

THE MARQUETARIAN

Summer 2024 No. 287

ISSN 0025-3944



“Just One Run Needed”

by Jean Robinson of the Sutton Coldfield Group
Phil Jewel Award - in Class 5



**Journal of
The Marquetry Society**



The Marquetry Society



Founded 1952

Executive Committee

Patrons: John Bly F.R.S.A. Tony Jacklin C.B.E.

President: Enrico Maestranzi, 19 Ravendale Ave, North Finchley, London, N12 9HP Tel: 07402137843 Email: enrico.maestranzi@gmail.com

Chairman: Peter White, 10 The Russets, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0HH Tel: 01474 814217 Email: peterwhite16834@gmail.com (or: peter@marquetry.org)

Vice Chairman: Les Dimes, 17 Chapel Crofts, Northchurch, Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, HP4 3XG. Tel: 01442 862643 Email: les.dimes45@gmail.com

Hon. Gen. Treasurer: Janet Edwards, Lavender Cottage, 181 High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9JD Tel: 01376 573412 / 07708 334204 Email: janwards40@gmail.com

Hon. Gen. Secretary: This position is at present vacant. All applications welcome.

Minutes Secretary: Janet Edwards, Lavender Cottage, 181 High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9JD Tel: 01376 573412 / 07708 334204 Email: janwards40@gmail.com

Hon. Editor & Webmaster: Alan Mansfield, 142 Charlton Crescent, Barking, Essex, IG11 0NQ. Tel: 020 8507 0104 Email: alan.mansy@gmail.com (or: alan@marquetry.org)

Hon. Membership Secretary: Andrew Jaszczak, 17 Redwing Close, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG2 9FE Tel: 01438 352859 Email: andrew@marquetry.org

Independent Members' Secretary: This position is at present vacant. All applications from Independent Members only welcome. Please contact Editor.

Web Secretary: David Walker, 105 Brackenbrae Avenue, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, G64 2DU Tel: 07722437518 Email: dave@marquetry.org

Social Media Officer: Karen Russo, 69 Chestnut Avenue South, London, E17 9EJ Email: info@marquetry.org

Society USA Representative: Ernie Mills, 14515 W Granite Valley Dr., #B407, Sun City West, AZ 85375. Tel: 623-242-9668. Email: emills21@cox.net

Publicity Committee: Peter White & Alan Mansfield (Contact details as above)

Ex-officio Executive Committee:

John Biggs, Hazeldene, Ruskin Rd, Stanford-Le-Hope, Essex, SS17 0LF Tel: 01375 678695

A. M. Townsend, 3 Green Walk, Marden Ash, Ongar, Essex CM5 9HR. Tel: 01277 363058

Dave Bulmer, 5 Devonshire Gdns, Linford, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, SS17 0QW. Tel: 01375 675411

Martin Bray, 43 Melthorne Drive, South Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 0TS. Tel: 0208 845 7180

David Kelmanson, 6 Neptune Drive, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 7NH

Email: dkelmanson@hotmail.co.uk

Web Site Address: <https://www.marquetry.org>

Cover Background: Lignum Vitae

Front Cover Picture: "Just One Run Needed" No Size Given

Back Cover Picture: "Daniel Craig as James Bond" 30 x 45 cms





Visit the Groups



Bexley

Deborah Morris, 137 Wellington Avenue,
Sidcup, Kent, DA15 9HB.

Tel: 020 8301 1600

Email: deb.morris08@ntlworld.com

Broadlands

George Webb, 37 Sands Lane, Lowestoft,
NR32 3ER. Tel: 01502 515703

Chelmsford

Karen Cooper, 32 Ashurst Drive,
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 6TN

Tel: 01245 465509

Email: karencooper@live.com

https://www.marquetry.org/chelmsford_group.htm

Cotswold

For information regarding the Cotswold
Group please contact by e-mail at:

info@marquetry.org

East Dorset

Peter Mollan, 10a Gordon Road,
Highcliffe, Dorset, BH23 5HN .

Tel: 01425 280664.

Email: edmg_stanpit@tiscali.co.uk

Harpenden

Peter Goucher, 14 The Close, Harpenden.
Hertfordshire, AL5 3NB.

Tel: 01582 713978

Email: p.goucher@ntlworld.com

Harrow

Janet McBain, 39 Carpenders Avenue,
Watford, Hertfordshire, WD19 5BS.

Tel: 07722 346350

https://www.marquetry.org/harrow_group.htm

Humberside

This group has now converted to
Independents status.

Leeds

Geoff Margetson, 3 Bransdale Close,
Baildon, Shipley BD17 5DQ

Email: secretary.leedsmarquetry@gmail.com

<https://leedsmarquetry.org.uk/index.html>

Meopham

Peter White, 10 The Russets, Meopham,
Kent, DA13 0HH.

Tel: 01474 814217

Somerset - previously known as Merriott

Michael Burnham, Rendlesteps,
29 Broadway, Merriott, Somerset,

TA16 5QG Tel: 01460351785

Redbridge

Alan Mansfield, 142 Charlton Crescent,
Barking, Essex. IG11 0NQ.

Tel: 020 8507 0104

Email: alan@marquetry.org

<https://www.redbridgemarketrygroup.org>

Scotland

David Walker, - Tel: 01415347128

E-mail at: dave@marquetry.org

Sheffield

Graeme Johnson, 152 Hazlebarrow Crescent,
Jordanthorpe, Sheffield, S8 8AR

Tel. 0114 237 5348 - theegraeme@mac.com

Sproughton

For any enquiries regarding the
Sproughton Group please contact by e-mail
at: info@marquetry.org

St. Albans

Corinne Barnaby, 9 Arundel Close, Hemel
Hempstead, HP2 4QR. Tel: 07561 111278

Email: cojoba@ntlworld.com

www.marquetry.org/st_albans_group.htm

Staffordshire

Quentin Smith, 15 Newport Rd,
Eccleshall, Staffordshire,

ST21 6BE

Tel: 01785 850614

Email: qjsmarquetry@gmail.com

<http://www.staffordshiremarquetry.org.uk>

Sutton Coldfield

Mike Roberts, 30 Crockford Drive,
Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, B75 5HH.

