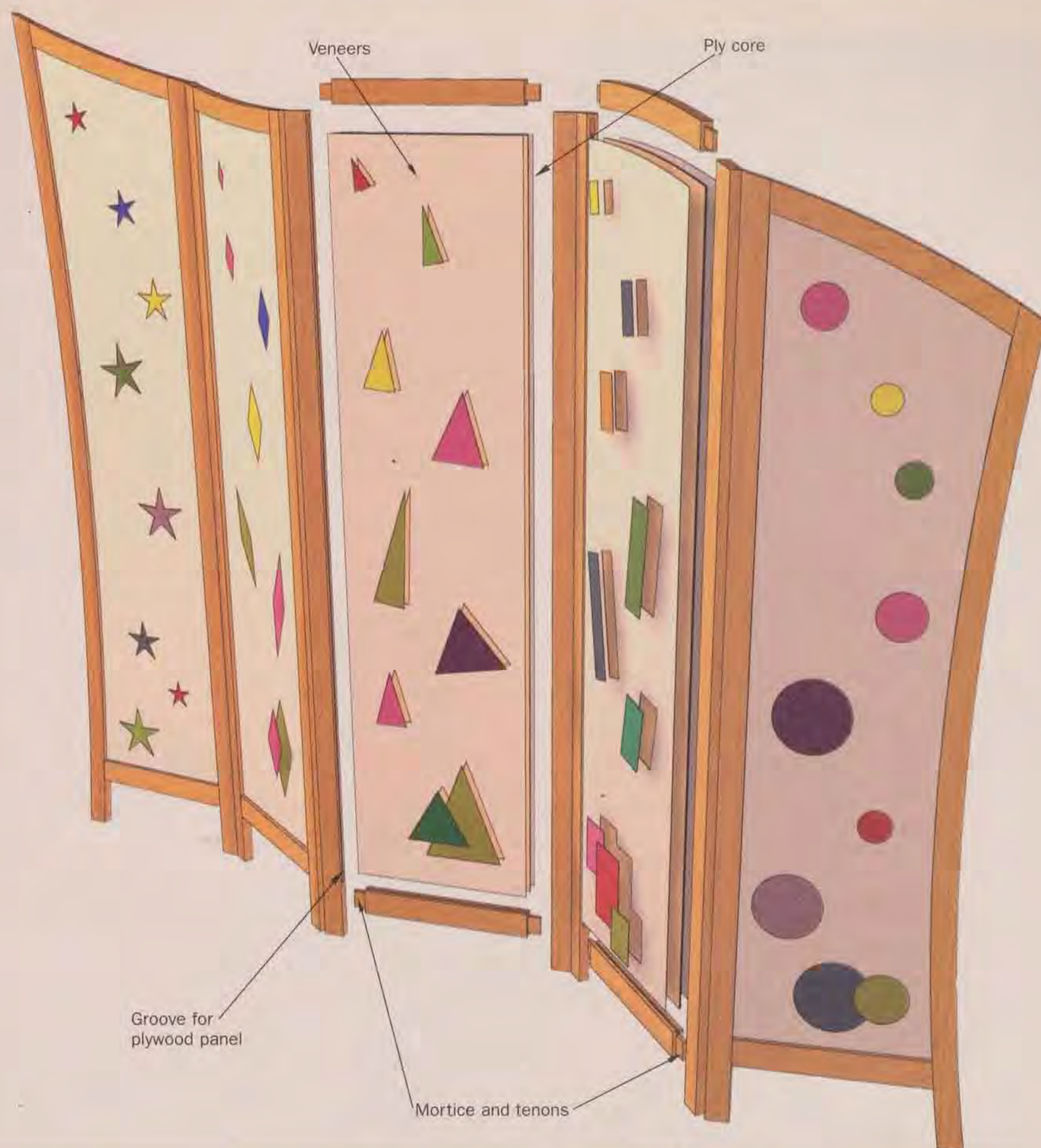


Close up of the cascading foliage

sharp edge tool is superb.

After the trials of the initial timber preparation, the construction of the 40mm (1½in) x 20mm (¾in) thick frame was relatively straightforward. The curved components (the two end stiles and the five top rails) were marked out using the full-size, mock-up pieces as templates, roughed out on the bandsaw and cleaned up with a compass plane and spokeshaves.

All the frame joints were traditional mortice and tenon. I had the relative luxury of a mortice machine, but the tenons were hand sawn and the shoulders pared back to the line with a sharp chisel. The panel is held in stopped grooves in the frame. I used a biscuit jointer to make the grooves. The 4mm (⅜in) thick blade produced a groove that was an exact fit to the



panels made from an inner core of 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) birch ply with a sycamore marquetry panel glued to each side. I removed the two rubber anti-slip pads so that the biscuit jointer slid easily along the length of the frame.

Press and clean-up

A vacuum press is a tremendous asset when you are gluing the almost 2m long marquetry to the birch ply core. Even with a vacuum press, I still opted for a two-step approach, gluing one face and then after the minimum recommended cure time gluing the reverse face. A single step is possible, but each panel represents such a lot of work and glue spreading that I opted to play safe. Getting the panels into the press immediately after the veneer was placed on the glued substrate was problem free.

A simple trial quickly established that sanding dust from both the padauk leaves on the nature side and the dyed geometric shapes on the abstract side produced severe staining to the sycamore background veneer. This staining was impossible to remove by normal post sanding procedures and therefore sanding was not an option. All surfaces of the panels had to be scraped. Hand scraping almost 4 square metres of marquetry is quite a chore, but somehow it seemed to be totally in character for this project.

Hinging

From a functional perspective I identified three possible hinges that I could use: special screen hinges (three-part butt hinges) that open both ways, standard brass butt hinges seen on many contem-

porary screens and concealed Soss hinges. The Soss hinges are the least visually apparent when installed. You get a clean unbroken line particularly from the front. With butt hinges (standard or screen), the hinge knuckle protrudes onto the front face. Although the Soss hinges are more difficult to install, I think that the final appearance of the screen made the additional effort worthwhile.

The recesses for the hinges were machined before the frames were assembled. In principle you can use a drill with a little clean-up with a chisel to make the recesses. I did a few trials and was not overly impressed with the final result. I was looking for an extremely close fit. In any case, given that the ends of the hinge body are semicircular, this is an ideal job for the router. With 24



Coloured veneers add a sense of fun on the children's side of the screen



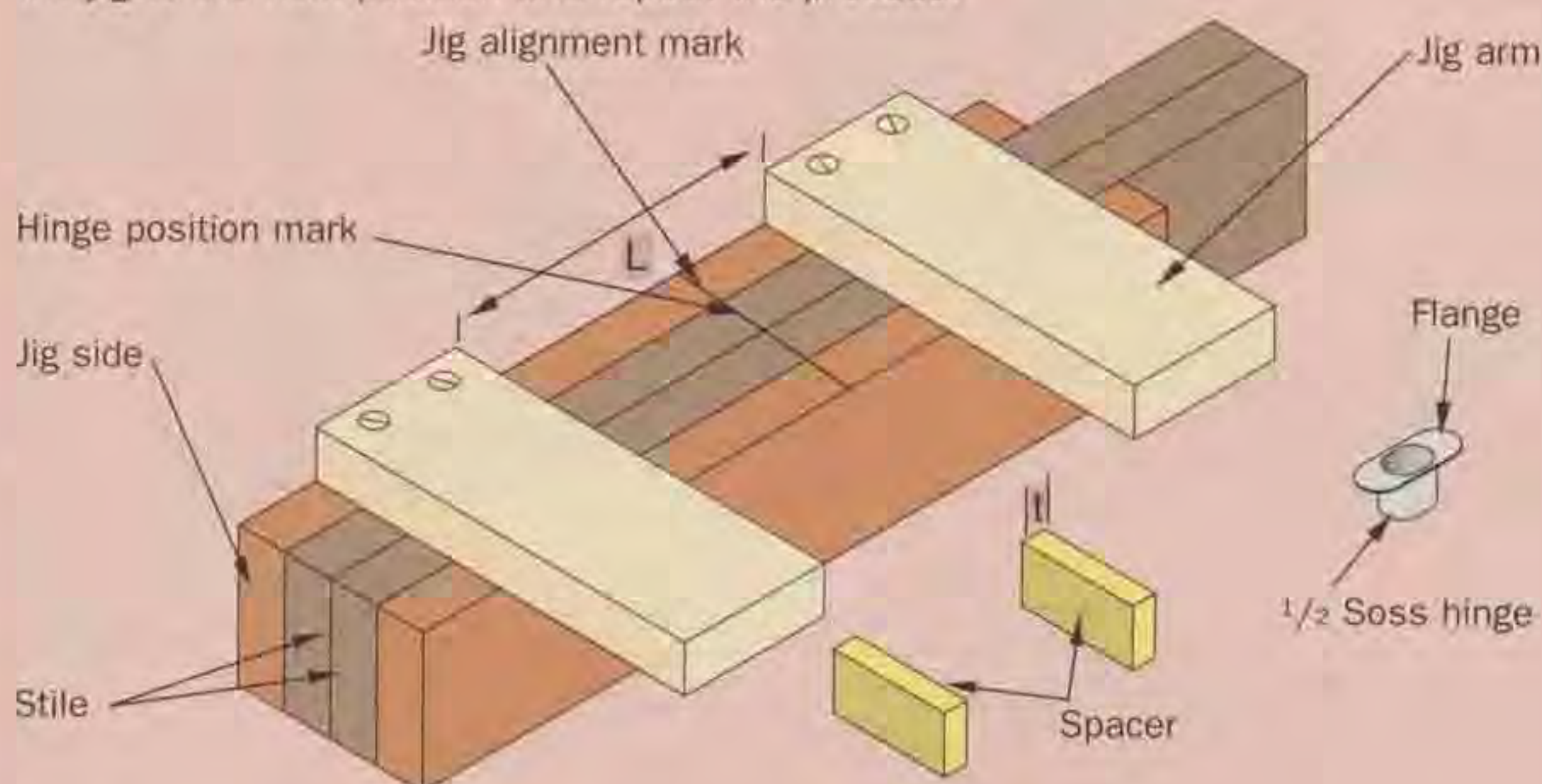
SOSS hinges have a neat appearance and are only seen on the inside edge

Router jig for SOSS hinges

The two arms are glued and screwed to the jig side member. Two dimensions must be accurate; 'L' is easily determined from the size of the router base and the diameter of the cutter, such that moving the router between the two jig arms produces a recess equal to the length of the hinge flange.

The thickness 't' of the two spacers reduces the length of cut to produce a recess for the hinge body. The other dimensions are not crucial, although the floater must be the same thickness as the main jig side member. Using a floater rather than a fixed second side means that the jig can be used for any thickness stile, provided that the jig arms are of reasonable length. The jig provides a wide, stable platform for the router base, resulting in an accurate, fast and safe process.

The two stiles are assembled in the jig as shown and placed in the bench vice. Set the router side fence from the outside face of the jig so that the hinge recess is at the correct distance in from the edge of the stile. Set the depth stops, one for the thickness of the hinge flange, and the other two at intermediate and full depths for the hinge body. Select the first depth and machine the first stile for the hinge flange. Turn the router through 180° and use the opposite jig face to machine the second stile. Note that the router base needs to be symmetrical, or at least the distance from the cutter to the back edge; the cutter to the front edge of the base must be the same. Insert the spacers between the two arms, one on each side, increase the depth of cut and machine the recess for the hinge body. Remove the assembly from the vice, slide the jig to the next position and repeat the process.



◀ recesses to machine, I made a simple jig to ensure accuracy and also to save time. The results were excellent.

Gluing the panels

It is important to ensure that the edges of the panels are straight and parallel. There are a number of ways of clamping up the panels to achieve this. I supported one side by tacking a two-metre long straight piece of timber to a flat piece of MDF and used a second floating straight edge on the opposite side. A cramp across each rail and one across the middle was sufficient to pull the whole panel together. Only moderate pressure was used to avoid the possibility of distortion.

The curved tops mean that diagonals can't be used to ensure the panels are square. Stop blocks tacked to the MDF at the top and bottom of the stiles before glue-up ensured that the panel would be square without having to measure and

adjust during the gluing process. I also cut a spacer to the exact distance between the two stiles and used this to quickly check that the two stiles were parallel after the cramps had been applied. I try to do as much preparation as possible before I get the glue out. With so much work at stake and no easy way back if things go wrong I make no apologies for a cautious approach.

After gluing and the inevitable clean-up, the horns at the top of the stiles needed to be cut to shape. In order to ensure that the top curvature blended smoothly across the stiles from one panel to the next, I installed the hinges and assembled the screen before marking the top of the stiles for cutting.

The final look

The finish is polyurethane gloss varnish diluted with about 30% white spirit applied with a cloth as very thin layers until a sufficient build is obtained. The

mix is applied in excess and then wiped with a clean cloth to leave only the thinnest layer on the surface. There should be no apparent wet film on the surface after each application. It should look almost dry.

Six to 10 coats should produce a tough thin finish that seals and protects the wood without the problem of trapped dust particles. The process could be stopped at this point, but my own preference is for a slightly less glossy surface. I therefore use fine wire wool (0000 grade) and a good quality paste wax to gently cut back the finish to leave a natural looking satin sheen. A few passes of the wire wool at moderate pressure should be sufficient. Make sure that the surface is sufficiently hard before you wire wool. Overnight should be long enough if the drying conditions are good and you are pushed for time. It is better to wait for a few days after the final application of polyurethane.

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Take your seats



Michael Huntley retired from the Headship of Sotheby's Workshops at Billingshurst in order to concentrate on writing, acting as a consultant for various national projects, and building his own timber-frame house. He undertakes commissions and has recently been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers & Commerce

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THANKS TO SCOTT NETHERSOLE AT SOTHEBY'S FOR PICTURE RESEARCH

Michael Huntley continues his series on the history of furniture with 18th century seating, 1760-1800

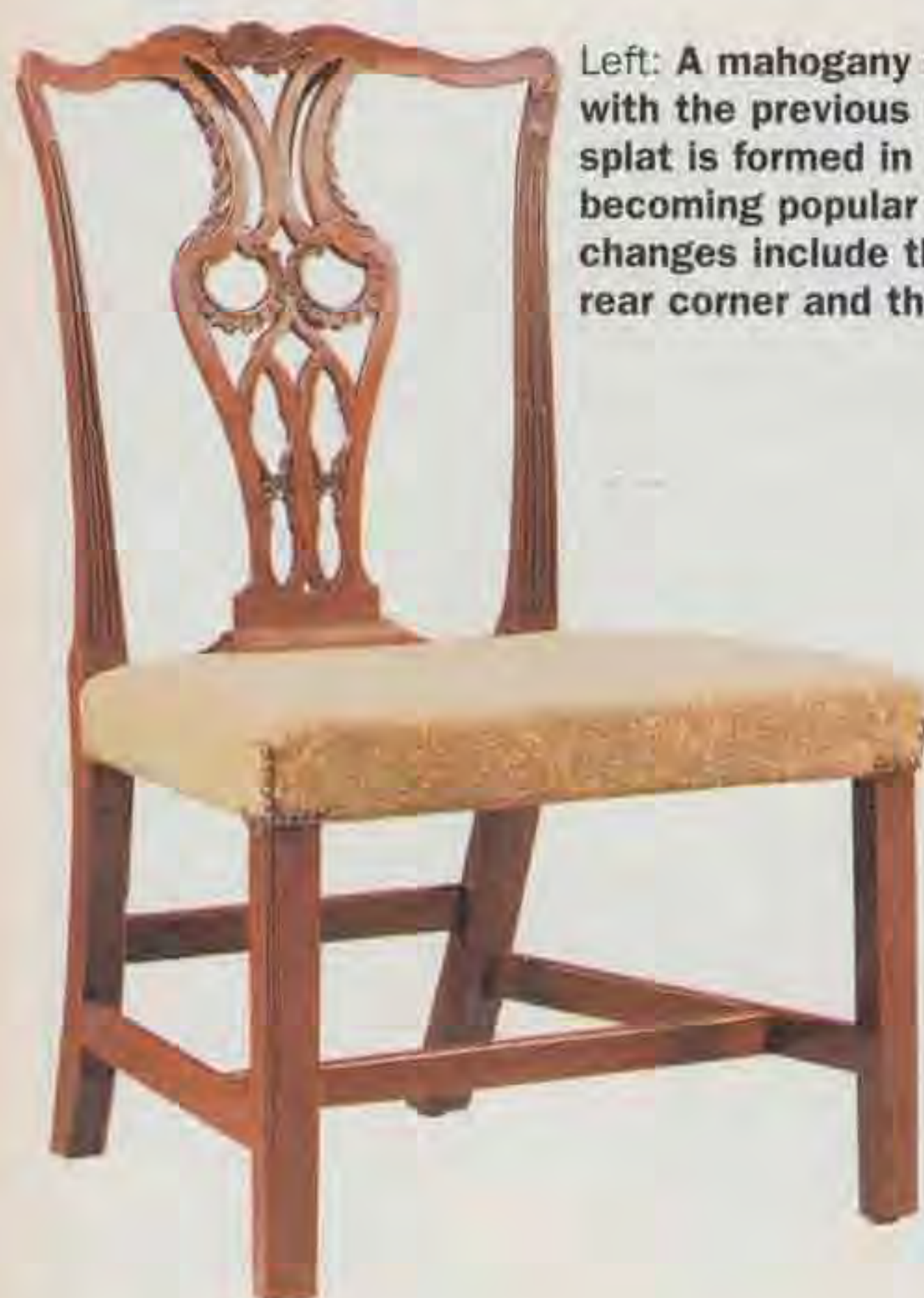


Above: A pair of mahogany library armchairs circa 1760. They have thin-section timbers, producing elegant lines, but avoid the weakness associated with deep curves. The seats of all these mid-Georgian chairs are wider than those of an equivalent chair today, possibly because Georgian posteriors were broader or to allow for flowing frock coats and wide dresses!

Left: Mahogany dining chairs circa 1760, with pierced interlaced splats. The crest-rail is carved with drapery and tassels.



A mahogany triple-chairback settee circa 1760. The design of the splat is similar to one published by Thomas Chippendale in 1754. This was a rather cumbersome form of settee which lost favour in the later years of the century.



Left: A mahogany dining chair circa 1760. As with the previous item, the lower section of the splat is formed in Gothic tracery, which was becoming popular at this time. Other design changes include the straight leg with canted rear corner and the H-shaped stretcher.

Right: A mahogany dining chair circa 1760. The legs and back uprights are carved with blind Gothic fretwork decoration. The term 'blind' refers to the fact that the decoration is lightly carved over the surface of the timber; the carving has a front and no back. The decoration is formed by what is left after the adjacent material has been carved away. The background material has simply been lowered by $\frac{1}{8}$ in or so. Cheap forms of blind fret are made by gluing pierced fretwork onto a solid ground, then hiding the glue line with dirty wax to make it look as though the piece has been carved from the solid.