Tel: 0121 308 0239

https://www.marquetry.org/sutton_coldfield_group.htm

Thurrock

John Biggs, Hazeldene, Ruskin Road,
Stanford-Le-Hope, Essex, SS17 0LF

Tel: 01375 678695

Editorial and Publishing Office

142 Charlton Crescent, Barking, Essex, IG11 0NQ. E-mail: alan@marquetry.org

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Deadline Dates

Final date for receipt of material for issue
288 is 12th July 2024, but please let me
have as much material as possible by
mid June 2024

Final date for receipt of material for issue
289 is 12th October 2024

Marquetarian Back Numbers

Are available in PDF form via e-mail at a nominal cost per issue. All editions from number 1 are available. Enquire via Editor.

Other Useful Addresses

American Marquetry Society (AMS)

AMS Pres. Dave Peck, 726 Road N, Redwood Valley,
CA 95470. Tel: 707-485-7458

Email: president@americanmarquetrysociety.org

Flemish Guild of Marqueteurs

Driesstraat 18, Tielst 8700, Belgium

Marquetry Society of Canada

Cathy Lago, Email: cmlago@rogers.com

Marquetry Society of Victoria.,

Mrs. Elsie Knaepple, 11 Mullens Road, Vermont
South, Victoria 3133, Australia

Email: secretary@marquetryvic.org.au

Rencontre Internationale de la Marqueterie (R.I.M.)

Xavier Dyevre, 15 rue du Peintre Lebrun, 78000
Versailles, France. 01 39 51 53 66

De Verenigde Marqueteurs vzw

Tel. : 011 222 010 (Chairman)

Club Rooms: zaal het park, oostlaan 10, 3600 Genk.

E-mail: deverenigdemarqueteurs@gmail.com

facebook: De Verenigde Marqueteurs vzw

Website: <https://deverenigdemarqueteurs.wordpress.com/>

Atrema

Espace Henri-Barbusse, 60 bis 10e Avenue, 93290

Trembley en France Tel/Fax : 331 43 84 53 54

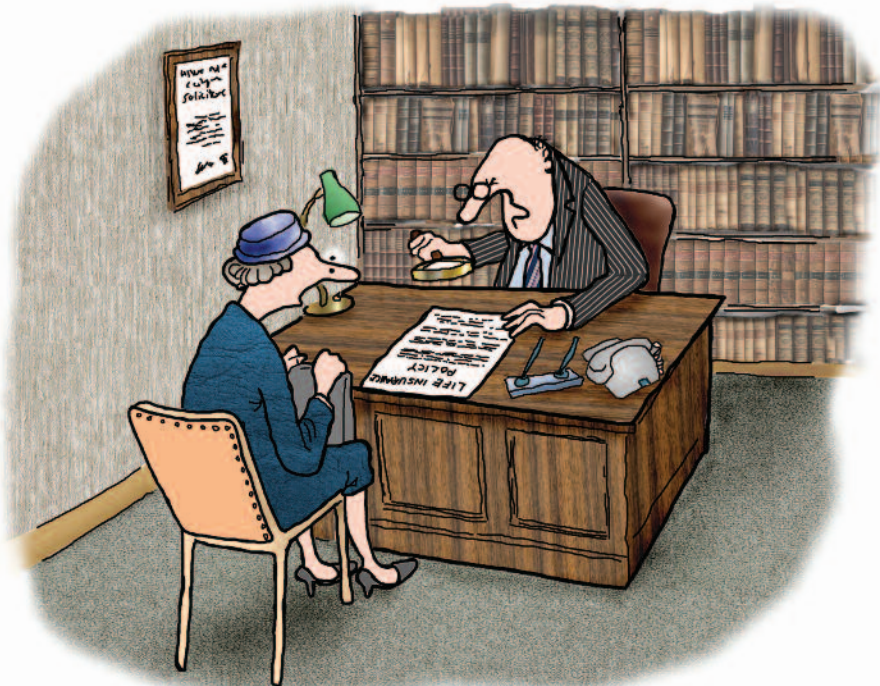
Email: pathooge@hotmail.com

The Marquetry Guild Inc (NSW)

Kay Underwood Tel: (02) 9570 8680

Email: kuwood@bigpond.net.au

Page 3 Cartoon



"According to the very small print at the bottom of your late husband's policy you only get the payout if he wins the Rosebowl, otherwise it all goes as a bribe to the National Exhibition judges!"

Cartoon theme by Vaughan Thomas. Artwork by Alan Mansfield.

The 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition
No group has come forward to hold a 2025 International Marquetry Exhibition at the time of writing.

Hopefully we will have a more secure footing here on this subject with the Autumn edition of The Marquetarian.

Watch this space.

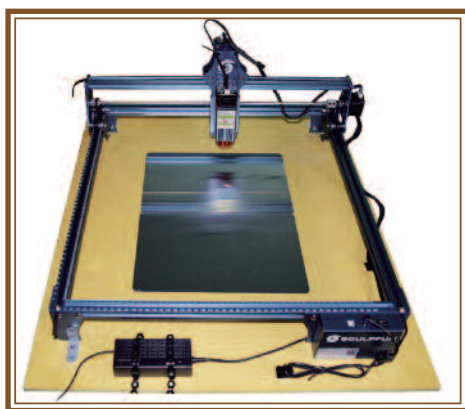


Well, as I said here at the same time last year, we are at the end of the 2024 International Marquetry Exhibition. The Rosebowl winner will have been decided, but, due to publishing and distribution arrangements, I am not aware of the result at printing time, which is a week or two before the exhibition ends.

However, as soon as the results are known, we can publish the Rosebowl winner on the website as a “special” - and hopefully that will be in the latter days of May, or at the latest, with the normal schedule of 1st June.

I am certainly eager to see our ultimate piece of marquetry for 2024. Will we have a new Rosebowl winner to join our somewhat exclusive club, or will it be one of our ‘regulars’ (so to speak)? Whoever it is, well done to you, superb work.

Now, a bit of a new venture for us. You may know that we introduced and ‘test ran’ what we named, eMag membership, in the USA a few years ago. This is a new form of membership where the member opts for receiving this publication as a PDF email attachment instead of the printed copy. This form of membership is much cheaper as there are no postal or



Your editor's own laser cutter

printing costs involved for us. So the eMag member has all the other advantages of Marquetry Society membership, but this time, at a reduced cost. There's no postal delays either with this form of membership, plus you can save it in a library on your computer if you so wish.

On a different topic, I'm pleased to see plenty of new interest in laser cutting among our membership. Laser cutting requires extra skills, it is not the easy “cop out” to traditional cutting that many think it is. It does take skill, as I've found out myself using the cutter you see above.

Alan.