A pair of mahogany library armchairs circa 1760. These are almost identical to a set of 14 chairs known to have been supplied by Thomas Chippendale in 1759 for the Earl of Dumfries. They are so light and airy, especially the buttoning of the fabric so close to the moulding on the seat rail, that they almost look 19th century. Compare them to other armchairs illustrated and you can see how distinctive and revolutionary Chippendale's designs were.



A pair of carved mahogany library armchairs circa 1765. These are the normal form, robust strong chairs with simple decoration. Note the nice small castors. Sometimes these are recessed into the bottom of the leg.





Above: One of a set of 14 mahogany chairs circa 1765. The set contained two armchairs and 12 side chairs. They are rather continental in style, but the construction and restrained curves confirms their origin as English. Continental chairs often have pegged joints; English chairs, of this and later periods, had glued joints. In general the frame makers used better cabinetwork on English chairs.



A pair of mahogany library armchairs circa 1765. Notice the Gothic blind fret and the pierced spandrel brackets joining the legs to the rails. On better quality chairs the central stretcher is dovetailed into the side stretchers.



A mahogany window seat circa 1770. The carved decoration on the facings is known as gadrooning or nulling. It consists of carved 'tongues' alternated with flutes: sometimes the flutes are so narrow that they merely consist of the trough or valley between the raised up 'tongues', all of which is usually sloped to left or right.



Mahogany armchairs circa 1775. These are now moving away from the earlier Georgian designs and show the influences of the Adam style. The stick splats are carved with flower-heads and leafage resembling palm foliage.



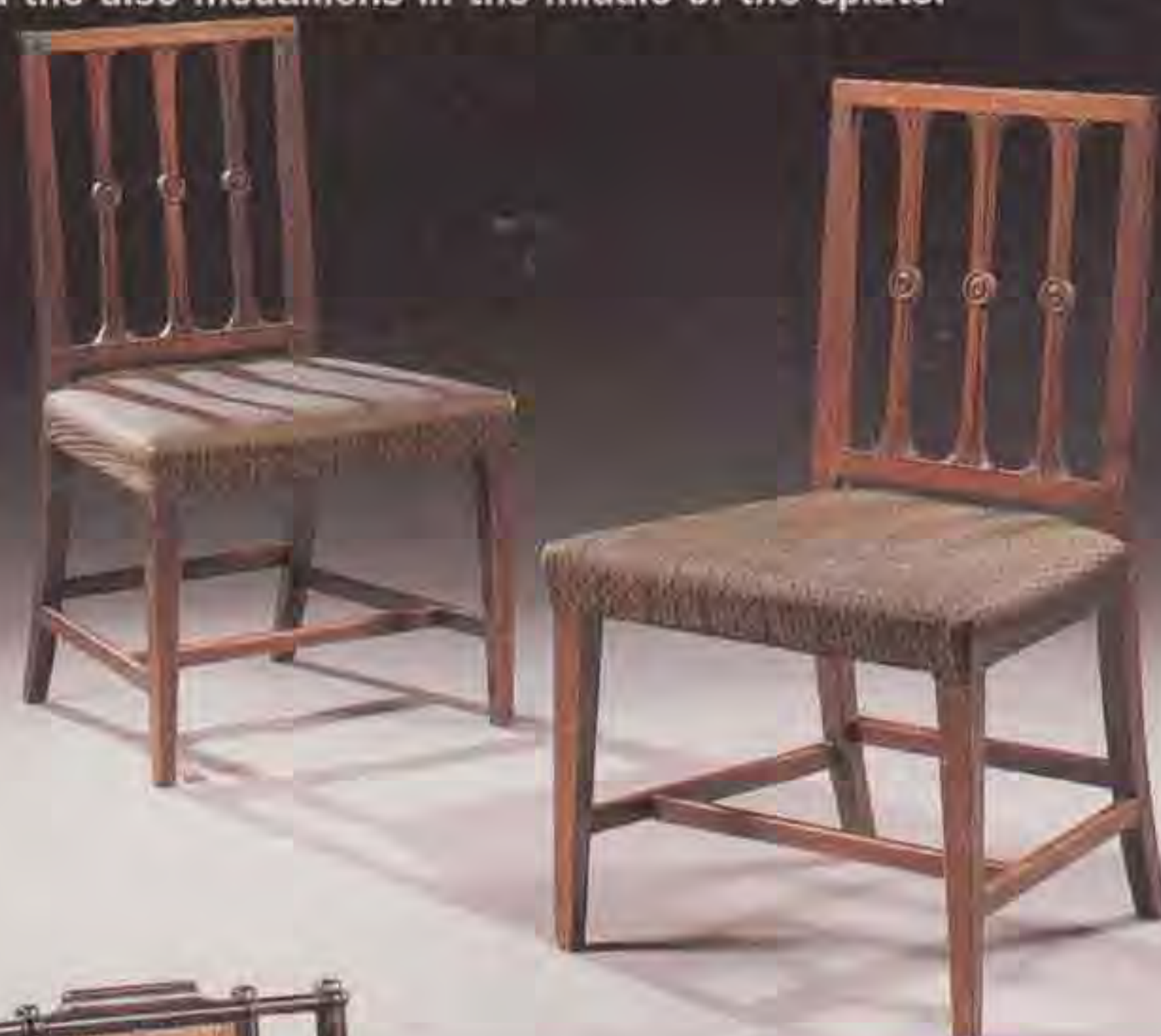
Mahogany armchairs circa 1775. The neoclassical design ethos has now arrived. These chairs have guilloche (spiral carved decoration) and fluted tapering legs. Such delicate constructions are not suited to large heavy Georgian country squires!

A painted beech side chair in the manner of John Linnell circa 1775. A neoclassical chair with painted decoration. The Adam brothers made painted decoration acceptable.



Mahogany chairs in the Gothic style circa 1775. The supports for the arms are called 'clasped' columns. The Georgian Gothic style lasted from the middle years of the 18th century on into the Victorian period and didn't really stop until the First World War. At various times in that period of about 150 years, designers looked over their shoulders to the imagined golden age of the middle ages and used medieval-type ornaments.

Mahogany chairs circa 1775. These are relatively simple, inexpensive chairs to make, but they still have a touch of neoclassical decoration in the palm such as ends to the splats and the disc medallions in the middle of the splats.



Mahogany armchairs circa 1780. These have paterae and bell-flower carving. They look French, but are English.



A pair of painted beech chairs in the manner of George Seddon circa 1800. These chairs are barely neoclassical. They are moving on towards Regency which was only 11 years away. The use of ebonising gives the chairs a slightly mysterious oriental quality, and provides a perfect ground for the gilded leaves and painted flower decoration. Form has finally become more important than function.

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Belt up!

PHOTOGRAPHS: THE AUTHOR

test

Kevin Ley comes clean with belt sanders from Bosch, DeWalt, Makita and Skil



A gathering of sanders

When I was asked to do a review of belt sanders for the magazine I was surprised by the range available. The accessories generally available are sanding frames or shoes, and inversion stands with various fences. In general, I found the accessories expensive, with poor instructions or none at all, and sometimes not to the same manufacturing standard as the main item. I only went into depth on a representative range.

Motor power

The industry standard method of rating motor power is to state the input wattage. A more useful method to enable functional comparisons would be to give the output power at the belt or drive roller. The construction of the motor, efficiency of the power transfer, and machine design all have an effect. Two equally input-rated motors may deliver completely different power at the drive roller. Of the makers I tested, only Bosch gives the output power and then only in the instruction book. DeWalt

will start to do so in its next catalogue, and hopefully in time all manufacturers will. In fairness, all the models I tested had adequate power outputs for their belt size and intended use.

Prices and performance

I have taken my prices from the Axminster Power Tools catalogue rather than manufacturers' list prices which are rarely what we pay. Readers should be aware that there are many special offers available and it pays to shop around. Often, the main tool is discounted, but the accessories are not. You may have more bargaining power if you buy the accessories at the same time as the main item! One of the main considerations before buying may very well be access to a main dealership for spares, repairs and advice.

There is an extremely good range of belt sanders at various prices and power levels, and all the ones I tested performed well. Many factors affect individual choice, so define and assess your needs carefully before buying.

The 4in sanders are all a bit big and cumbersome for me: they are more suited to the larger areas associated with joinery. However, the Bosch GBS 100A with its inversion stand, parallel guide and sanding frame, and the DeWalt 650E with its similar accessories, could be set up as multi-purpose, heavy-duty, workshop machines, as well as portable surface sanders.

For value for money and medium use it would be difficult to beat the Makita 9911.

For lighter users, there are excellent choices in the lower price bracket in the Bosch and Skil range, particularly the Skil 1200 HV complete with its sanding frame.

My favourites are the DeWalt DW 431 and Makita 9903. Both are well made and similarly priced. I tested the accessories as well. As they take the same size belts it would not be unreasonable in a busy workshop to have one of each in order to exploit the differences, provide convenience and backup.



Makita 9903

Make and model	Makita 9903
Price	£180
Power	1010W
Intended use	Professional/ medium
Belt size	76 x 533mm
Weight	4.3kg

Comments

A well made, nicely balanced machine. It sits well in the hands, its own weight providing plenty of downward pressure, and the hand holds are in just the right place to enable comfortable, accurate use. It seemed to want to stay level and not dig in, even without a frame. The motor has plenty of power; the same motor is used to power the 4in version. The motor speed is variable and the running relatively quiet. Dust extraction is to a dust bag, but the nozzle will fit directly to a vacuum hose. Its flat top enables it to be used upside down.

A sanding frame, inversion stand and parallel guide are available (without any instructions), made of relatively light, pressed steel. The sanding frame in particular will only just allow the belt to touch the work surface at full adjustment on a new machine, leaving no leeway for wear. The parallel guide however, is extremely useful for edge sanding.



Makita 9911

Make and model	Makita 9911
Price	£95
Power	650W
Intended use	Medium/ professional
Belt size	76 x 457mm
Weight	2.5kg

Comments

Again, excellent value for money. At under £100 the range of features is impressive. It has automatic belt tensioning, a quiet variable speed motor, will sand up to one edge, and the flat top enables easy upside-down use. It is extremely well made and ergonomically well designed for easy, accurate use, and a long life. Although provided with a dust bag, it will also connect directly to a vacuum hose. It will clamp to a bench top or in a vice to enable it to be used upside down. No inversion stand or sanding frame are available.



Skil 1200HV

Make and model	Skil 1200HV
Price	£59
Power	600W
Intended use	Light
Belt size	76 x 457mm
Weight	2.7kg

Comments

This machine comes complete with a pressed-steel sanding frame, which is as good and effective as some of the much more expensive add-ons available for other machines. This makes it ideal for the occasional, relatively unskilled user at whom it is apparently aimed, as it currently comes as a special offer with a set of home-decorating tools. It has the Skil two-year warranty, and Automatic Belt Centring system (ABC). Dust extraction is to a bag; the rectangular outlet would be difficult to connect to a hose and no adapter appears to be available. It is easy to operate and makes a useful DIY tool.

‘The motor speed is not variable and its output is a bit fierce for a namby-pamby furniture maker’

Make and model	Makita 9403
Price	£252
Power	1200W
Intended use	Professional/ heavy
Belt size	100 x 610mm
Weight	5.9kg



Makita 9403

Comments

A well-balanced, heavy-duty machine, with well placed hand grips to enable easy control. It will also flush up to one edge to get right into corners. The extraction is to the top through a swivelling hose outlet which also takes a bag. No sanding frame or inversion stand is available. The motor speed is not variable and its output is a bit fierce for a namby-pamby furniture maker. This machine is designed to sand large areas like floors and for long periods of time. This it will do extremely well, representing good value for money.



DeWalt 431

Make and model	DeWalt DW431
Price	£191
Power	650W
Intended use	Professional/ medium
Belt size	75 x 533mm
Weight	2.9kg

Comments

This looks like a re-badged version of the tried and trusted Elu 158. It is well made and relatively easy to use, though I found the front handle took a little getting used to. It has the dust bag on the front and this does make it compact and neat to use. It will also sand flush to one edge. The motor is powerful and has a constant variable speed control. The dust extraction point is rectangular and an adapter has to be purchased to fit a vacuum hose. This is not acceptable in a machine of this price, quality and intended use.

It does have an inversion stand and a sanding frame available as extras. They are well made, though not cheap. The fence with the inversion stand only allows sanding across the belt. I have seen one excellent deal offering the sander below the APTC price with the frame free. The accessories for the DeWalt are more likely to be stocked by the extensive dealership, and probably more likely to be on special offer.



DeWalt 650

DeWalt 650E

Make and model	DeWalt DW 650 & DW 650E
Prices	650 £280; 650E £320
Power	1010W
Intended use	Professional/heavy
Belt size	100 x 560mm
Weight	6.3kg

Comments

The only difference between these two machines is that the 650E has a constant variable speed control and consequently costs a bit more. Again, it looks like a re-badged Elu – this time the MHB90. This is no bad thing bearing in mind the quality we associate with Elu.

Though a heavy machine, it is intended for workshop use, having both an inversion stand and a sanding frame available. It is not easy to use upside down without the stand as the top is not flat and it does not easily clamp into a vice. The motor is robust, giving plenty of power and far better control in workshop use; I would certainly go for the variable speed version.

The dust extraction outlet is round and fitted to my vacuum hose; there is also a multi-fit dust extractor nozzle available – at a price!



Make and model	Skil 1400
Price	£164
Power	1000W
Intended use	Heavy
Belt size	102 x 552mm
Weight	2.9kg

Comments

Good value for money, this machine comes with the Skil two-year warranty and automatic belt centring. It has adequate power for the 4in belt; dust extraction is to a collection bag, but the outlet is rectangular and difficult to connect to a vacuum hose; again no adapter. A flat-top sanding frame used with clamps enable it to be used upside down. Low-cost entry to the heavy duty 4in range.

‘Again, it looks like a re-badged Elu – this time the MHB90. This is no bad thing bearing in mind the quality we associate with Elu’

Bosch PBS60



Make and model	Bosch PBS 60
Price	£63
Power	50W
Intended use	Light
Belt size	60 x 400mm
Weight	2.3kg

Comments

At 60mm this has the narrowest belt of all the sanders tested. It was well powered and has a sub-frame available so it can be used safely upside down. It is well designed and easy to use, with comfortable handles at each end for good control and for applying even pressure. The dust bag seemed a bit prone to coming off, but the nozzle on the machine would fit directly to a vacuum hose. This is a compact, easily stored, DIY machine and gives excellent results at that level.

Bosch PBS75



Make and model	Bosch PBS75
Price	£92
Power	620W
Intended use	Light
Belt size	75 x 533mm
Weight	3.2kg

Comments

This is similar to the PBS 60, but uses a 75mm-wide belt and a more powerful motor. The dust extraction nozzle is round and will fit a vacuum hose. Extras include a sub-frame for upside-down use and a sanding frame. There is also a stand which fixes the sander in a vertical position with a guide or rest which fits across the belt. This would make it suitable for end, rather than edge sanding. It is well designed, with comfortable grips for applying even pressure. It has a flat top and will clamp into a vice. This would be suitable for the serious amateur.

Skill 7600HJ



Make and model	Skil 7600HJ
Price	£50
Power	560W
Intended use	Light
Belt size	76 x 457mm
Weight	2.35kg

Comments

This one is close in price and specification to the 1200HV, which has the added bonus of a sanding frame. This sleeker, more streamlined design has a bag at the rear, making it more comfortable to use and easier to store. The top is not flat, but it will clamp easily into a vice for upside-down use. It is the cheapest of all the sanders I tested and I found it good value for money. It takes a 75mm belt and is adequately powered for light DIY use. The Skil two-year warranty applies and it also has the automatic belt tracking system.

‘This is the real big boy of the Bosch range: hugely powerful, it will work all day. A good design makes it easy to use despite its weight, and it certainly needs no extra pressure when sanding surfaces’

Bosch GBS 100A



Make and model	Bosch GBS 100A
Price	£230
Power	1200W
Intended use	Heavy industrial
Belt size	100 x 620mm
Weight	6.4kg

Comments

This is the real big boy of the Bosch range: hugely powerful, it will work all day. A good design makes it easy to use despite its weight, and it certainly needs no extra pressure when sanding surfaces! There is a sanding frame, inversion stand, and parallel guide available which make it suitable for heavy workshop use as well. This one does not have speed control, but there is a version which does, and I would find that useful in view of the power of the motor. It is competitively priced for a sander of this power and quality.