Summer period Password

The password for the Summer period Members Only section of our website is

greenwood

As always the password is all lower case and a single word, so just type it in as seen above on or after the **1st June 2024**.

To visit this section of our website go to the Independents' Page button on our home page, then scroll down on the Independents' Page to the bottom of that page to the “Enter Protected Area” button. Click the button and enter the password in the dialogue box which will appear on screen. You will then have full access to our large online designs library.



I was very pleased to meet so many of you at the recent International Marquetry Exhibition held at Hatfield Park. (The grounds of Hatfield House)

From what you told me, it looks like the exhibition was a big hit with you all. I am so pleased that you enjoyed it.

We put a lot of work into getting this exhibition underway. Much work behind



the scenes, that's for sure. Lots about the exhibition in the autumn Marquetarian.

Enrico.

Veneer Examples - these are 65 years old veneers

From a collection of sample veneers kept away from light for over 65 years!

Ice Birch	Yew	Oak	Agba	Afara	Larch
Cedar of Lebanon	Magnolia	Castello	Pearwood	Elm	Olive Ash
Prima Vera	Cherry	Planetree	Ayan	Eucalyptus	Birch Masur
Poplar Burr	Oak Burr	Maple Burr	Sapele	Bubinga	Oak Australian Silky

BASKET WEAVE

Basket weave parquetry

Perhaps the most popular form of parquetry is basket weave in all its variations. I will describe my methods of making two of them.

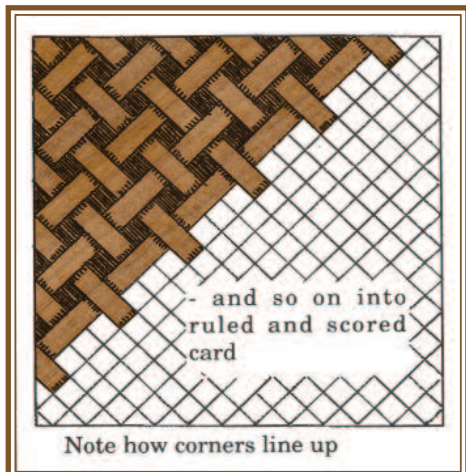


Fig. 1. Basket weave.

I will deal with each stage in turn. You will notice that again it is built into card, but before you rule the card prepare the basket weave strips. Anegre veneer gives a fair imitation of cane work.

Cutting and sand shading the strips.

The individual strips are prepared first so that the precise dimensions are known for marking the squares on the card. The strips are cut at a ratio of three to one. Let us assume a strip width of a quarter of an inch, the length will be three-quarters of an inch.

Knock up a jig, which doesn't have to be elaborate. A piece of plywood with a strip pinned or glued to the top is all that is required. Now cut two stops from quarter inch ply exactly three-quarters of an inch long.

You will need the three-quarter inch

widths and any convenient lengths, say six to nine inches. If you make them any wider than three inches it will make the sand shading operation more difficult.



**Andrew Smith
the original author**

Cut as many strips as you require to complete your project, erring on the generous side. Note! These strips are cut across the grain.

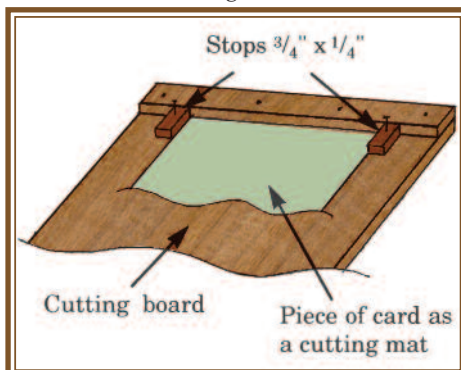


Fig. 2. Basket weave cutting jig.

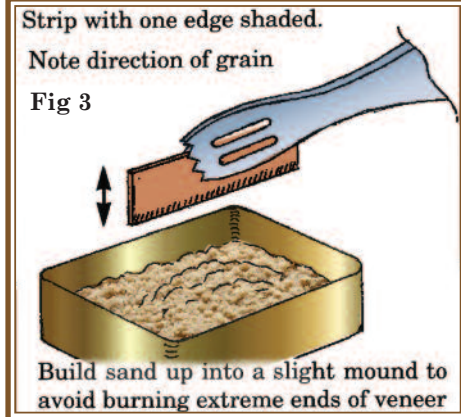


Fig 3 shows sand shading the edges.

Whatever the heat source, you will need a small flat tin to hold the silver sand. I find a tobacco tin ideal. Just put about a quarter of an inch depth of sand in and heat until very hot.

The strips are held between a pair of grill tongs, (keeps the fingers well away from the hot sand), and moved about just touching the surface of the hot sand. You will soon see the edge darken whereupon the strip is turned to shade the other edge. When the shading is completed, assemble the strips in sixes as shown in Fig. 4. Don't use any glue at this stage. Oh! and to the menfolk, get the grill tongs cleaned up and stowed away before the wife gets home.

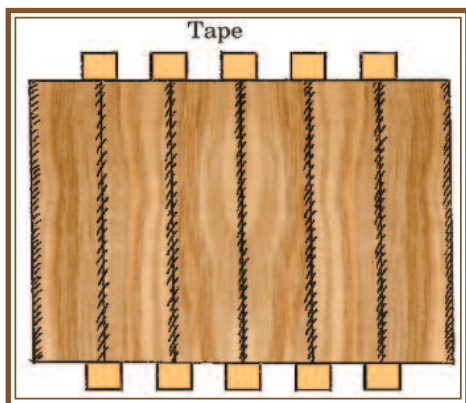


Fig. 4. Six strips taped together.

The strips are now ready for the secondary cutting into quarter inch strips. Adjust the stops to the quarter inch width and cut as many strips as you require for the project. Whilst the cutting jig is in the quarter inch mode, cut some dark infill strips, again across the grain. It doesn't matter if they break up as you will see later on. Rule your card in quarter inch squares, and score part way through with the knife. Now, lets get weaving.

The next stage is fairly difficult to describe but if you refer constantly to Fig. 5 it will become clear to you. Only do a few rows at a time one way and then link these up the other way. I find it is more

convenient to leave the strips strung together and pick them off with the point of the knife as required. This is your actual basket weave which now only needs the dark infill. The small squares of card are now flicked out one at a time, then a strip of the dark infill is inserted into each space and nicked off with the point of the knife. This is why the infill strips are cut across the grain. At all stages of the build up use spots of glue or very narrow strips of tape where necessary. When a small section of complete weave has been assembled, rub plenty of glue into the joints. It is actually easier to do than to describe and once you get into a rhythm of working, it just grows under your fingers.