Makita 9903 in sanding shoe



“The sanding frame in particular will only just allow the belt to touch the work surface at full adjustment on a new machine”

DeWalt 431 in sanding frame



“It does have an inversion stand and a sanding frame available as extras. They are well made, though not cheap”

Author using Makita 9903 on desktop



Contact:

- **Robert Bosch Ltd.** PO Box 98, Broadwater Park, North Orbital Road, Denham, Uxbridge, Middx, UB9 5HJ. Tel: 01895 834466
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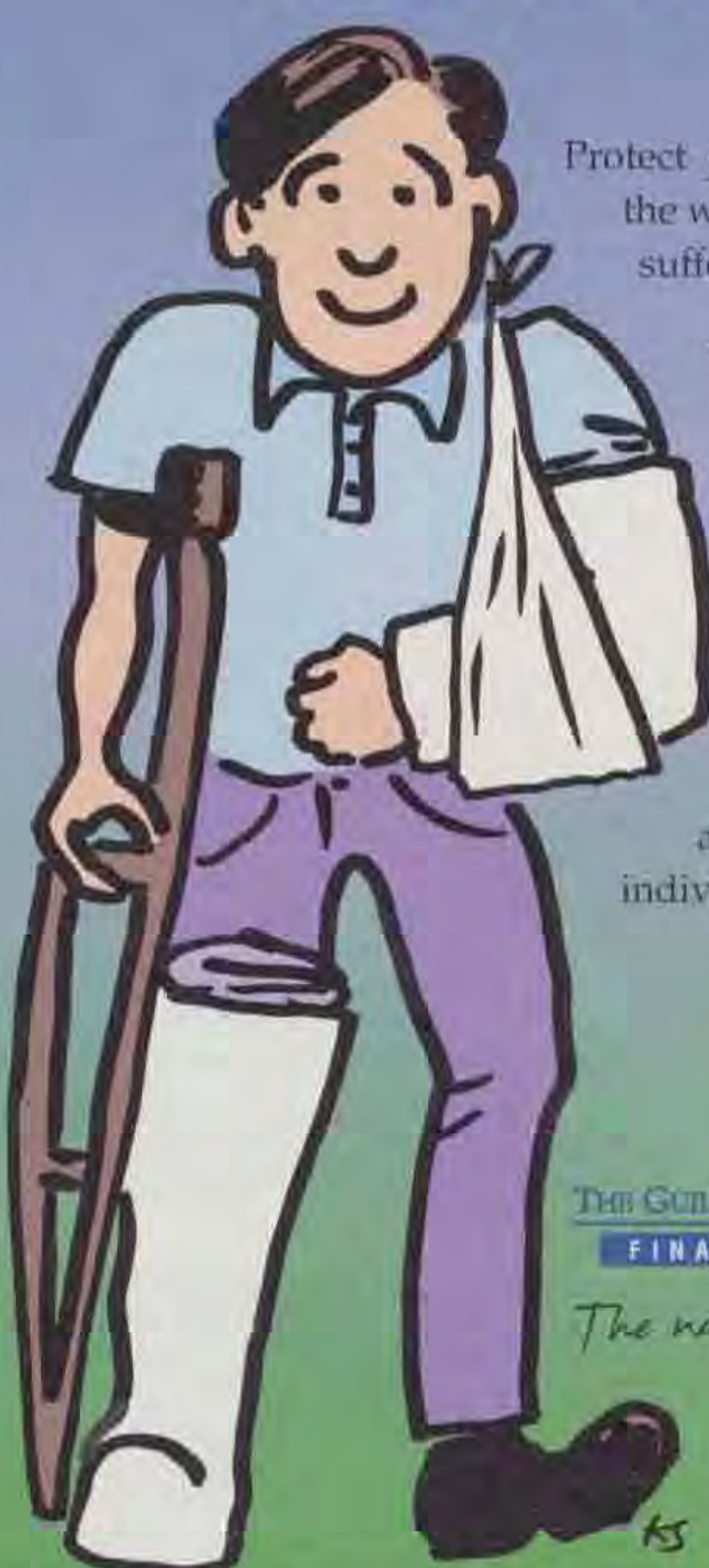
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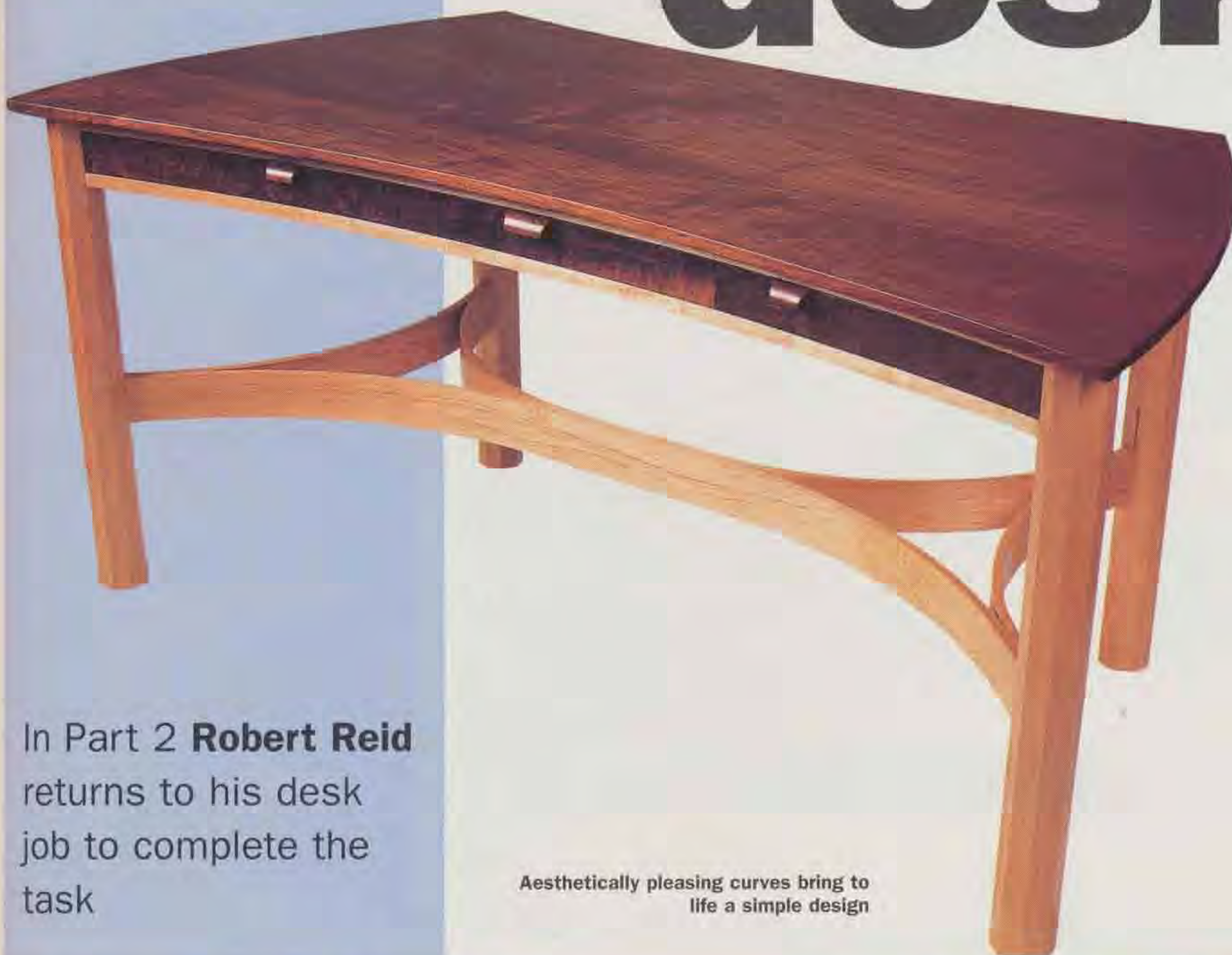
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Desirable desk

project

PHOTOS: THE AUTHOR AND GMC
ILLUSTRATIONS: IAN HALL (MAIN)
AND SIMON RODWAY



In Part 2 **Robert Reid** returns to his desk job to complete the task

Aesthetically pleasing curves bring to life a simple design

This month I will complete the instructions for making my walnut desk with the making and fitting of the drawers, runners and the top.

Drawer pivots

Cut and fit the wedged mortice and tenoned rail dividers, and drill the holes on which the two side drawers pivot. Then drill and cut the recesses for the secret-drawer catch; the holes for the drawer stops in the lower rail; screw holes in the top rail; and mortices to fit the loose tenons that secure the runners and kickers. Clean and polish every surface apart from the

tops of the top rails in preparation for gluing up.

Gluing up

Complete the gluing up in stages. Any of the woodworking glues are satisfactory but in most conditions the Cascamite/Aerolite glues allow a longer gluing up time than the PVA glues. The sequence runs as follows...

Glue up the four legs, the stretcher frame and the lower front rail. Separately, or together, glue up the top end rails and the top back rail. Glue up the drawer runners, fitting and sliding them onto loose tenons in the front,

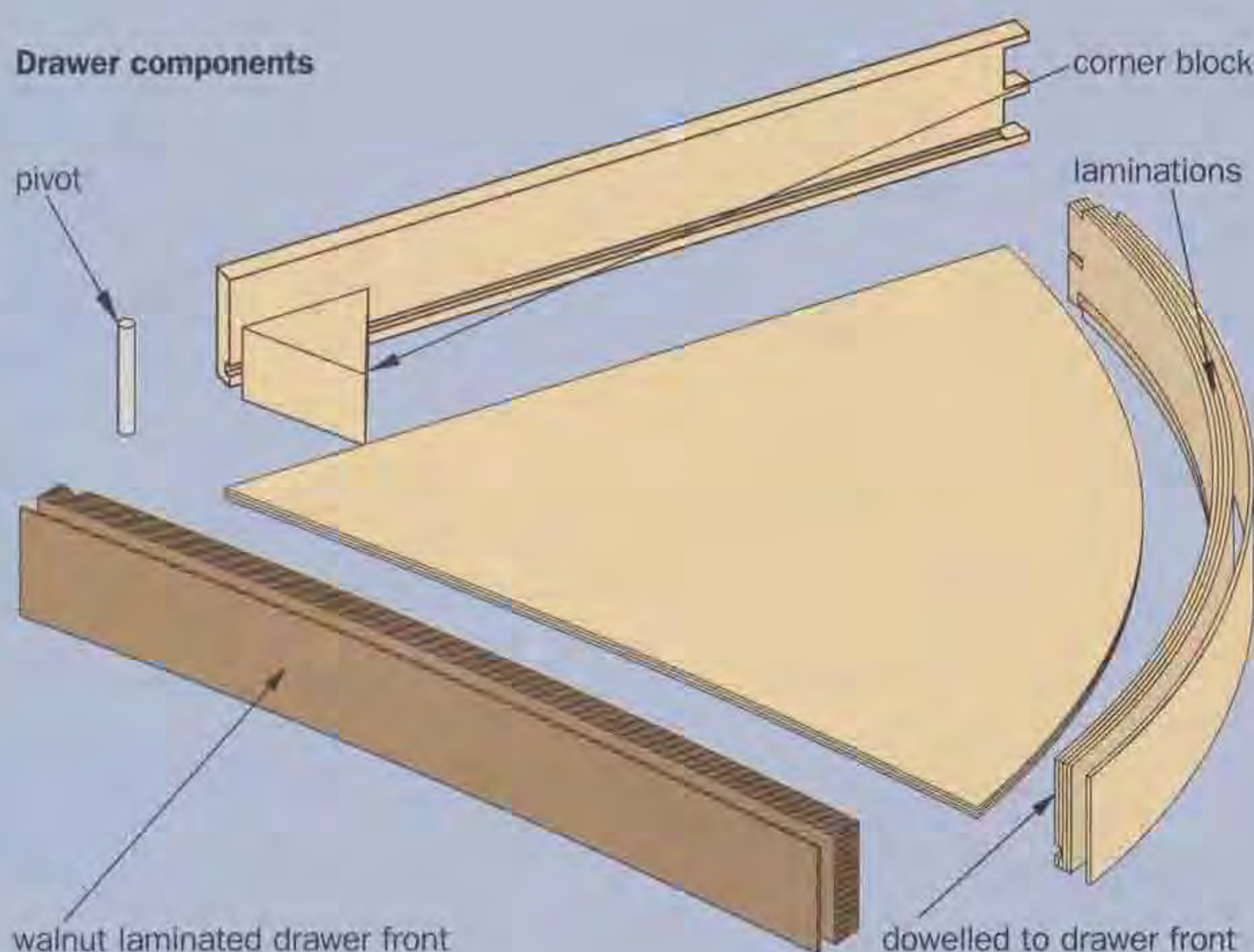
back and side rails. Finally, glue up the top front rail together with the two rail dividers, and glue the drawer kickers.

Leave the fixing and gluing of the drawer guides until the drawer has been assembled and fitted. The screws can be reached through 10mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) holes in the kicker rails.

The drawers

The centre drawer can be treated as a normal construction, with lap dovetails at the front and through dovetails at the back. However, if the secret compartment is included, the false back will have to be housed and tenoned

Drawer components



Central drawer

‘It’s also important, because of the curved shape of the drawer front, that the outside drawers stay closed when opening the centre drawer’

Pivoting drawer



Internal carcass construction, showing runner



into the sides. If the sides are made as long as possible to give the maximum bearing surface, the back of the drawer will have to be set in from the sides to allow for the curve of the backrail. This provides the added advantage that the drawer can be pulled out for access to the back without dropping.

When the drawer is fitted, the drawer guides are then fitted, screwed and glued in place, ensuring that space available for the drawer is slightly wider at the back than at the front. This needs only to be the thickness of a piece of paper placed between the

drawer side and the back of the guide.

Before making the side drawer, it’s necessary to make a template from plywood or MDF to the shape of the finished drawer. This is drilled and located to ensure it pivots perfectly. A small amount of wood will have to be removed from the inside of the front legs and possibly from the front corner of the rail dividers.

The sixth former can be constructed to shape the curved sides of these drawers. Five laminates were used to make up a final thickness 12mm (½in). The veneered plywood bottoms are routed in to the sides and fronts of these drawers.

When the drawers are fitted, the pivot holes for them can be started before removing from the desk frame and completing on the pillar drill. With the drawer bottom fitting inside the drawer frame, a conventional drawer stop cannot be used. It’s also important, because of the curved shape of the drawer front, that the outside drawers stay closed when opening the centre drawer. A light, magnetic catch is fitted at the back of the pivoting drawers to act as a stop and a closing mechanism.

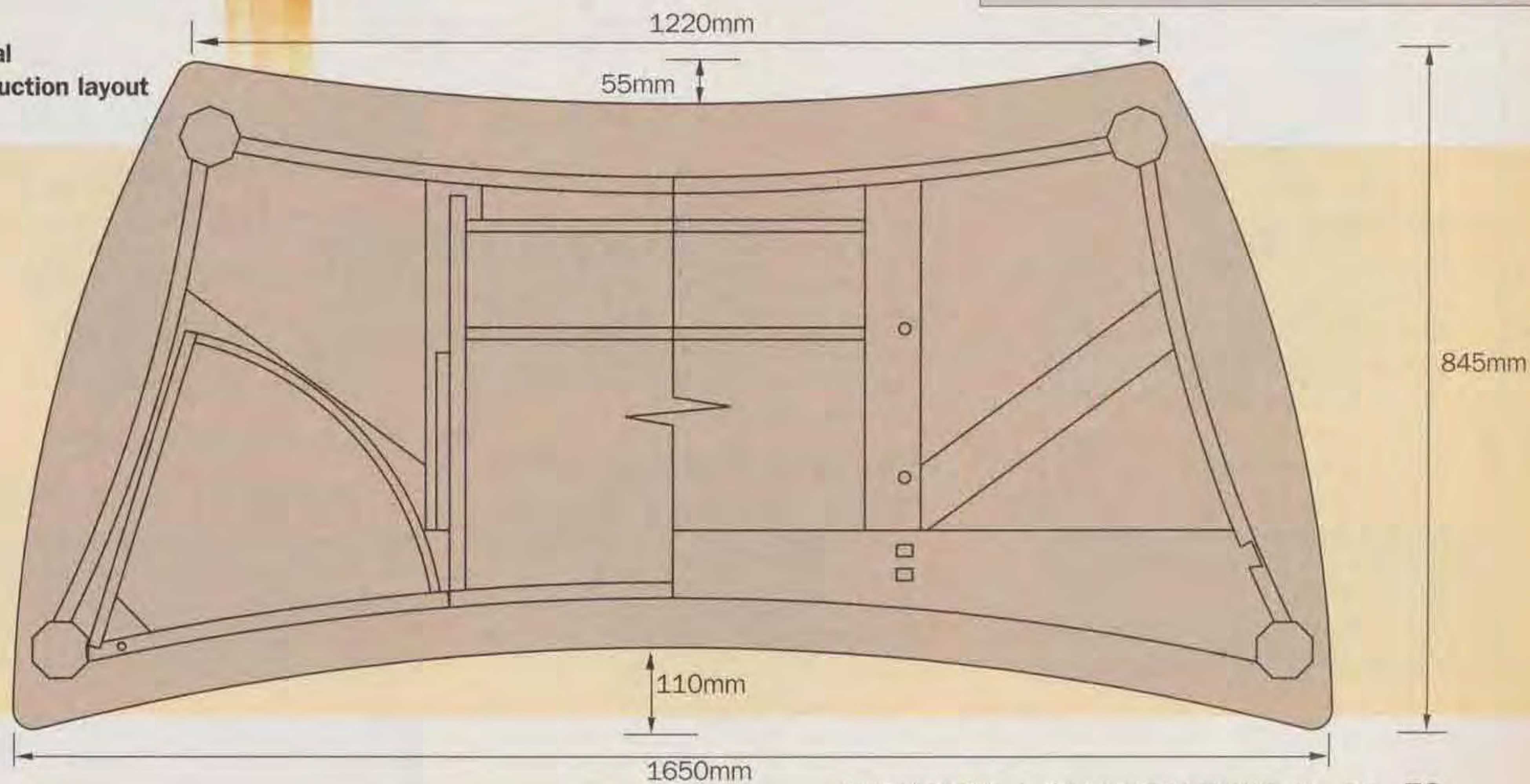
To prevent the drawers from pivoting fully, open-spring catches, similar to the middle drawer, are fitted.