Fencing panel effect.

The same shaded strips are used for this except when taping them together, insert a narrow strip of the same veneer between each joint as in Fig. 6. The building up of the effect is simplicity itself. Cut these prepared assemblies into quarter inch strips as before, offset each alternate one, glue together and tape. Fig. 7. This makes a very effective background panel for a flower study etc. (Figs 6 & 7 in next issue)

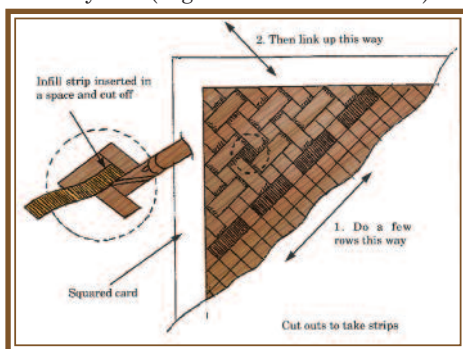


Fig. 5. Assembling the basket weave.

Editor's Note: Due to a problem with the original article intended for these two pages, it has been substituted with this replacement article which we had in reserve. I hope you enjoy it. The second part of this article will appear in the autumn Marquetarian. See you then.



Spring is sprung, the grass is riz, I don't know where the birdie is. The little bird is on the wing. Don't be absurd, the little wing is on the bird." So writes Ogden Nash.

Well, I don't know what time of the year he wrote that, but it is almost the end of March and Spring has still not sprung! At the time of writing bird-song is rather scarce, the early daffodils are just beginning to show and at least the grass still does not need its first cut of 2024. You would have thought that with all the rain and cold I would have had plenty of time to get stuck into my marquetry.

Unfortunately, No! My marquetry has not progressed. A picture is where I left it just after Christmas and the longer that I leave it the less inclined I am to get started. I must make a concerted effort to start cutting again.

I've missed not having my picture in the National this year. I really thought that I had time to get it finished in time. Well, perhaps I will have more to enter next year.

I would like to thank Enrico and his merry band of workers for all the work they are putting into this years' National. The venue, Hatfield Park & House, is very special and the Marquetry Society stand is going to attract many visitors. I just hope that the weather brightens up and the rain departs.



Our Website on Ionos has been very quiet. I've only had to reply to two enquiries since the last Report. As for the Marquettarian Journal, Alan is as usual putting in lots of time at the expense of his own marquetry. He is having to write articles himself because of the dearth of letters sent in. If he didn't do this the Journal would be much smaller. He is appealing for letters or articles to include so that he doesn't have to write them himself. Please send him something to include. Thanks again to Karen for the work that she is doing to include new members on our Facebook page.

I wish all who have entered into the Competition good fortune. I only wish that I could go. It is a superb venue. Well until the next time I wish you all, 'Happy Cutting'.

David Walker

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Many thanks to David for highlighting the need for articles and material from you, our readers and Marquetry Society members, on all and any matter(s) relating to marquetry.

You don't need to construct an article in any way, we can do that for you, but an idea, or description of how you do your marquetry, or finishing, or designing, or in fact, anything, will be of interest to our other readers.

A photo or two, or a drawing would be very helpful to accompany your words.

Any format will be suitable. You can write using pen and paper, send any type of computer or email file, it will suit my needs perfectly.

I look forward to hearing from you. You all have special talents with your marquetry, so don't hide them away, show the rest of us how creative you are.



Are you looking forward to our September website update? The reason I ask this is that the September update always brings the International Marquetry Exhibition award winners' gallery and slide show with it. Of course, we also add a selection from those who just missed out winning an award along with the award winners' gallery, but we do split up the 'non-awards' into equal portions so that we can add ten or more new ones to the 'Others Gallery' over the next twelve months until the next International Marquetry Exhibition comes round.

Don't forget that we have a 'Favourites Gallery' on the website where you can submit photos of your favourite marquetry work (one of your own preferably which you are pleased with) where we can all enjoy your work, and, it's also a place where you can show your marquetry to friends and relatives worldwide. Just click the 'All Galleries' button on our website Home Page, you can find the 'Favourites Gallery' from there.

If you do send photos in, please try to make the file size over 100KB (1MB or more is preferable). The reason for this is that anything below 100KB can lose definition and can sometimes look 'blocky' and pixelated.

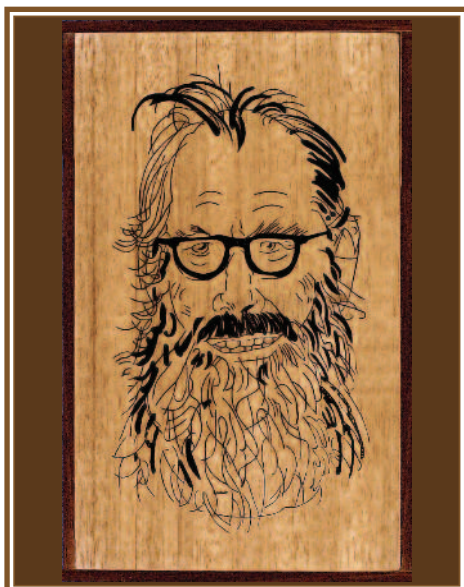
I do upscale low file size photos, but JPEG especially can look blurred with very prominent artifacts and evidence of ringing, which rather spoils a good photo.

A large file size gives me much more to work with; so if sending in a photo or two, do try to keep the files as large as possible.

Having a sort of wander around our website archives I came across the the portrait you see below. It is a fine line work by the hand of Eric Horne. Eric had certainly mastered the art of fine line work, and he produced several other pieces of such quality over the years. The subject of this portrait was Ernie Ives. This was Eric's version of Ernie's famous cartoon which he used in the header of his editorial for this very magazine over many decades.

Did you know that we have downloadable PDF copies of past Marquetarians available in the 'members only' pages of our website? Password on page 4 for access.

Alan.



Previous editor Ernie Ives - a portrait by Eric Horne in the 1980s

HAREWOODS

Editor's Note: In the Readers' Letters on page 39 of this summer edition of The Marquetarian, a reader asks if it is possible to reprint the definitive article from the 1980s on the subject of harewood. Well, I'm pleased to say that after some hours of thumbing my way through the 1980s copies of The Marquetarians, I found the article and have copied it into MS Word and can now print it again for your edification.

Do note that the original article was all text with no graphics, so I have updated it a little where appropriate.

HAREWOOD

(A Reasonably Complete Discussion)

By George Gaye

To most Marquetarians, the term Harewood brings to mind one word in particular - Grey! It may be a silver grey, a pearl grey, a medium grey, or even a charcoal grey and the wood may appear as unfigured, striped, flat cut, curly, or fiddleback. I think that many of us have ordered "Harewood" from veneer suppliers and then waited patiently to see what figure and what shade of grey the veneer would actually be when it finally arrived. Sound like Gambling? —You bet!

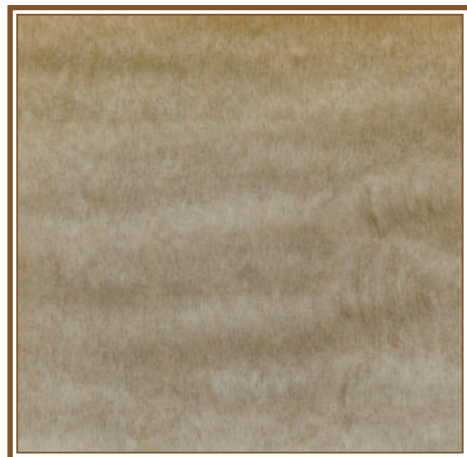
In this article I'll try to describe what Harewood actually is, how it is formed both in nature and artificially, how to treat your own Harewood from veneers in your own stockpile, and I'll briefly mention some of the other methods of obtaining "grey" woods and veneers by alternative and less "natural" means, evaluating each method in turn.

Harewood can (and does) occur in many trees naturally, but it seldom occurs uniformly throughout the wood. It usually

appears as grey streaks or areas in veneer sheets and these areas are generally trimmed off as "defects" at the veneer mills whenever possible. Harewood, in its most familiar form, was discovered by accident. Prior to the mid 1500's, the "veneers" used for marquetry and cabinetry were about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. At that time, the development of the pitsaw allowed the cutting of logs into veneer as thin as $\frac{1}{8}$ " and it was not until the mid-1600's that veneers as thin as one sixteenth were possible to cut. In order to cut "veneers" of these rather robust dimensions without shattering the veneers, the knife blades, or one's patience..... it was necessary to then (as it is today in veneers mills) soften the wood in order to allow it to be cut easier. The monks, who did much of the marquetry of the period, softened their woods by immersing them in their artesian or spring-fed well pools, some of which happened to be chalybeate (impregnated with salts of iron). They noticed that some species, notably Sycamore and Maple, took on a grey or a greenish grey hue after being soaked. Eventually, they soaked some of their veneers of this species intentionally to duplicate this colour shift and, in doing so, "Discovered" Harewood. They knew that the process worked, but they didn't know why. Quite possibly, they didn't care!

What the monks were witnessing was the same chemical reaction that has been used for centuries to make inkYup!Ink!.... Two compounds are involved in this chemical reaction. The first Tannic Acid (which is used as a styptic and as an astringent, as well as the tanning of hides) is a lustrous, yellowish-to-light brown powdered, flaked, or spongy mass found in various concentrations in many plants, including trees.

The second compound is a metallic sulphate, such as the sulphate of Iron, Copper or Zinc, which also go by the names of Vitriols or Copperases (green, blue, and white respectively). When Tannin reacts with the metallic sulphate, a black powdery compound is the end result. It may be worth noting that the initial salt product formed by the reaction is colourless but will oxidize immediately upon contact with air and turn black. Later in this article, I will discuss using your own solution to treat your own Harewood, and if the water in the



A piece of harewood from my own stock

solution is stale and airless (as can happen to a solution that sits in a bottle for a long time in your workshop), the black colour and the Harewood effect may not become evident until the wood or the veneer has dried and been oxidized by the air in the room, although there is usually sufficient air trapped in the pores of the wood to allow the reaction to go to completion while still wet.

Of the three metallic sulphates mentioned, the most commonly used reaction occurs with the sulphate of iron (Ferrous Sulphate), as that one will react with the Tannin in the presence of only water and at normal room temperature. The others require the additional presence of an acid or Ammonia mordant and higher temperatures by heating.

Further, Copper Sulphate is a strong irritant and poison. This metallic sulphate-Tannin reaction which creates Harewood can occur by immersion of the wood in a solution of Ferrous Sulphate or it can occur naturally if the tree happens to be growing in soil that is rich in Ferrous Sulphate, in which case the chemical is picked up by the tree's roots and is transmitted throughout the tree by the flow of the sap. Slowly, it should be becoming obvious that if a tree contains no Tannin, it cannot become Harewood in this manner, and that if it does contain Tannin, the degree of the potential effect is dependent upon the degree of concentration of Tannin in the wood.

This leads us to the topic of how Tannin concentration varies throughout the tree while it is still growing. The wood in a tree is made up of the live growth cells that make up the outer sapwood and of the dead cells that make up the usually darker heartwood. It is in the sapwood that the flow of the sap, which is the tree's "blood" takes place. Within a given tree, the concentration of sap in the wood is not at a constant level throughout the year. A majority of species vary seasonally in their sap flow. This means that the sap rises in the spring to help the tree start its new growth and continues to flow throughout the growing season. In the fall, the sap begins to taper off to the mere trickle required during winter to maintain life during the period of dormancy. The more severe the variation between the season, the more pronounced this effect will be.

Why do we care? Very simple! Much of the Tannin in a given tree is in the sap (and hence in the sapwood) and when the concentration of sap in the sapwood drops, so does the wood's ability to be changed into Harewood. Because the sapwood is lighter in colour, it is primarily the sapwood which is used for commercial Harewood (and for Home-treated Harewood). Not all species vary on a seasonal cycle.