Dowel jig for drawer sides



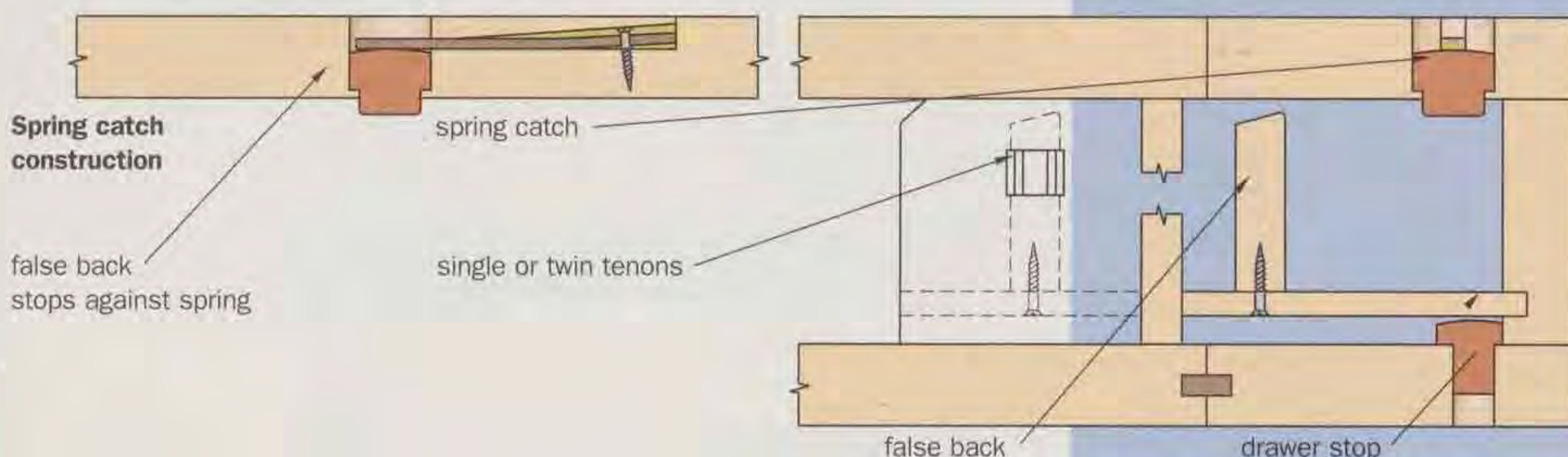
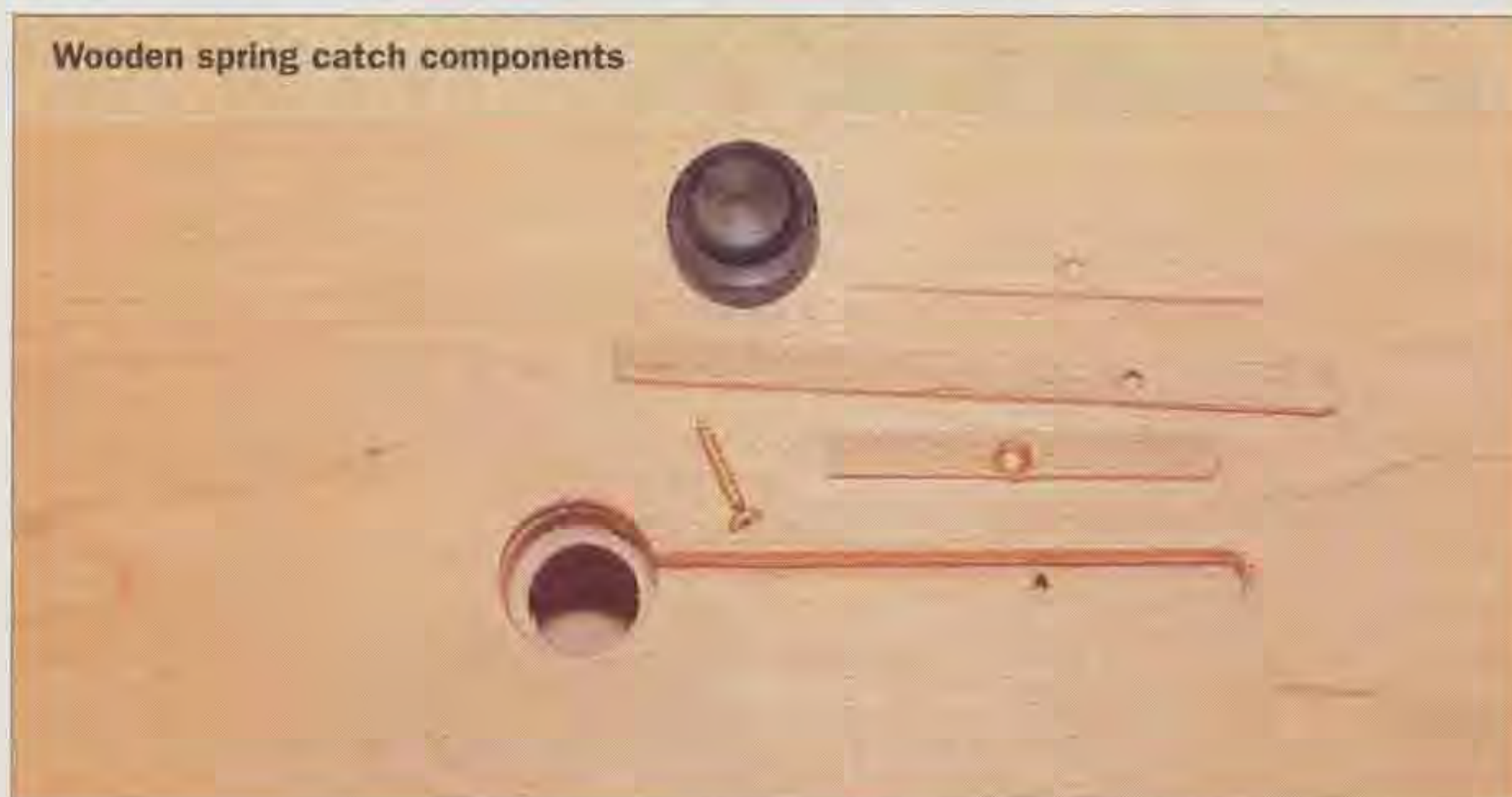
Internal construction layout



A special block made life easier, when it came to gluing up



Wooden spring catch components



Handles

Handles always create conflicts in the design of a piece of furniture. They need to be effective, but should they contrast or blend in with the piece? Should they use the same or different wood? Break the line of a drawer or leave it relatively uninterrupted? There are no right answers, only the one that satisfies maker and client.

Finishing

The desk is finished with three coats of Mylands' finishing oil on most of the

surfaces and five or six on the legs, top and more-exposed areas. Perhaps *F&C* could run a comparison of all the various oils on the market?

Finally, the surfaces are wax polished using dark wax for the walnut and clear wax for the maple.

Post-construction blues

Sufficient time has elapsed since the completion of the desk for the agonies and anxieties associated with its construction to have faded from memory. Perhaps it's time for the formers to be dusted off and used again?

The top

The top of the desk in American black walnut (*Juglans niger*) is made up from two wide planks each cut down the middle to relieve stress in the timber and also to facilitate machining. There's much to commend the practice of butting and gluing such a top and taking it to a local woodworking shop where it can be sanded down to 120 grit. Or you can enjoy a few hours of hand planing and finishing!

The top is cut to overlap the legs by 25mm (1in) and bevelled to the shape as shown. The top is then secured in place with a row of fixed screws in the front rail, and allowed to expand or contract in a combination of buttons and expansion slots in the top rails.

Sufficient time has elapsed since the completion of the desk for the agonies and anxieties associated with its construction to have faded from memory

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F&C Competition 2001

F&C's annual competition will take place again this October. Co-sponsored by GMC Publications and Axminster Power Tool Centre, it will be held at the Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset. Here is your chance to enter!

Now in its fifth year, the F&C competition will take place from 25 to 28 October, with entries coming from all over the country. There will be a preview day on 25 October.

In previous years the calibre of the exhibits has surpassed all expectations, making this annual event an important milestone in the wood-working calendar. The competition attracted 140 excellent entries in 2000 and it is fast becoming the most prestigious annual furniture event in the country. If you go along you will also have a chance to meet F&C's Editor at our competition stand.

Hosted by the Axminster Tool and Machinery Exhibition, the competition is open to everyone – professional, student or amateur, with separate categories and prizes for each.

So far, the judging line-up includes the former Principal of Parnham College Robert Ingham, master furniture-maker Alan



The judges at work last year

Peters, F&C Editor Colin Eden-Eadon and GMC Publisher Paul Richardson – a formidable line-up!

There will be some stunning prizes with major international woodworking machinery and power tool manufacturers among the sponsors, including Bosch, Trend and Elektra Beckum. In the year of its 50th anniversary, The Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers is to award a special prize for this year's competition. This will go to the piece considered to be the overall "best of show". This a

great accolade and incentive for everyone entering this great competition.

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Categories

The competition is open to all furniture makers, with three main categories: Professional, Amateur and Student. The Amateur category will be subdivided into Trained Amateur, Experienced Amateur and Newcomer. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each of the categories, with other special awards also being made.

Any type of furniture can be entered, contemporary or traditional – the only restriction being that each maker may enter only one piece.

Closing date: Return your entry forms to F&C by:
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Cut to size:

Part 2

PHOTOS: THE AUTHOR



Tightening the collet nut: most modern routers have a spindle lock, which makes life easier

To fit a cutter, first ensure that the machine is switched off and unplugged. Lock the motor spindle by depressing the locking button and slacken off the collet nut if necessary and insert the shank of the cutter at least three quarters of its length: ensure that there is a gap of at least 4mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) between the face of the collet and the webbed flange where the shank meets the business end of the cutter. Then tighten the collet, always using the spanner supplied with that particular machine, until firm resistance is felt.

The manuals always state rather vaguely: 'do not overtighten'. Excessive force can damage both the collet and the cutter shank and should therefore be avoided. Most if not all modern routers are cleverly designed so that if a cutter should happen to work loose, the collet

nut prevents it from flying out of the machine completely, although the workpiece itself would probably be damaged by the slipping of the cutter.

This safety device can be felt when slackening off the nut to change the cutter: the nut reaches a point where it suddenly becomes stiff again, then with a further turn of the spanner, fully slackens off.

Set the depth of the intended cut in the following way: with the machine still switched off, rest the machine on the workpiece and depress the spring loaded columns with the handles until the cutter just touches the timber. Secure the columns in this position by turning the locking one of the two grip handles clockwise. Again, this shouldn't be done too viciously, just enough to set the columns in the desired position;

too much pressure may result in the lockable column becoming distorted and no longer able to plunge up and down perfectly freely.

Adjust the depth bar to the desired position: the distance between the end of the bar and the screw at the top of any of the three rotary turret stops will determine the depth of cut. The purpose of the rotary turret stops is to allow three different depths to be set up, since it is important not to try and remove too much stock with any one pass.

Groovy applications

Grooves have countless applications: for example, fitting back panels in carcasses. Mark the position of the groove from the edge of the board, preferably with a gauge, then set the fence to this. All routers come with an adjustable fence as

Andrew Lawton
continues his series
on routing for
furniture makers.
This month he
looks at basic
techniques using
straight fluted
cutters

The routers shown in the photographs have had the dust extraction attachments removed for clarity. Shots showing breakout have been deliberately exaggerated to emphasise the point

Cutting tip

A useful rule is never to make a cut which is deeper than the diameter of the cutter shank. Thus, if a groove 18mm ($\frac{23}{32}$ in) deep is to be cut using a cutter with a $\frac{1}{4}$ in shank, the turrets should be set to give progressive cuts at 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in), 12mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) and 18mm ($\frac{23}{32}$ in) with the turret being rotated at the end of each cut.

With experience, it is often quicker and easier to simply set the final depth and judge by eye the intermediate cuts: if the motor is labouring and the going is hard, then too much is being taken off at one go. On some dense timbers it is worth making progressive cuts at intervals of as little as 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in); this will help prolong the life both router and cutter as well as being safer.

Fig 1:
Direction of feed

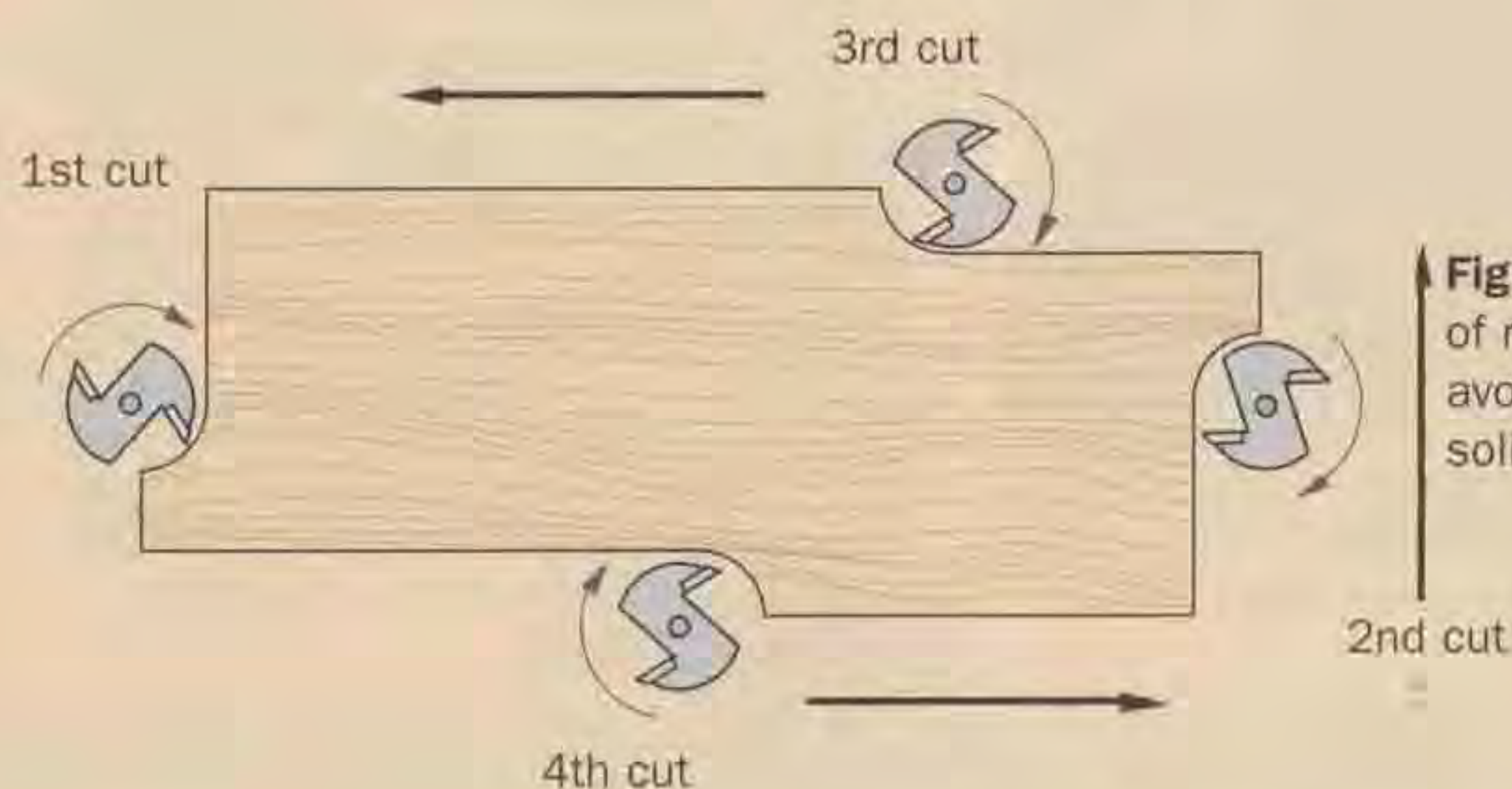
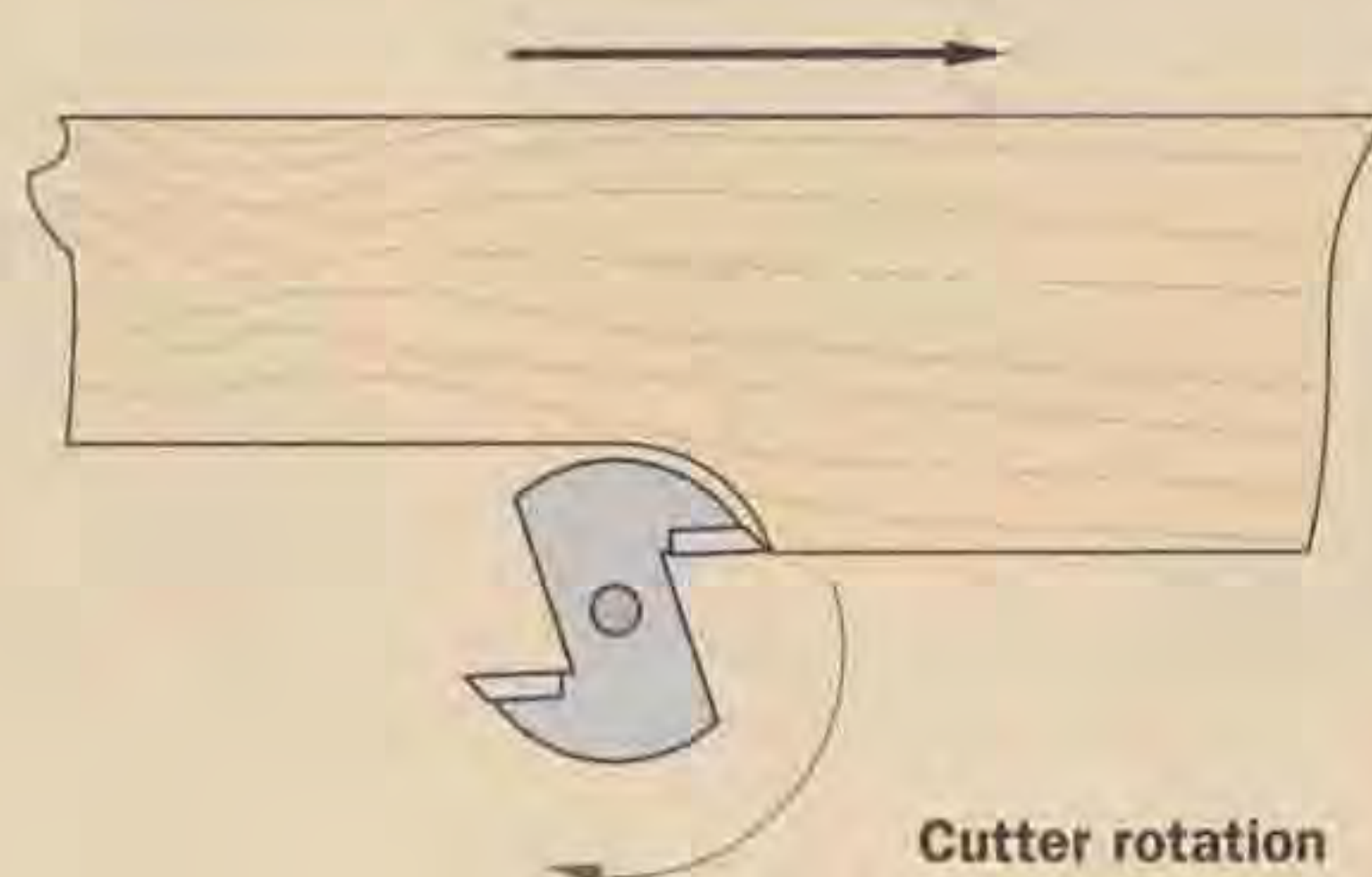


Fig 2: Sequence of routing to avoid breakout on solid timber

standard and many, such as the Trend T5, have a fine adjustment feature which is most useful for accurate setting.

Set the desired depth of cut as previously described. Ensure that the workpiece is firmly secured to the bench to prevent it from tipping over the edge of the bench with downward pressure, or skidding along it. In which direction is the router fed to produce the cut? With a few exceptions which we will look at later, the rule is always to feed the router in the opposite direction to the rotation of the cutter. In other words, with the router mounted above the workpiece as in all hand-held operations, the cutter spins clockwise, therefore the router is fed anticlockwise – see fig 1.

Plug in the router, then rest it on the workpiece with the cutter fully retracted, switch on the motor, ensuring that

the rpm doesn't exceed that stated for the cutter (unlikely with a straight cutter), depress the columns until the depth stop touches the turret, lock the guide knob and feed the router along the workpiece, from left to right, not so quickly that the motor labours, nor slowly enough to cause the cutter to heat up and possibly scorch the timber.

At the end of the stroke, slacken the grip knob, allow the columns to spring back up and switch off. The most difficult part is the start and finish, where the baseplate of the router has to be carefully balanced on the workpiece; this is similar to planing a piece of timber by hand. One way of making this easier is to position run-off boards of the same thickness at each end.

In many cases, such as frame and panelled doors, if long enough 'horns'

are provided, there is enough of the workpiece projecting at each end to give enough support to the baseplate. Once mastered, cutting grooves with the router will be far quicker and more accurate than other methods.

Housing news

Housings are a second major constructional area where routers win hands down and differ from grooves by running across the grain rather than along it. When routing across the grain in solid timber, two points are worth mentioning. First, the housing should be marked out with a pair of parallel knife lines, not just to provide an accurate reference to work to, but the act of cutting through the uppermost fibres of the wood will minimise splashing and give a cleaner cut. Second, when a housing is ➤



Adjusting the turret stops



Fine fence adjustment



Use of a run-in board to help cut a groove



Cutting a housing using a shop-made guide



Using a Trend Clamp Guide



Starting the first cut of a rebate by backfeeding, subsequent cuts are done in the conventional manner



Starting the final cut of a rebate without the use of a run-in board



Spelching caused by failure to backfeed on initial rebate cut



Breakout caused by machining a rebate in the wrong sequence

◀ cut across the full width of the workpiece, or all four edges routed in any way, the right sequence should be observed – see fig 2. This will prevent breakout at the corners.

If a housing is near the end of the workpiece, the fence can be used in the same way as in machining a groove. If, as is often the case, a housing is positioned midway along a cabinet side, for example, the standard fence bars will be too short to reach. Longer bars can be used but they tend to be unwieldy; a much better solution is to make a guide such as the one in the photograph. With a stock of carefully planed hardwood and 'blade' of MDF, such a device can easily be made in a variety of sizes to suit different jobs.

The blade must be perfectly straight and at 90° to the stock. If the blade is sealed and waxed, friction and wear will be reduced. In use, the guide is carefully positioned and clamped to the workpiece.

An alternative to making a guide is to buy a device such as the Trend Clamp Guide, available in three lengths up to 1,270mm (50in). With a flick of the locking lever, the guide was moved progressively along the piece of timber being machined, with a fair amount of time saved compared with repeatedly having to slacken and tighten a G-cramp on our shop-made equivalent. It is useful to have both the commercially and shop-made versions depending on the nature of a particular job. For instance, I recently had to rout out a recess and found a Trend guide ideal. There are two versions: the basic clamp guide and the Pro Track. The basic version does have some slack in it, which renders it unsuitable, in my opinion, for the degree of accuracy required for fine furniture making. The Pro Track version models use a grub screw to eliminate any. They are more expensive, but worth the extra cost in the interests of accurate work.

Rebating know-how

The third basic application of the router is for rebating. By definition, rebates are along either the edge or end of a board so they can be cut using the standard fence. Any size straight cutter may be used, though a 6mm or 9mm is suitable for most applications.

Rebating does however, present a potential pitfall in that certain timbers with long stringy fibres, such as ash, have a tendency to tear out, leaving an unsightly ragged edge when we follow the rule about routing in an anticlockwise direction.

To avoid this, mark out the limits of the rebate with a marking gauge. Then, for the first cut set the fence quite fine and draw the router backwards or clockwise as it were. This technique, known as 'backfeeding', can feel a little awkward at first, but has other applications as we will see in the next instalment, so it is worth mastering. ■

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John Lloyd trained with Bruce Luckhurst and gained a City & Guilds silver medal in Furniture Advanced Crafts. He now has his own workshop in Bolney, West Sussex, where he restores and copies mainly traditional furniture

PHOTOS: THE AUTHOR



John Lloyd goes to a dinner party and comes home with a commission to make Arts & Craft chairs

Made to complement much cherished Arts & Crafts carvers

A recipe for success

I was never a great lover of dinner parties. To my mind they were an experience that had to be tolerated from time to time. Occasionally though, when you were least expecting it, they could actually be quite enjoyable. There are some restorers and makers that I know of who positively look forward to dinner parties. They see them as a vital part of their business's marketing strategy, often having a great deal of success in securing work over the dinner table.

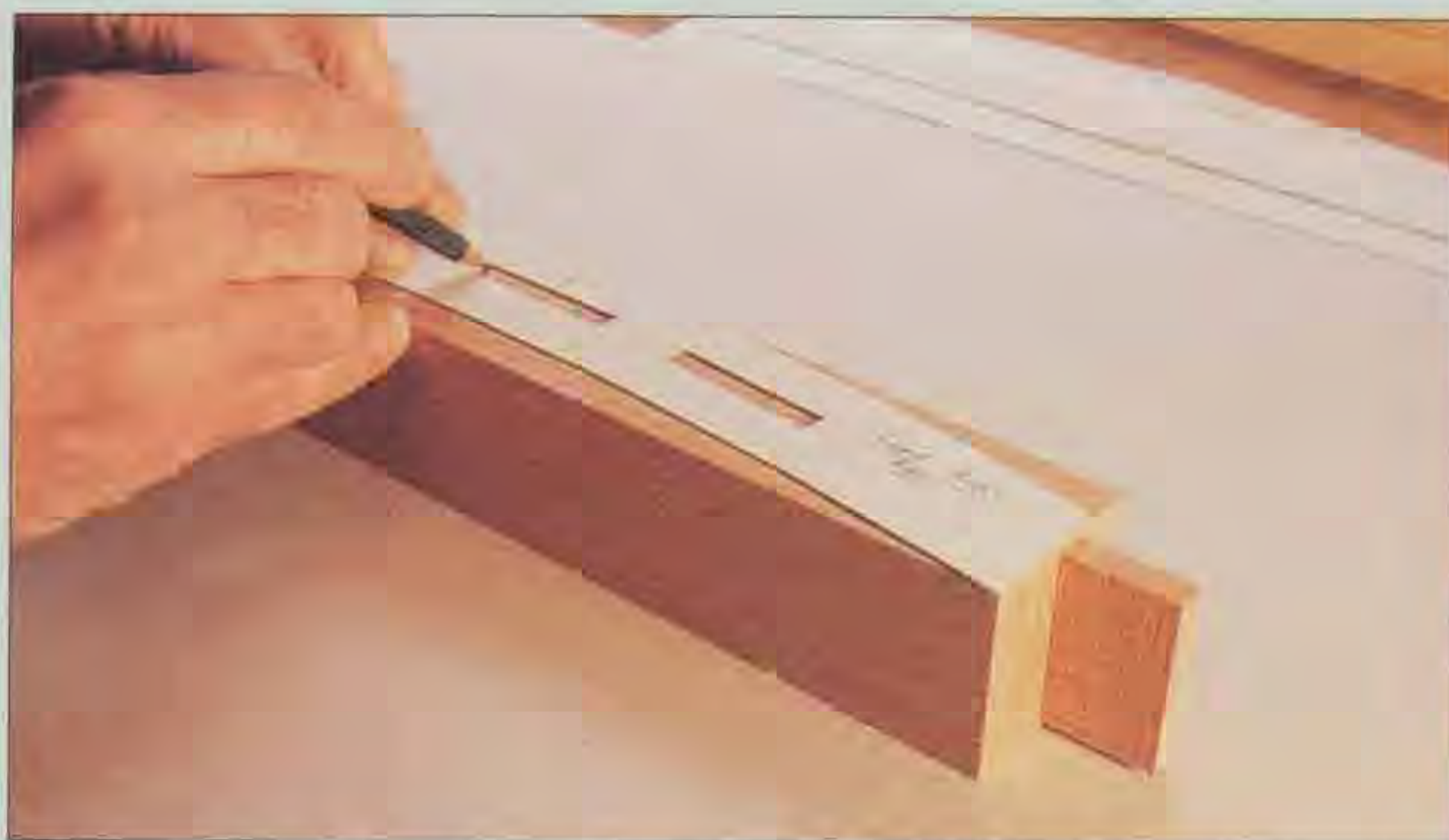
A little while ago I found myself at a dinner party where I was in the happy position of enjoying the experience.

My immediate neighbour and I had quite happily negotiated the rather predictable 'what do you do for a living?' stage, and had successfully moved on to more interesting topics.

During the main course she shared her current furnishing dilemma with me. She obviously remembered that I had used the word 'furniture' some time earlier and presumably decided that this would be an appropriate topic for discussion. Her dilemma was that she didn't really like her current set of mahogany repro dining furniture. She was about to move to a converted barn in the depths of the countryside and

thought that the repro look would not be appropriate.

By the time we were tucking into some fine chocolate mousse, I had established that she and her husband were also proud possessors of a pair of oak Arts & Crafty armchairs that had been inherited and were liked very much. She bemoaned the fact that they didn't have a whole set that would be perfect in their new home! Before I knew what I was doing I had swung into a previously unused dinner party marketing mode, suggesting that a set of chairs could be made, copying the original chairs.



Marking out the rear seat rail from the template. Note the curved shape and mortice position



Morticing the rear leg for rear seat rail using an offcut to cramp the leg into the morticer



Wedges are set up in the morticer for the rear seat rail splat mortices



Additional wedges are made for the compound angle

◀ I wasn't sure that she was convinced that this could actually be achieved. It could after all have just been alcohol-induced bravado on my part, but her brain was obviously still retaining information at this stage because the next day I received a telephone call and the rest, as they say, is history!

Setting my priorities

The chairs I was introduced to were carvers with drop-in seats. Their design was simple: all the components were basically a square section. The only embellishment was some pewter inlay diamonds to the tops of the back legs and a heart in the front seat rails. They had attained a lovely mellow colour which I decided could be matched using brown oak. This would avoid the need to do any further colouring.

The copies of the chairs were to be made without arms. I kept the height

of the seat rails and the backs the same as the originals, but otherwise the whole chair was scaled down to a more fitting proportion for a dining chair. Having established the overall dimensions, I did the usual stuff that is required for making a chair. I drew up a full-size seat plan to establish the size, position and angle of the mortice and tenon joints in the seat rails and legs, and made up templates for the curvy bits; in this case the cresting rail, the rear seat rail and the back legs.

I had six chairs to make so I made up each component as a batch to take advantage of any time saving that could be made while machining. It takes a little while to set up machines accurately, but when you have 12 identical mortices and tenons to cut, it is worthwhile.

My first priority was to create all the basic components for the chairs: the

seat rails, front legs, stretchers and splat were just square section, although to make use of the batch process, they were not only machined to the correct finished cross-section, but were also cut to the exact overall length, including the bit needed to create the tenons if required.

The curved cresting rail and rear seat rail were kept square at this stage to make the adding of mortices a bit easier. I cut the rear legs to their final shape on the bandsaw, remembering to keep one of the convex offcuts for use at the morticing stage! For the final shaping of the convex part of these legs, I used my trusty disc sander.

The concave parts are never quite so straightforward and I didn't have the luxury of a bobbin sander in my workshop. Instead, I used a combination of cabinet scraper to get close to the final shape, and a piece of 80-grit belt



A steel rule and sliding bevel are used to find the shoulder angle for the rear leg/side stretcher joint



Note the stopped slot dovetail to the 'H' stretcher – joint apart



Finished joint assembled



Marking out the diamond inlay with a scalpel

sander-type abrasive combined with a piece of Flexiply. The 80 grit cuts pretty quickly and the Flexiply when used as a sanding block, can be bent as required and smoothes out any unwanted lumpy, bumpy bits resulting in nice smooth curves.

Standing tall

Morticing the legs was next. It's no good cutting the tenons first because a mortice is required to check the tenon for fit! The vital requirement, apart from a morticer, was the curved offset from the back legs which enabled the legs to be cramped into the morticer successfully. The mortice and tenon joints for the front and rear seat rail joints are always straightforward because the components form right angles with each other. There are always two options when creating the mortices and tenons for the side rails.

Since the seat frame is wider at the front than the back, either the mortices or the tenons have to be cut at an angle. Tenons are easier to cut on a machine if they are not angled so the only option was to angle the mortices. To do this was pretty straightforward. I just made up three MDF wedge-shaped pieces (angles are taken from the seat plan) which held the legs at the correct angle while in the morticer.

The same treatment was required for the three mortices to the rear seat rails and cresting rails which were to house the tenons for the three splat pieces. The only added complication here was that the mortices were at a vertical angle and the two outer splat pieces were at a horizontal angle to form the slight curve to the back. To achieve this compound angle I made up the necessary MDF wedge-shaped pieces as before to get the vertical angle, and I

added a pair of softwood wedges to get the horizontal angle.

If I didn't have a morticer with a moving carriage I don't think I would accept chair-making commissions. They save so much time cutting mortices at accurate angles, and the whole rather tedious process of cutting dozens of square holes is made really quite tolerable!

Square holes et al

Cutting the bits to fit into the square holes was the next process. I like to use a bandsaw for creating tenons and the recipe for success is a sharp blade. Tired blades can wander about a bit and curved tenons are not generally considered to be good cabinetmaking practice. Even when using a machine to cut components, I always mark out the joints as a 'safety net'. The marks are not strictly required because the



A freehand router with small bit is used for the inlay



Diamond inlay inserted!

◀ fence will make the cut parallel to the fence and with a bit of luck it will be in the right place.

If the cut you are making seems to be heading down the middle of what you had hoped would be the tenon, you might just have the wrong face against the fence! To achieve a set of tenons that are all the same thickness, I use the same face side when cutting both cheeks, having cut the first face of all the tenons in one batch. The fence has to be set carefully to cut the second face so that the tenon is a snug fit in the mortice. A little bit of trial and error is all that is required here and once it is set up right for the first one, the rest will also be right.

Fitting 'H' stretchers

The final embellishment to this system is to cramp an MDF stop to the fence to prevent the tenons from becoming

longer than you were expecting. There were 'H' stretchers fitted to the original chairs which I copied on the new ones. The only trick required for the side stretchers was to get the shoulders at the right angle where they met the curved part of the rear legs. To find the required angle I cramped a steel rule to the chair in the right position and transferred the angle with a sliding bevel. The rear leg is actually curved at the point where it meets the stretcher but because the curve is so slight, I cut the shoulders straight and there was no obvious gap.

The construction on the original chairs for the joint between the side and cross stretchers was a little stub tenon, although I prefer the stopped slot dovetail joint here to give a mechanical resistance to spreading, and quite apart from its superior structural integrity, it's a lovely joint to make.

‘As far as finishing was concerned, the brown oak was a perfect colour match, and I just applied oil to match the original chairs!’



Finished and upholstered

The face towards the rear of the chair has the dovetail cut on it, the front being bare faced. Having cut the dovetail joints to the ends of the stretchers, it's just a case of assembling the chairs (no glue!) with the side stretchers in, offering up the cross stretchers and scribing the dovetail onto the side stretcher with a scalpel. With the side stretchers removed from the chairs, the stopped housing can be cut using a combination of router to remove the bulk of the waste and chisels to achieve the final shape!

As far as finishing was concerned, the brown oak was a perfect colour match, and I just applied oil to match the original chairs.

Having completed the chairs I was commissioned to make a matching dining table and then a coffee table. Consequently, I now positively look forward to dinner parties!

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PHOTOS: TERRY PORTER

Hold on tight!

In the second part of **Terry Porter's** test on clamps he looks at a selection from the Bessey F-clamp range

It has often been said that you can never have too many clamps in a workshop. Over the past few weeks I have certainly had a bigger variety of clamps to get to grips with, than you would probably find in the best-equipped workshop.

I have chosen a selection of clamps for their ingenuity or specific functions, such as mitring or butt jointing. I have also included a selection of clamps you can use one-handed, and discovered a few systems that need three hands! With some manufacturers, such as Bessey, I have only dipped into their comprehensive range and would advise you to look at the company's extensive catalogue.

A clamp is a clamp . . .

There are clamps and there are clamps. It depends what you actually want to achieve with a clamp or clamping system. Some clamps are fine for positioning two pieces of wood together, but do not actually press the faces together to get a firm and fine join. Some clamps could be described as positional rather than pressure clamps. It also depends on the amount of pressure needed for a particular job, as well as the problems of possibly bruising the wood.

So, something such as the Klemmsia cork-faced wooden clamps are ideal for gentle positioning and light gluing work, but not for securing large joints in large pieces of wood. Conversely, you wouldn't use a powerful ratchet-

Bessey GH Lever Clamp



action clamp for model making if you wanted your model to survive. It's very much horses for courses, and that's why you can't have too many clamps.

While trying the clamps, I was particularly interested in seeing if they would pull the wood together square, whether there was any creep, how much they bruised the wood and how quickly they could be applied and released. In some cases, I was also interested to see if even pressure could be exerted over a wider area with the area-pressure clamps.

Bessey GH Lever Clamps

The GH lever clamps are principally for engineering, but I can see a use for

them in the woodworking shop when a quick powerful grip is needed, or there is some application of metal in conjunction with wood. The pressure plate pivots to accommodate angled surfaces. The ratchet system on the moveable jaw is extremely effective and a strong clamping action can be achieved by pulling the clamping lever.

This lever also has a quick release trigger within it. I tried the 160mm (6 1/4in) version, but there is a large range, from 120mm (4 3/4in) to 1,000mm (39 3/8in) opening. This is a tough, handy, rapid-action clamp that really grips.

● Price: G 16 H, 160mm (6 1/4in), £23 including VAT

Bessey K Body Clamps

✦ Apparently, the development requirement for the K Body series of clamps was 'for damage-free clamping with self-adjusting or precisely parallel jaws, without spacers.'

Well, that is just what they have achieved here and I was impressed by this clamp. The jaws have steel inserts and have a tough unbreakable polyamide casing which is glue-repellent and resistant to paints and solvents. The moveable jaw has a system of rollers to maintain a constant right angle between the shaft and jaw. To move the bottom jaw the wooden handle is simply pulled out slightly and pushed back to lock the jaw on the rail.

Final tightening is done using the screw handle. These clamps have an 85mm (3 1/4in) throat and give even pressure right back to the rail. In addition to clamping wood, I also clamped some polystyrene packaging sheets as an experiment, to see if I got even pressure right across the jaws. The indentations were absolutely parallel.

The K Body is a good clamp and I can understand why it is one of Bessey's best sellers. The clamp is easy to use, well made and tough, and is just the job where even pressure is required over a larger area. This is one I would happily recommend. It is available in eight lengths from 300mm (12in) to 2,500mm (98 3/8in).

● Price: K 60, 600mm (23 5/8in) clamp, £25 including VAT

Bessey FG Carpenters' Clamp

This is an F-clamp that has a large self-adjusting top arm with a flat super polyamide casing reinforced by steel inserts that pivots in line with the lower pressure plate. The advantage of the clamp is that it makes it easier to maintain firm contact with a larger surface on one side and then clamp in using the round pressure plate on the other.

It can be useful for holding beading in place without bruising, or for securing long narrow pieces edgewise at right angles to each other. This is a tough, useful and practical clamp which is available in nine sizes from 160mm (6 1/4in) to 800mm (31 5/8in).