In some tropical species the sap flow varies according to the moon and many species must, for various reasons, be harvested according to lunar cycles. The reason for this paragraph is not that I expect everyone to be trying to decide on the best day of the year to plan galloping off into the forest with their little axes and chainsaws in search of prime Harewood material. Neither do I expect anyone to be successful in ordering veneers from suppliers and trying to request only veneers from trees felled during specific months of the year. What I do hope is that if and when you try treating your own Harewood, (as I'll describe in a couple more paragraphs) that you will understand how and why it is possible to take three different sheets of veneer of the same species and the same general figure, treat them identically with the same Harewood solution (Ferrous Sulphate), and end up with three totally different results—one almost unchanged, one piece of good Harewood tone, and one piece that falls just short of charcoal colour. The seasonal variation of the Tannin-laden sap, present in the wood at the time it was cut, is very often the explanation. A secondary reason for the variation in Tannin content that can occasionally be noticed, when treating consecutive sheets of veneer from the same flitch is that the pre-soaking or pre-steaming of the flitches to soften the wood (so that it can be cut into veneer by the veneer mills) can dissolve and remove some of the sap and hence some of the Tannin (both of which are water-soluble) from the outer sections of the flitch. Hence, veneer sheets cut from the outer sections may be noticeable lighter in colour than sheets from within the same flitch, when all are treated to form Harewood, as it is commercially available, is generally made from Sycamore and Maple in their various figures (F/C, Q/C, curly, fiddleback etc.), and the colour can vary from light grey to medium grey. Since Harewood is not a high-volume item, the treatment plants (where it is made) tend to work with only



Fiddleback harewood example

one or two species in order to simplify their labelling and storage problems and to maximize profits. Numerous species of wood contain Tannin in appropriate quantities to be treated as Harewood and hence a broader selection of combinations of tone, figure, and brilliance can become available to the marquetarian who is able to treat and to “make” his (or her) own Harewood.

To treat your own Harewood, you will first need to assemble the necessary materials.

The chemical you will need is Ferrous Sulphate powder or crystals which is available at around £10 per kilo from online sellers (like Amazon, eBay), from your pharmacist (on a special order) from some garden centres (it's a fertilizer too), and it's also available in one-ounce bottles at about £2 each from hobby shops as refills for home chemistry sets. (These “refill” displays often include other chemicals of interest to the woodworker such as raw powdered Tannin, Haematoxylin, etc..) You will also need some sort of container in which to soak the veneers. Don't use metal containers! Glass is an ideal material and I have found no problems with most plastics as container materials. For small jobs, use screw top jars large enough to hold your

piece(s) of veneer. For larger jobs you can step up to larger jars, wide-mouth jugs, photo processing trays, dishpans. and so forth. If you need a really large container, make one of wood and make it water-tight with plastic sheeting or fibreglass resin.

In any case, the container should be fitted with a cover to prevent loss of solution by evaporation. The third item needed will be flat boards (of dimensions equal to or slightly greater than the size or the veneers to be treated) to be used as cauls in drying the veneers and keeping them flat. Finally, you will need a supply of kitchen-type rolled paper towels, and they need not be exotic ones as long as they are absorbent.

The process is very simple. Mix the Ferrous Sulphate with warm water in the proportions of ½ pound of chemical to one U.S. gallon of water and allow it time to dissolve. Pour enough of the liquid into your container to cover your veneer and move the veneers about, turning them over also, to ensure that they are thoroughly wet and not insulated from the solution by any trapped air bubbles. At this point, do something else for a while! How long? It depends on the veneers. Thin one fortieth inch veneers of soft, open pored woods may take only a half hour, whereas thicker, harder, tight grained woods may require several days. To help you, place a scrap piece of the same veneer in the bath along with the main piece of veneer and periodically take it out. rinse it off in clear water and cut a sliver off with a knife to check for penetration through the centre. If you don't rinse it thoroughly, any remaining solution will enter the veneer along with the knife blade and fool you by darkening the newly exposed surface of the cut edge almost immediately.

We will continue with this fascinating series in the autumn edition of The Marquetarian. Most of this text is somewhat historic, so things like prices of materials and various components may (or will) have increased proportionally.



**IMPORTANT
ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR
INDEPENDENTS**

Due to health problems Robin, our Independent Members' Secretary has been obliged to resign his post.

Therefore we are looking for an Independent member to take over this important position. Could it be you who would be keen to look after the interests of your fellow Independents?

The job is not onerous, it's basically being a voice on behalf of all you Indies at our Executive Committee meetings & AGMs and writing the Indies Corner.

As those above meetings are now conducted via Zoom, no travelling is required, just a PC, iPad or smartphone.

If interested please contact the editor or a member of the Executive Committee.

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Leeds Marquetry Group

Back in the summer of 2002 we lost the affiliation of the Leeds Marquetry Group to our fold due to a dispute that has now been forgotten in the mists of time.

The Leeds Marquetry Group was sadly dropped from the group listings on the 'Visit the Groups' page, and went their own way from there. That was until last year when they approached us with the proposal to reaffiliate with the Marquetry Society. Needless to say, we, meaning me your editor especially, jumped at the chance to see the Leeds Marquetry Group back with us on a most friendly basis.

Many Marquetry Society members have asked me over the years "when will we see the Leeds Marquetry Group back with us again?".

Well, as you can see, that question has been answered and we now have the combined talents of that wonderful and very successful group back where they always belonged - alongside the rest of we groups and independent members as an affiliate in the Marquetry Society.

As from this edition of *The Marquetarian* the Leeds Group are back in their proper place in our "Visit the Groups" listing on page 1 of this journal.

It may be interesting to know that the very first listing of groups in *The Marquetarian* was in January 1954, edition number 5, and the groups listed then were: Birmingham, Bristol, Guildford, Leeds, London and Manchester. So, they were there with us 70 years ago. In fact, they are the only group from that initial listing that are still in existence.

Our Quentin Smith of the Staffordshire Group and myself, your editor had, for

many years been trying to entice them back to our marquetry brother and sisterhood, but until recently, things were not fully in place for the rejoining to take place. However, now that things have settled nicely and all systems are "go" so to speak, Leeds Marquetry Group are once again back with us.

So let me say for all of us a big "Welcome back Leeds Marquetry Group, it's lovely to see you back with us once again. You were most sorely missed".

But, enough of my chatter, let's meet some members of the Leeds group and see a little of their splendid work.



The Watercarrier by Pat Steval

*Displayed at 2021 Great
Yorkshire Show*

The picture you see at the bottom of the previous column is a favourite of mine. It was made by the superbly talented Pat Steval. Much of the Leeds Group marquetry output is up to Pat's exacting standards, so the rest of us have some rather stiff competition to grapple with here.

As you may guess, the Leeds Marquetry Group attends and puts on plenty of demonstrations and displays where they can promote the joys of marquetry. It is worth knowing that they also produce and sell their own beginner, intermediate and advanced level kits, which is very enterprising and helpful to those who want to try at marquetry.



Working on the next award winning piece

We have just mentioned the Leeds Marquetry Group's website. Well, it is true, they do indeed have one, and it is well worth a visit, especially their "Galleries of Work". And, for me, I often really enjoy looking through the work of past members, where will be found the work of one Colin Bentley, who has long been a personal favourite marquetry artist of mine. Okay, I agree that there had been a fair old amount of criticism concerning his finishing; but the artwork itself is simply outstanding in my opinion.