● Price: FG16, 160mm (6 1/4in) opening, £14-00 including VAT

Bessey FK Area Pressure Clamps

These clamps are a variation on the FG carpenters' clamp. They have two flat

Bessey K Body Clamp



Bessey FG Carpenters' Clamp



Bessey FK Area Pressure Clamp



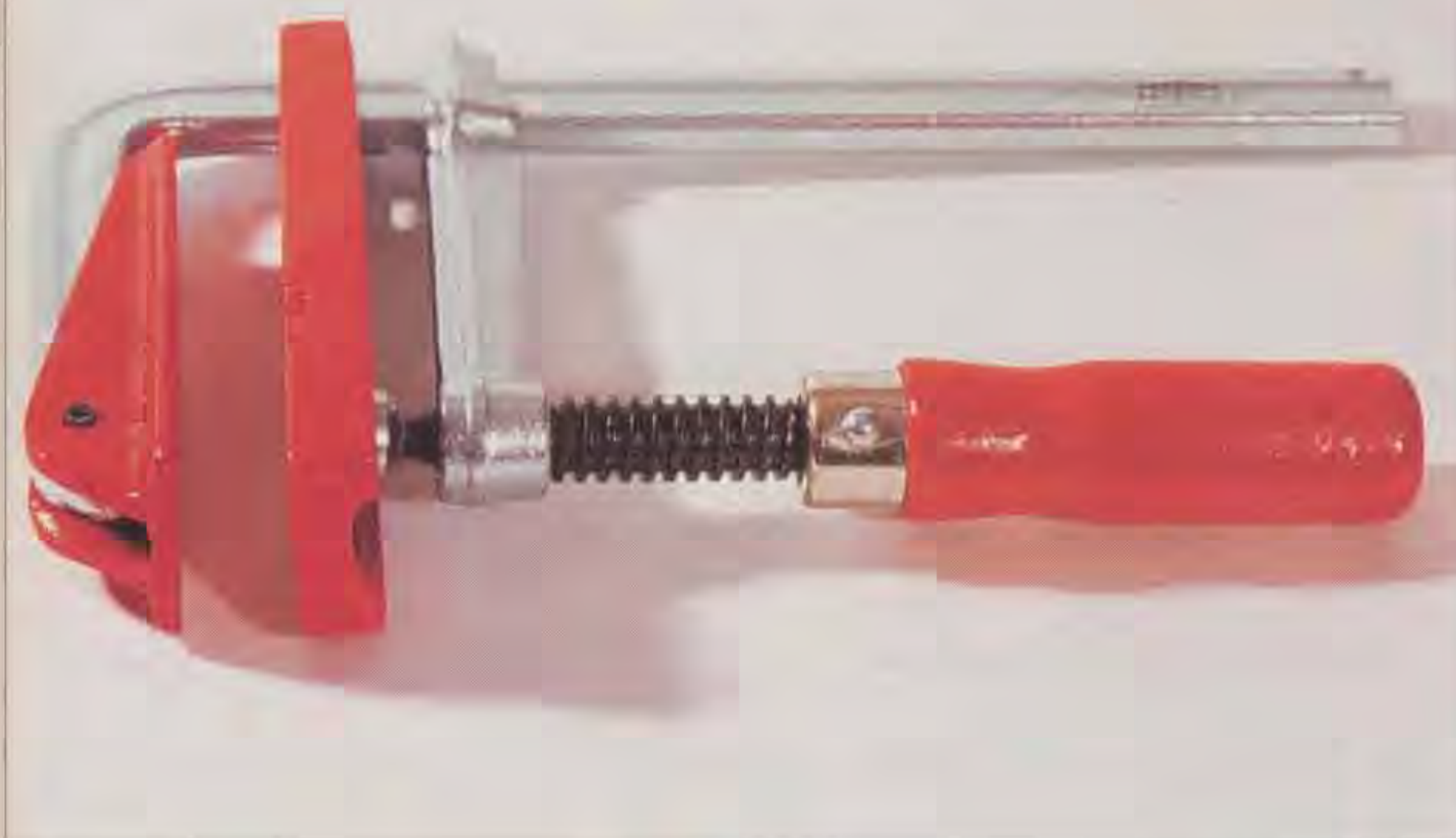
pivoting polyamide jaws with steel inserts. The jaws pivot so it is possible to clamp tapered pieces as well as parallel work. The clamp grips for the full depth of the jaw throat. As the jaw faces are flat, little bruising can occur. I found this clamp to be excellent for clamping together wider pieces evenly, in a restoration situation where a small new piece of wood is being scarfed in, or for veneer repairs. Half a dozen of these clamps in a cabinet workshop would be more than handy.

The polyamide jaws are replaceable. The FK is available in four sizes from 160mm (6 1/4in) to 600mm (23 5/8in).

● Price: FK 20-10, 200 x 100mm (8 x 4in), £26-00 including VAT

‘Half a dozen of these clamps in a cabinet workshop would be more than handy’

Bessey F Area Pressure Clamp



A couple of Bessey Malleable Cast Iron Screw Clamps



‘My favourites were the Bessey Malleable Cast Iron Screw Clamps – these will clearly last and last’

Bessey F Area Pressure Clamps

Now if you want something that is really tough and will last you a lifetime, then use the Bessey F area pressure clamps. These are principally designed for engineering and have plastic-coated malleable cast-iron jaws that pivot. I found them to be effective and firm: the clamp exerts equal pressure over a wide area for almost the full throat of the jaws.

The jaw faces are smooth, but as the cast iron is so hard some packing might be advised for fine woodworking. The FK model is probably more suited to the woodworker, but I'd find a

couple of these very handy. They may well last a lifetime, but they are pretty expensive. Available in four sizes from 160mm (6¹/₄in) to 300mm (12in).

● Price: F20, 200 x 100mm (8 x 4in), £55 including VAT

Bessey Malleable Cast Iron Screw Clamps

Bessey has a large range of these clamps, which range from 100mm (4in) capacity with a 50mm (2in) throat right up to 3,500 x 120mm (138 x 4³/₄in), and on to some large ones with a 500mm (19³/₈in) throat. These are tough long-lasting clamps suitable for engineering and wood-working. They are of the F-clamp principle and come with detachable plastic pressure pads.

The sliding jaws are made from high-grade malleable powder-coated cast iron. The rail is electrogalvanized cold drawn steel.

I found the non-slip mechanism for the lower jaw very effective. A grub screw in the sliding arm engages in the serrated edge of the rail when the jaw is inclined, which ensures no slipping or releasing. The screw action itself, with an acme thread, is firm and the pressure plate swivels easily.

These are well made, tough, easy to use clamps that will last and last.

● Price: TG 20, 200 x 100mm (8 x 4in), £14 including VAT; TG40, 400 x 175mm (15³/₄ x 6⁷/₈in), £25

Impressive stuff!

I was very impressed by the Bessey range as the clamps are well designed and well made. My favourites were the Bessey Malleable Cast Iron Screw Clamps – these will clearly last and last.

Contact details:

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FROM THE SHARP END

Living simply with wood Part 2



A take-off of Rodin's *The Thinker*, it shows me trying to put in action Nietzsche's dictum to Upholosopher with a hammer

In his previous columns, Paul Richardson has done an exemplary job of pushing us to consider how to work wood in order to make a living. Last month, I approached the problem a little differently, asking how we should work wood in order to make it an integral part of a responsible life. However, there's no escape from the practical day-to-day needs of living. So this month I want to turn the problem around and consider how we need to live in order to work wood the way we should.

Charge your worth

Clients will immediately appreciate that your work costs more, but don't expect them to understand why unless you tell them. I invite prospective clients into my shop to see how I work. Many of them appreciate the beauty of the hand tools I have salvaged and made, and they can understand why I would rather work with them than mummify myself with ear protectors and dust masks to work with power tools. They can see, feel, and smell the difference between a piece of wood smoothed by a sharp hand plane and one smoothed by sandpaper.

While there are clients out there who can appreciate these distinctions and are willing to pay for them, I'll be the first to admit that there are not enough of them. Whatever you do,

Laurence Mate faces up to the need to be at the cutting edge of business

don't lower your prices in order to bring in more work.

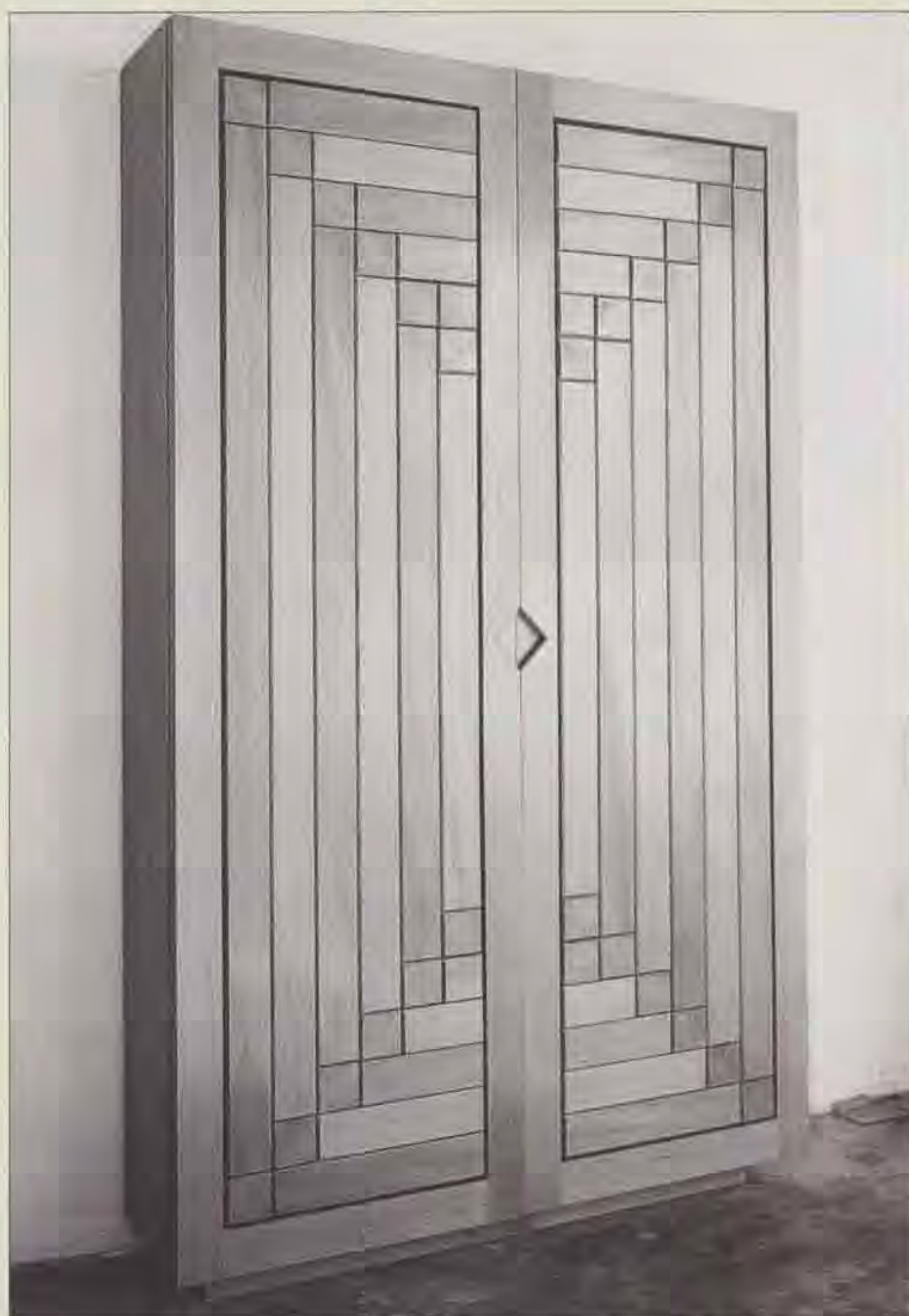
In order to be free to do this, you need to think small: small enough to work only at what you love, small enough to care about all you do. Minimise your

overheads. That means owning your shop space, owning your tools, and no employees. When work doesn't come in, you can turn off the lights, close the door, and not worry too much about paying the bills. When I left the big city where I worked for others and moved to a smaller town where I could go into business for myself, my wife and I only looked at houses with a garage large enough to set up shop.

Build your own

If you don't have your own shop, use your free time and your skills to build one. The garage that came with my house was just a shell: no insulation, no (legal) power supply, no dartboard. I didn't do as much of the work as I now think I should have, but at least I made sure that I learned what I didn't know. So recently, when I relocated all the machinery to a different part of the shop (the part where the car was originally supposed to go), I was able to do all the rewiring myself.

Starting from scratch is more work, but it allows you to incorporate things such as solar heating into the design. In my shop, I replaced most of the south wall with insulated



Tool cabinet. I chose this as a sample of my work because it's made from solid, old-growth Douglas Fir that was salvaged and resawn. Note that the design is not original – I borrowed it from a piece in Franz Karg's book on Solid Wood Furniture

◀ windows. All that light is good for my spirits, and it generates enough heat as it hits the concrete slab that I don't have to heat the shop when I'm not there, even in the coldest part of the winter.

If you work for yourself and you have your shop near your house, you can work odd hours. Before my kids were in school, I used to start my workday at 5am to get in several hours before my wife left for work, and then make up the rest when she was home, evenings and weekends.

One of the simplest things we can do is grow and prepare our own food. When you grow your own, you can grow what you like and you get better quality because you can harvest it at the peak of ripeness and eat it fresh. I learned how to cook because when we were first married, my wife and I couldn't afford to eat out; now we don't eat out because we can't buy food as good as we make at home.

I am not urging a life of miserable, penurious drudgery upon anyone. How about getting a life – a whole, healthy, wonderful life? Wouldn't that be good? Dropping out of the rat race, you might just find as I did, that you've rejoined the human race.

Living with wood

Such a life might seem incredibly scattered – getting in a few hours of work in between seeing your kids off to school, getting some seeds started, making bread, typing at the computer, but my experience has been the opposite. Such a life is concentrated and concentrated specifically around home.

So, in my search for a final image of such a life, I'm drawn back home, or rather, to the landscape around my home: the

garden. The garden I'm thinking of is not one where we are freed from labour, but one where we find our proper labour. I could describe the life that I'm striving for by saying that the goal is not to leave the workshop for the garden or to turn the workshop into a garden, but to have a workshop that is not out of place in the garden.

To belong in a garden, the workshop cannot pollute it. The noise of machinery should not shatter the peace of the garden, and the workshop should not generate any waste, for which the garden has no use. In my workshop I have two dust collector bins: one for toxic wood shavings, which I rarely fill, and another destined for the garden. Just this morning I spread some of these wood shavings as mulch around newly transplanted seedlings.

Anyone familiar with the Arts & Crafts movement will know that these are not new ideas. William Morris eventually moved his workshops from London to Merton Abbey, and this example was followed by younger craftsmen: Gimson and the Barnsleys settling in the Cotswolds and C.R. Ashbee initiating the move of the Guild of Handicraft to Chipping Campden.

The men and women who practise craftsmanship, said Ashbee 'must be ready to take a hand at the elemental processes of life, work on the land, cooking and baking, husbandry, the things of the house, the more direct things that show what it is well to have and what it is better to do without, all those things that imply a simpler living of life'. In order to practise craftsmanship and produce real goods, believed Ashbee, living simply is not just a matter of practical necessity; it is a moral imperative. ■

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A cut above

The tenon tool showing the working face, clamp bar and kick-back bar

PHOTOS: THE AUTHOR



From conventional and angled tenons, to half lap and bridle joints, **Bob Wearing's** tenon tool for the sawbench is a welcome addition to the workshop



One expects readers of *F&C* to be able to saw tenons, but we cannot always indulge in the pleasures of hand sawing. For the skilled amateur, the demands of garden, house, car, family and job leave insufficient leisure time for this. For independent professionals, their clients are not prepared to pay extra for hand-sawn tenons which, unlike dovetails, they cannot see.

No special skill required

The tenon cheeks can be removed by planer, router or spindle moulder in the form of shavings or chips. Sawing removes the cheeks as pieces of wood; surely, this is a more economical method. Professionals will know how many messages and notes are written on these handy sawn off cheeks. They also make useful cramping blocks.

Only the finest, well tuned handsaws can be trusted with safe tenon sawing. So we are left with the circular saw, which does a quick and accurate job.

This tool does the job perfectly, so it should be made from best quality multi-ply or MDF. The sizes given suit me and my small sawbench; modify them to suit your particular needs. It will then last a working lifetime. Prepare a multi-ply piece big enough for the three main components in line, with a little extra length for machining. Saw off the working face, rout a pair of parallel grooves in the longer piece, then saw this in two. Make and fit a pair of hardwood splines and glue them in place into the fixed base. Check that these two components slide easily.

Attach the working face to the moving base with two backflap or strap

hinges. Note that the bottom edge of the working face should just clear the table. Remove the working face to drill the holes for the clamping screws. Drill with a $\frac{7}{8}$ in sawtooth bit or a flat bit to 'just' accept the flanges of $\frac{5}{16}$ in or M8 tee nuts. On the same centre, drill through at 10mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in). Insert the three tee nuts. Do not hammer or crush these in; they will invariably go in skew. Instead, pull them in with a hexagonal head bolt, washer and a hardwood block. Make the clamp bar and drill to match. Use a drill one size larger.

Return to the bases

To fit the clamping screw, drill the fixed base at 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in). Countersink this and thread it at 8mm ($\frac{5}{16}$ in). There is no need to buy a tap specially for this.

Rear view showing the adjustment and clamping detail



The foolproof guard



Sawing a tenon cheek. Only the first tenon needs to be clearly marked



◀ You can make an adequate one for wood from an offcut of threaded rod. Fit a countersunk woodscrew.

The sliding base is slotted to receive this. Rout the slot slightly wider for ease of working. Finish with a large washer and a wing-nut. Check that the two bases slide and lock easily. Make the clamping bar from hardwood and drill three holes a trifle oversize for the clamping screws.

Setting up time is saved by incorporating an adjusting screw. Drill the moving face at 12mm (1/2in) to take a cylindrical steel nut. This is drilled and tapped to take an M6 screw. This time, a proper tap and tap wrench will be required unless a cylindrical nut can be found as part of a knock-down fitting, that is, a draw bolt.

Drill the hole for the adjusting screw,

say 7mm (9/32in). An accurate angle plate will be needed for the drilling machine. This can be workshop-made from multi-ply. Alternatively, drill in the lathe between centres.

A small metal anchor plate is made and let into the fixed base; 3mm (1/8in) aluminium is shown, although any metal will do. Fit two lock-nuts on the screw, the thinner the better. Thread through the anchor plate, then fit an old radio knob. File a flat for the locking screw to bite onto. Some tool shops will stock internally threaded plastic knobs. If one of these is used, squeeze a little Loctite or Araldite into the hole to secure the thread.

The working face is locked by means of a slotted metal stay anchored to two mirror or glass plates. Use short roofing bolts, washers and wing-nuts. A

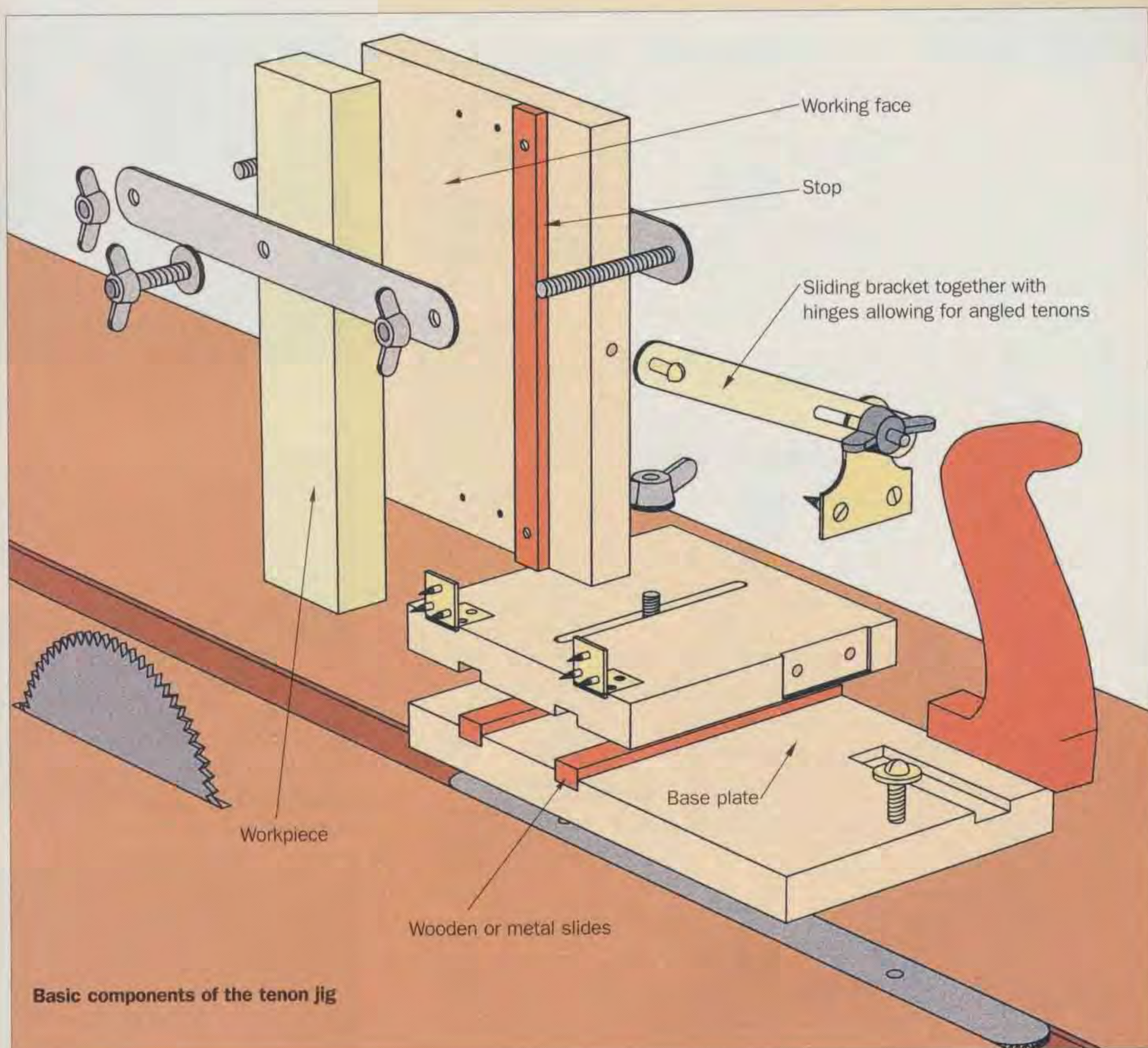
dab of adhesive under the bolt head prevents rotation.

Fit a plane handle

The last bit of construction is to make and fit a bar to slide in the sawbench groove. If a suitable metal bar cannot be found, it can be made from a dense hardwood such as beech. This will form a lot of tenons before wear becomes apparent. Great care is needed when screwing it to the base so that it is truly parallel to the working face. When locating the bar, consider the greatest thickness of material to be worked. Of course the bar can easily be re-positioned should the need arise.

Setting up

Remove the clamp bar and set the working face vertical using a draughts-



Basic components of the tenon jig

man's large set square which is more accurate than the average try-square. Use it again to set the kick-back bar. For angled tenons set the working face with a plywood template.

Several overlays can be fitted to the working face for such operations as cutting tenons on cylinders, slotting mitres of 90° or 60° for strengthening keys. Readers will certainly find further applications.

I have used this device for many years. However, I am aware that the editor of *F&C* should not be seen to be encouraging dangerous practices, so I have designed a foolproof, or rather woodworker-proof guard. It will take considerable ingenuity to injure oneself now.

A notched piece of multi-ply is screwed to the inside of the working

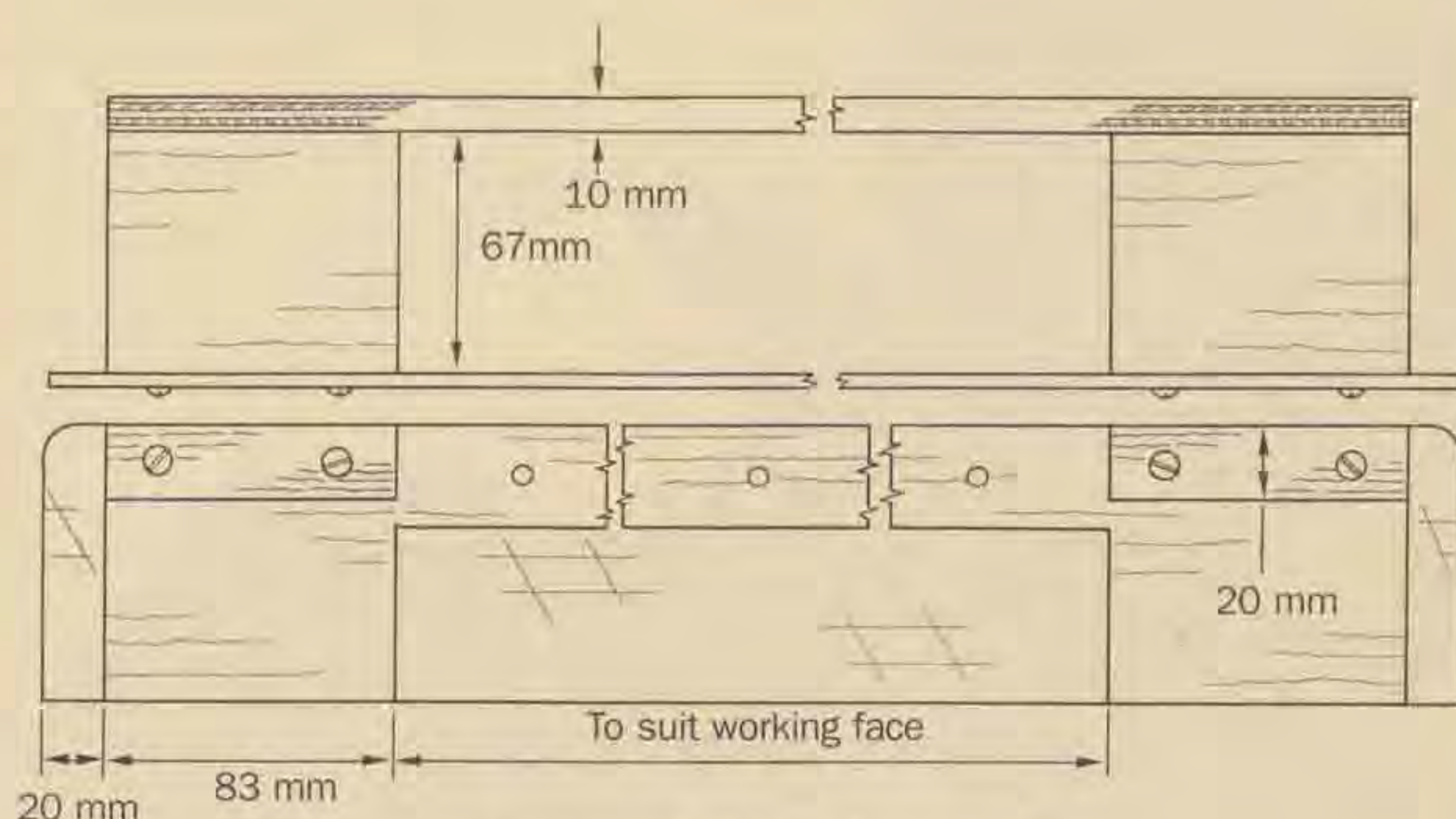
face. Take care not to impair any movement or adjustment. Two blocks are glued and screwed to the ends. Their width is dictated by the size of the work expected. Keep this as small as is reasonable. Add the front piece. This could be thin plywood, but I have used 3mm (1/8in) Perspex and liked it. Offcuts are available from plastic sign-makers – see The Yellow Pages. Anti-static fluid will help reduce the dust adhering to the Perspex.

Perspex will splinter badly on the circular saw and less so on the band-saw, so be patient and saw with a fine hacksaw blade in a pad handle. The edges plane well on the planer, using the last 6mm (1/4in) of the blades. The common cabinet scraper works well, particularly when taking off sharp corners.

All the bottom edges of the guard must just clear the saw table. Care must be taken when setting up for angled tenons. If the saw spindle is long enough, fit two identical saws (there is no need for them to be TC-tipped) with a wood spacer in between. Remember that a 6mm (1/4in) tenon needs a spacer of more than 6mm (1/4in) because of the set. A mixture of plywood, veneer and card will do the trick. Note that tenons are machined to fit mortices, not vice-versa. So chop all the mortices first.

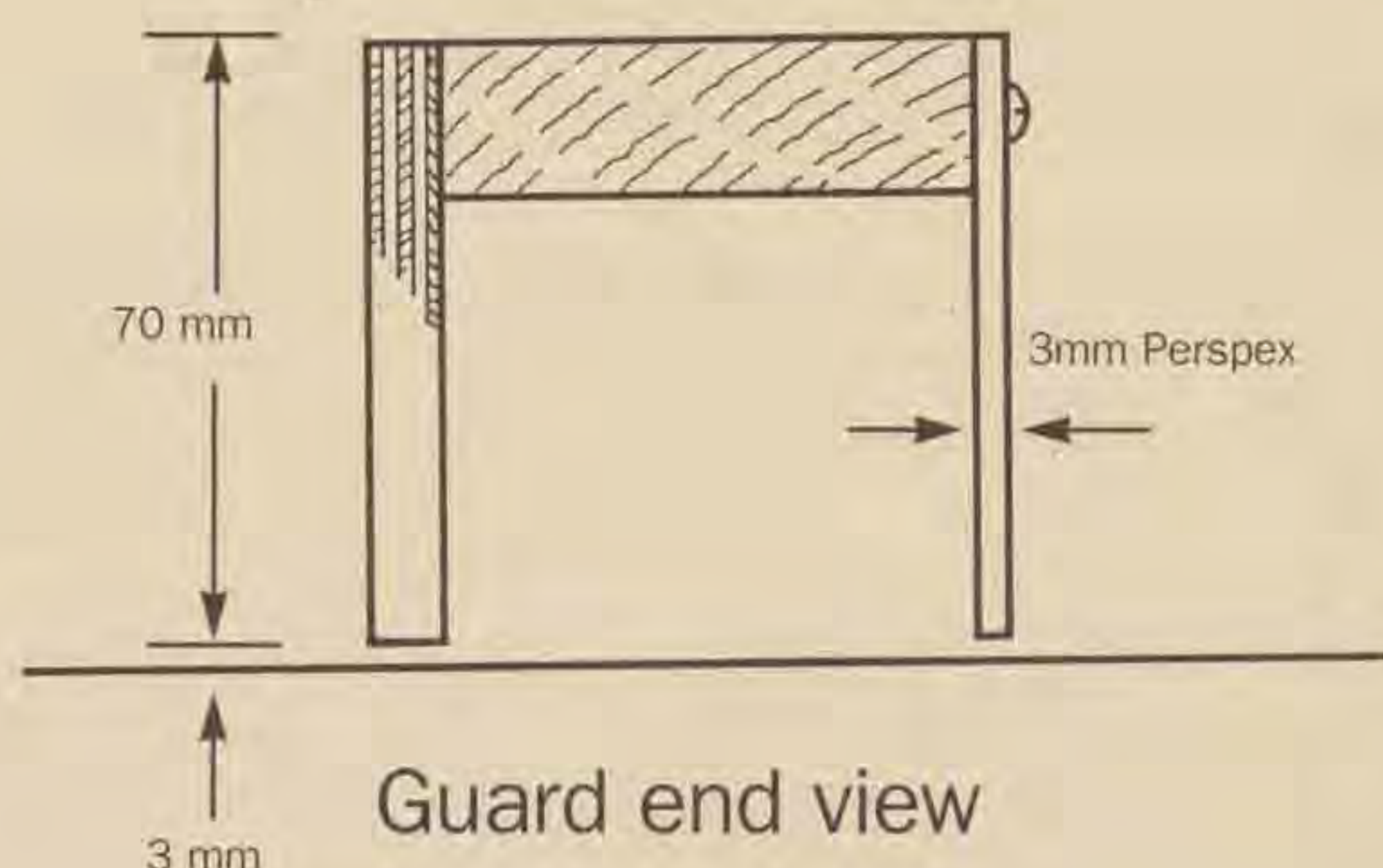
Getting started

There is no need to mark more than one or two tenons, using the same gauge as set for the mortices. Screw on a kick-back bar to locate the work-piece, roughly, central on the working



Guard front view

All sizes are suggestions only



Guard end view

face. It may appear school-like, but shade in the waste; it is all too easy to cut on the wrong side of the line. Clamp in the workpiece: the true face always towards the working face.

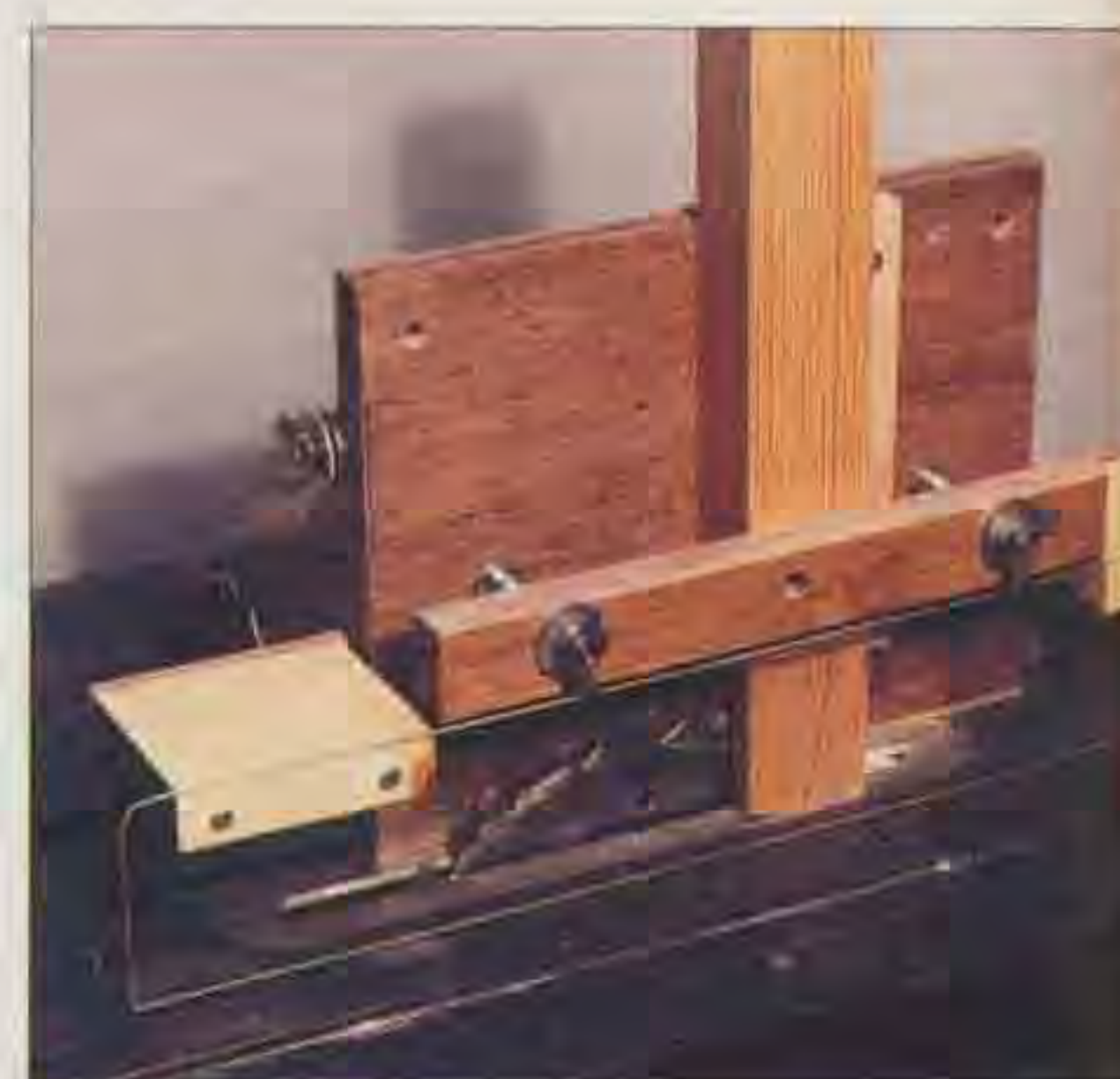
Looking through the Perspex side, wind up the saw to the required height and lock there. Unclamp, and with the adjusting screw, position the workpiece for the first cut, but with a bit to spare. Take a few nibbles, adjusting the screw until the cut is right. Two wood-stop blocks can be cramped to the saw table to limit the movement of the tool to and from the operator. If the tool is to have frequent use, drill and tap the saw table and use two slotted blocks.

Half laps and the tenons of bridle joints are all cut this way. The socket for a bridle joint is removed by several passes. The wide kerf of a TC-tipped

saw removes the waste quickly. The sockets should all be cut before the tenons. Any set-ins or haunches will be cut, either by hand or by bandsaw using the fence.

Further uses can be made of the tenon tool by adding auxiliary faces. Three are shown, although you will no doubt think up more applications. Auxiliary faces are made from good quality 6mm (1/4in) plywood and are fixed to the working face by counter-sunk screws and wing-nuts passing through identical pre-drilled holes.

The keyed mitre joint is particularly strong and can also be used decoratively. Fix two guide strips to the 6mm (1/4in) ply, having an exact 90° between them and at 45° to the saw table. They can be quite thin, but if they get sawn into, it doesn't matter. The workpiece



A bridle joint forming the socket by several cuts. The thick TCT blade makes light work of this



Sawing the slots for a mitred frame

Hint

Two springs wound from piano wire (obtainable from model shops) and placed on the clamping screws, ensure that the clamp bar opens as the screws are released.

is held by the clamp bar, having only one screw in the centre.

When making the cuts, rely on the thickness of a TCT saw or use a thinner steel saw with wobble washers (available from Simbles on 01923 226052). The keys can be produced with care on a thicknesser or by using the router as a miniature thicknesser. The mitres must be glued together first of course, and in this state are rather fragile, so handle them with care.

Frames mitred other than at 45° can be treated similarly. They can be held either by outside or inside guides; if the latter are used, screw on an eccentric cam to prevent kick-back. Tenons can also be sawn on cylindrical components by means of a V-shaped cradle attached to the auxiliary face and held firm by the clamp bar.