Finishing itself is something that can be done perfectly by machinery, but artistic interpretation such as Colin's own talent produced, simply cannot.



Members of the Leeds Group hard at work

Talking of kits, the Leeds Group make a very important notification about this topic on their website. It states "If you are thinking of buying a kit on say eBay, remember that the veneers will still need to be cut into the right shapes. It will also contain a template, instructions and backing MDF. It is NOT like a jigsaw puzzle. If it is an older kit the glue will probably have dried up and the knife may have been removed for safety, in case it is sold to an under age purchaser." Very wise words, well stated.



Godfrey's Tea & Coffee 'Cafe' - plus biscuits!

As with most groups, we must not overlook Godfrey's Tea & Coffee Cafe as seen on the previous page.

Now, what group these days hasn't got their own version of Godfrey's Tea & Coffee Cafe? We have at Redbridge, and I am sure that you other group members have the facility. Mind you, Godfrey's 'Cafe' looks rather splendid with full facilities and, especially, biscuits!

As I mentioned earlier, the Leeds Marquetry Group are the sole remaining group from our early days who are still running as a viable entity. So, looking back at The Marquetarian number 10 from April 1955, I was interested to see what their published group report from D.J.A. Rathbone actually said at the time, so here it is word for word as said by Mr Rathbone:

"The last few months have seen a great increase in our Group membership and this has been due to a great extent to the article and photograph of our Group activities in the Yorkshire Evening Post of 7th December, 1954. The Society and Marquetry as a hobby were given a very good write-up, methods of making pictures,



Some delicate work on a countryside scene

the veneers we use and our views on dyed and coloured woods was also given. Many letters were received from people who had seen this article and who wished to join us in the Society.

Exhibitions have, of course, been in the



Tigers by Pat Steval *Winning the public vote at Great Yorkshire show 2023*



Giving sage advice when requested

news and I myself was fortunate in being amongst the prize-winners in Lewis's National Competition.

The Leeds Group also held an exhibition in the Odeon Theatre during the third week of January, and this we consider to have been a great success. We had 75 pictures on view and many people were seen admiring them, indeed a total of 37 names appeared in the book provided for anyone requiring further details of our Group activities. One picture submitted by Mr. Green was 20 years old, and in contrast there were pictures by a new member, who two months ago had never done Marquetry. Our thanks must go to Mr. E. Clifford and his staff at the Odeon Theatre for the help they gave us to hold our Exhibition.

The Leeds Group have been invited by the Institute of Handicraft Teachers and College of Handicrafts to give an exhibition of their work at the 1955 Harrogate Conference. We feel that this is quite an honour, and we have, of course, agreed to exhibit in this Craftwork Exhibition. The Exhibition is to be opened by H.R.H. The Princess Royal in Harrogate Grammar School on April 13th and will be open for three days to Craft-teachers, Craft-teacher delegates to the National Conference and also to the General public. We feel sure that this will be of great interest to any members who will be in the Harrogate area at this time.

Finally, may I mention that our Annual General Meeting will be held in St. James'



*Thomas Chippendale's Diana and Minerva Commode.
Being a full size replica made by the late Ron Dickens*

Schoolroom, Leeds at 7.30 p.m. on 23rd March, 1955, and our meetings will be held on alternate Wednesdays from that date. Lectures and demonstrations on all subjects relating to Marquetry are to be held in the weeks to come."

And, lastly, back to the present day group website, do check out the work as seen above made by the late Ron Dickens. What a magnificent piece of work.

So, let's say a heartfelt welcome back to the Leeds Marquetry Group. It's great to have you back with us once more.



Certainly a hard working group

Current Information regarding the Leeds Marquetry Group.

We meet weekly throughout the year, and currently have 40 members, the majority of whom have joined as a result of our annual Beginners' Course. This runs for six two-hour sessions through February and March, where Beginners are tutored through the process of making one of our kit pictures, from initial cutting through to the final polishing. All equipment and materials are provided at cost. As a result, each year we get a few new members.

We have an active programme which includes a number of demonstration evenings (mostly aimed at our newer members, eg fragmentation, fine lines, framing, sand shading, marquetry, etc), and a very popular 'Question Time' panel session where senior colleagues answer questions from members - this becomes a very useful way of sharing ideas and techniques.

We maintain a good stock of equipment and veneers in 'the Shop', ably run by our Chair David Duxbury, enabling members to purchase materials at discount.

We usually run two annual projects (recent topics have been a carriage clock, a Winter/Christmas theme item, a new kit picture, and three veneer coasters) and two annual competitions: one at the Great Yorkshire Show, where we are invited to demonstrate each year (followed by a prize-giving dinner), and our Club competition (with three levels of ability) in December linked to our Christmas buffet. At the latter, prize vouchers for the Shop are given.

Thanks to Leeds Marquetry Group secretary Steve Amos for this up to date information about the group.



Pat Steval starts work on a new masterpiece



In the 2001 National Exhibition Martin Mack of the Leeds Group got a 1st in class 1 with 'Castle Museum, York'



Jude Hoseason of the Leeds Group attained the winning entry recently with this superb marquetry clock

GALLAHER MARQUETRY PANELS

Back in about mid January this year, your editor was contacted by a representative of the Gallaher Group (a tobacco company) to ask if we would be interested in acquiring their rather large marquetry panels as they were moving premises from Weybridge in Surrey to central London and would no longer have the room required to display them.

I mentioned this offer to our President Enrico Maestranzi, and needless, to say, he jumped at the chance. These will be terrific to display at our forthcoming International Marquetry Exhibition.

And so, the offer was duly taken up, and the following story shows their progress from storage to our International Marquetry Exhibition.

Although today these panels are rather 'politically incorrect' and certainly 'not woke', they do nonetheless reflect attitudes at the time of their build and are of historical interest only rather than reflecting any attitudes of today. We purely feature them as pieces of superb marquetry, there is no underlying message of any sort with them at all. We do not promote the theme of the designs or the underlying message of tobacco products being of any benefit to mankind (or womankind of course) in general.

So, having stated our position regarding the themes of these historic panels, let's look at their journey from original commission to ending up at our International Marquetry Exhibition, and then, their future prospects.

These panels were originally commissioned from the Robert Dunn Marquetry Company in Chelmsford in 1965 by the Gallaher Tobacco Company for display in their reception hall at their company headquarters located in Weybridge Surrey, after various moves at Cannon Street and Kingsway, London.