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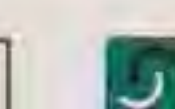
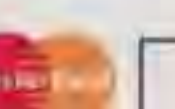
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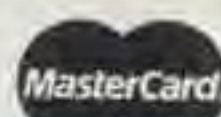
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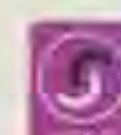
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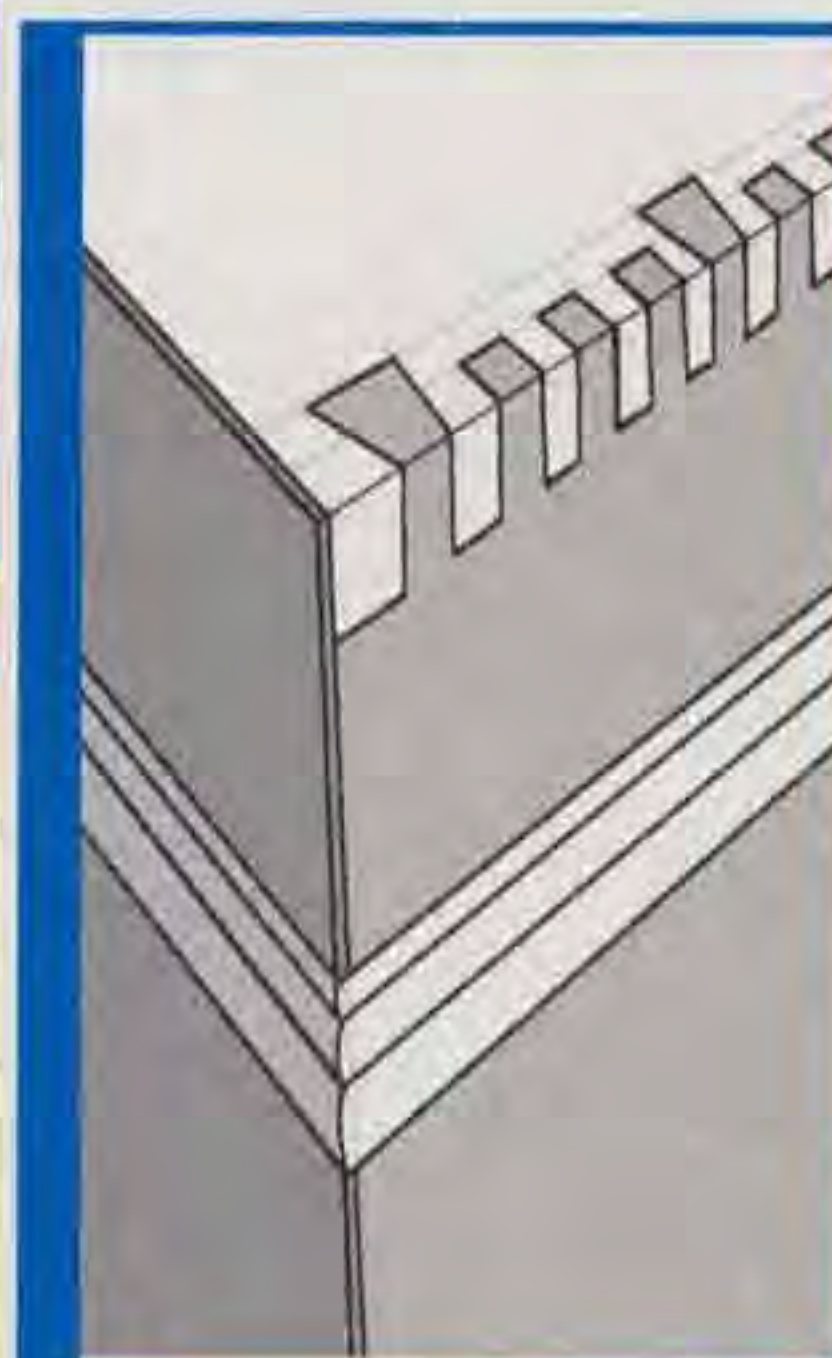
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This symbol denotes items tested by F&C. Items not bearing the icon have yet to be tried out by us, but would appear to merit attention.

The *F&C* team rummage around in their toolboxes for more new gadgets, tools and machinery

Fine-tune your bandsaw

I rejuvenated my 1930s Wadkin 30in bandsaw by fitting Chaco guides. The makers claim to have a model to fit almost any bandsaw, but I was slightly sceptical about their use on one as old as mine. The model recommended for my bandsaw, the M35 V+V, consists of two identical units for above and below the table. The upper guide differs only by having a removable clear plastic safety visor attached. Each has a robust steel casting (painted in 'woodworking green') to house the guiding parts, a horizontal shaft for back to front adjustment, slotted flange for mounting onto the bandsaw and a thrust wheel which supports the back of the saw blade when cutting.

A novel feature is the presence of a double pole magnet past which the blade sweeps. It is claimed to help keep the blade clean, reduce static electricity, lower steel fatigue and end blade cracking. The unique feature of these guides is the multiple Chaco Low Friction Material parts. They seem to be made from a type of graphite-impregnated plastic, and were invented in the late 1950s.

The parts are arranged in sets of three on each side with precise screw adjustment for whatever width blade is used. My bandsaw guides have been in regular use now for five years and have transformed my machine. Vibration is minimal; I've not had a blade snap even under arduous conditions; and it is easy to saw accurately and closely to a line. The toughest test of any bandsaw must be cutting of 2.5 and 3mm ($\frac{3}{32}$ - $\frac{1}{8}$ in) thick veneers: Chaco guides take them in their stride. Being built to stand up to industrial use, they cope easily with the less intensive use they get in a small workshop. There has been minimal wear to the guiding parts which, to all intents and purposes, are as good as new.

However, these guides are not cheap, and if your bandsaw is already working well, fitting them may not be the

best way of spending over £400. For anyone with an old machine that isn't cutting as well as it might, or who is thinking of buying a 'cast in the past' machine to renovate, Chaco guides are worth every penny.

Andrew Lawton

Bandsaw guides

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Rustic fittings

Martin & Company, one of the UK's leading suppliers of cabinet hardware (used by many *F&C* contributors) has introduced a new range of rustic inspired fittings. The Hockley range consists of handles with either a plain diamond profiled grip or a twisted version. They are supplied with either square or diamond backplates. The twisted design comes in three widths 75, 100 and 200mm (3, 4 and 8in). The drop handle is 50mm (2in) in depth. The straight design is in similar widths.



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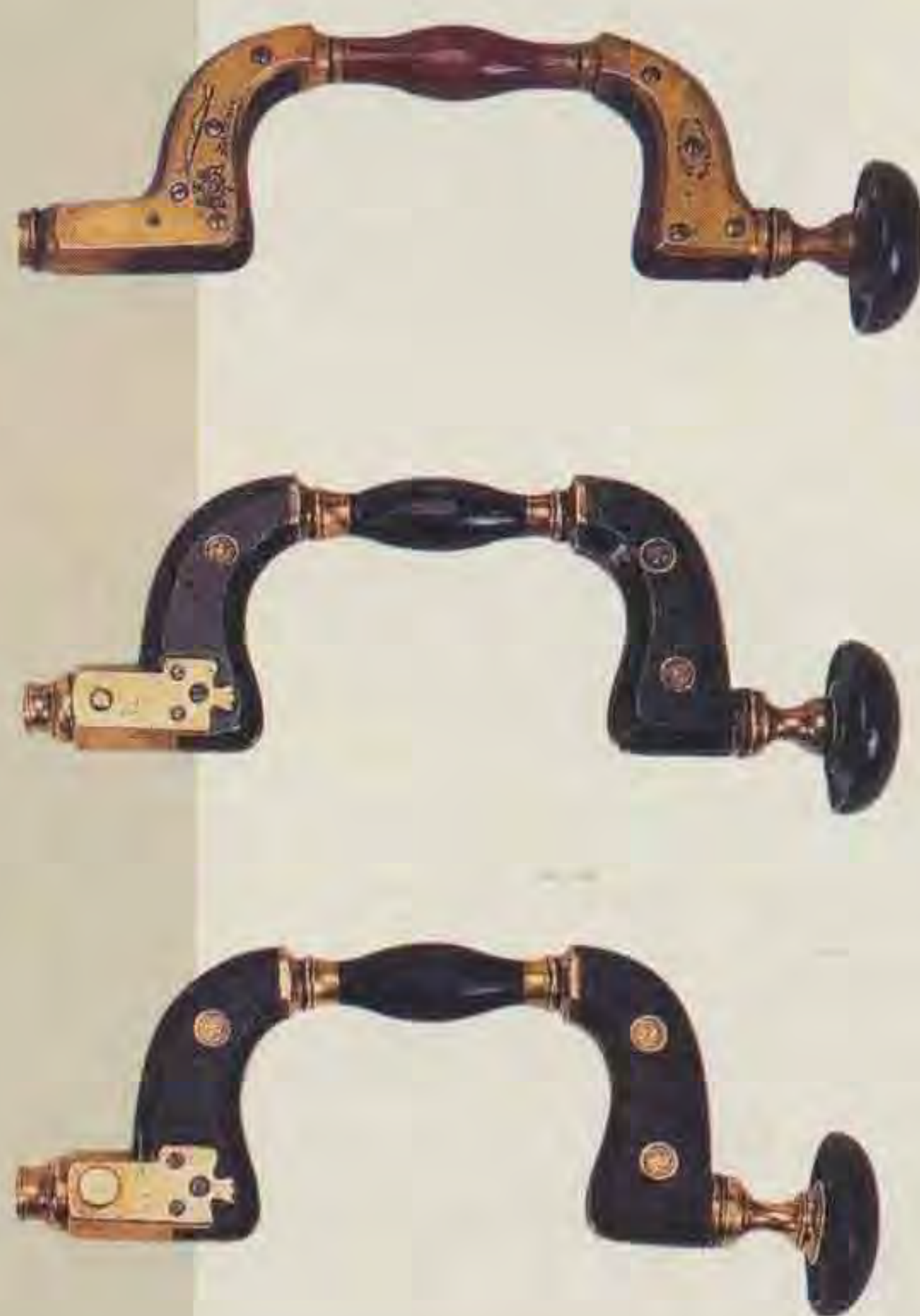
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Middle left: a William Marples Ultimatum in original condition, ebony and brass framed, worth about £240

Bottom left: a rare William Marples Ultimatum with rose infil,

worth about £435; brass framed are more valuable than plated examples

Top right: a long sweep William Marples, circa 1855, brass framed with rosewood infil, worth about £1,000

Middle right: a Sims-type brace in ebony, worth about £800-£1,200

Bottom right: a rarer Sims ebony-framed brace, worth about £760

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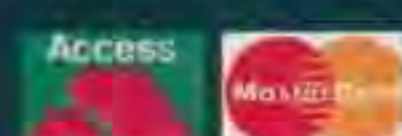
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By Niall Barrett

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Some of these 17 simple, attractive and useful projects for the kitchen can be made in less than a day, whilst others are more challenging and will take longer. They include a cutting board, a knife rack, spice drawers, a wine rack and dish-drying rack, plus a farmhouse kitchen table. Supported by step-by-step instructions, cutting lists and excellent photography.

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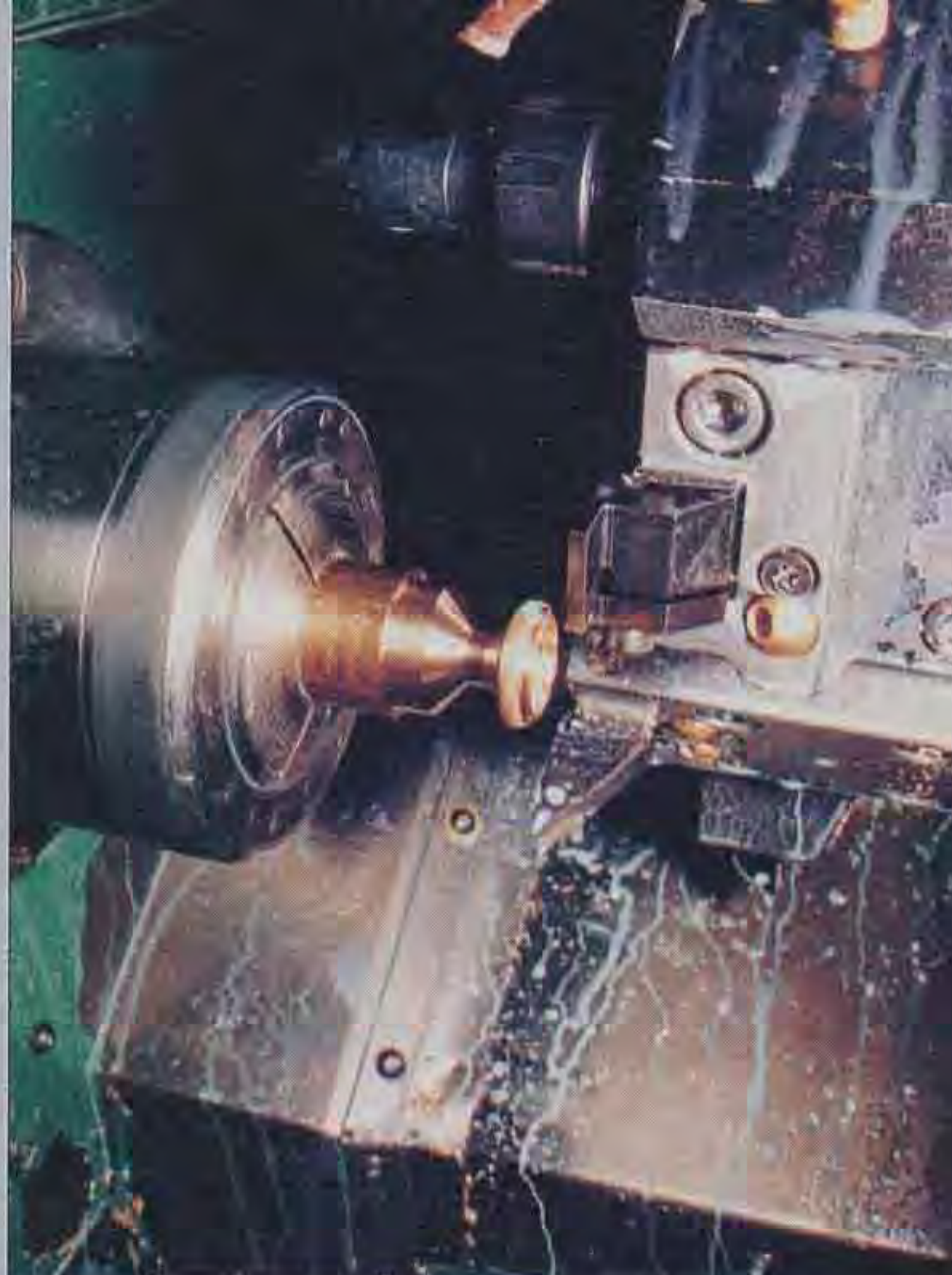
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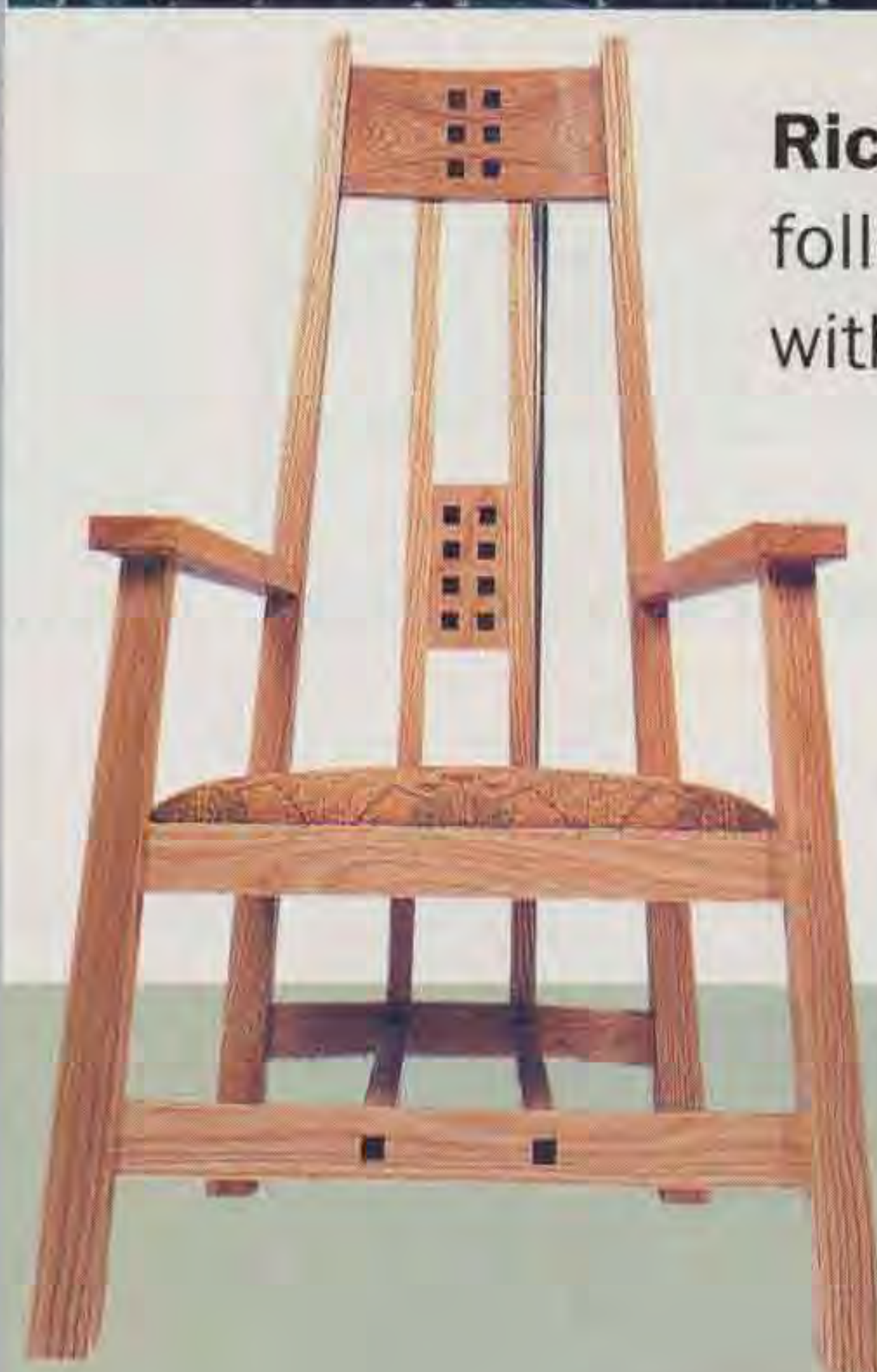
Next month in **F&C**



Johnathan Lear explores roll top construction in his desk



Laurence Mate pays a visit to Bridge City Toolworks in the USA



Richard Stevenson follows Mackintosh with this chair

Paul Gower makes this elegantly simple but stunning table



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