The panels in situ in Gallaher's reception hall in Weybridge, Surrey

William Lincoln, a former president of the Marquetry Society, wrote about these panels in his famous book "The art and practice of marquetry" and stated: "WESTWARD HO! London. Two of three large wall panels in architectural marquetry created by Robert Dunn, and designed by George Ramon, to illustrate the early history of tobacco growing and its shipment. They are installed in the reception hall at Granite House in Cannon Street, City of London at the head office of Gallaher Ltd. The smaller panel portrays, in the form of an open book, the famous passage from Charles Kingsley's story of Westward Ho! In the three pictures there are more than 20,000 separate cut pieces of veneer, cut from over 70 different woods. The book panel measures 3.5 ft square."



Marquetry book with Kingsley text

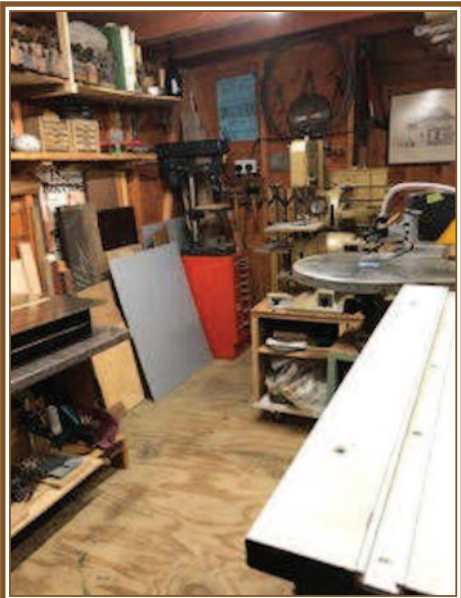
Okay, that's the history surrounding these somewhat famous panels, so let's now see what happens to them on their journey to our International Marquetry Exhibition 2024 at Hatfield Park.

As you see in the photo on the right, the panels were well protected in their custom made packing cases, and they were delivered in a rather large lorry. Of course, they were unsurprisingly heavy, as Enrico, Ivor and Ivan found out for themselves!

Enrico had volunteered to store them in his workshop, but to get them in there was indeed rather tricky. As you can see in the photo top left opposite page, the entrance to the workshop is a little tricky to get into with such lengthy panels. But they are a plucky trio and did their best to accomodate the panels under rather difficult circumstances.



The panels being delivered in their packing cases



Inside Enrico's Workshop



Enrico shows you the actual size of these Gallaher panels - they are certainly huge to say the least!



Entrance to Enrico's Workshop



Detail from first panel

Here you see, what we are calling, the first panel. It features much of what was tobacco production in around the late 1700's to around the 1880's.

No mechanical machinery here, it was all human toil that produced the finished tobacco leaf. The native people to the region were tasked with the production processes.



First panel loaded on a trolley prior to inspection and storage

The design used for these panels was produced by George Ramon, who was a stage designer by profession. The panels certainly show some inventive and imaginative work. They incorporate all of the main themes associated with tobacco production in its' historical context. It has to be remembered that the panels were commissioned by a tobacco company, so the

themes are consistent with the requirements of that company in the 1960's when political correctness or woke never existed. The high quality of the marquetry work and veneer choice are exemplary to say the least. Sadly today, some of those wonderful veneers used are no longer available to us, being such ones as Rosewood etc. Many more photos overleaf.



View of second panel



Detail from second panel



Detail from second panel

Here we have a few photos taken from another of the panels. We also see the corner of President Enrico's veneer store in his workshop where much of the renovation work on the Gallaher panels was carried out. The view of the tobacco plant itself above is perfectly detailed. The veneers used by Mr and Mrs Dunn in the 1960s do the job wonderfully. How many of those beautiful veneers are available to us today? Not too many I would assume, all due to CITES restrictions sadly.



Veneer store in Enrico's workshop



Detail from panel below



Detail from panel below

So far you have only seen a handful of the photographs we have on file of these magnificent examples of the work of the Dunn family marquetry business in the 1960s.

There is currently, at the time of writing, a lot more work being done to these wonderful panels to get them ready for display at our International Marquetry Exhibition at Hatfield Park. With any luck these panels, together with our own magnificent exhibition entries will encourage plenty of visitors to the exhibition to wish to try their hand at the enjoyable hobby of marquetry. We look forward to welcoming them as new members of the Marquetry Society.

Many more photos with our autumn edition of *The Marquetarian*.



Third section of panel prior to inspection and storage



Some work area in Enrico's workshop

Finishing

In the spring edition of The Marquetarian we said that would follow up on that first of this series of historic finishing articles. It may be interesting to note that, even from our fairly early days, we did include full page advertisements from manufacturers of finishes, glues, veneer sales and all other paraphernalia associated with the art and craft of marquetry.

One of the finishing variety of advertisements which cropped on a regular basis was the full page, inner front cover one for Furniglas Home French Polish.

This 'advert' went through several changes over the years, and you see some of those changes on the opposite page ranging from 1955 top left to summer 1964 bottom right. They were with us until the Winter edition of 1977. In fact, Furniglas advertised with us from edition 22 in April 1958 until edition 101 in the winter of 1977 - a total of 79 Furniglas advertisements in all. A rather good number, it must have been very popular with our earlier membership.

Okay, enough about the 'adverts' for now, let's look at those earlier members views and guidance on finishing. We start with the thoughts on finishing by Douglas Waters who was one of the original six who actually started the Marquetry Society back in August 1952.

So, over to you Douglas: "*We can now continue with the final sanding using only a FLOUR GRADE paper very lightly, until the satin smooth surface is obtained.*

Now we must decide on the type of finish we require - high gloss, eggshell or flat. This is purely a matter of personal choice, but my own preference has always been for an eggshell gloss. I do not propose in this article to do more than list the various types

of finishes. There are many excellent books on the market that deal in detail with this and all the methods of polishing, and the serious worker would do well to invest in one of them. I would like to mention one method of preliminary polishing which I have found to be very successful and easy to do.

The various veneers used in marquetry all have different degrees of porosity and to obtain an even finish it is first necessary to seal the grain of the picture and thus obtain a surface which is perfectly smooth and which will be even in its absorption of the polish. This may be done by the use of a cellulose "sanding sealer" a proprietary product consisting of a white powder in a cellulose solution. It is quickly and thinly applied to the surface with a clean rag, rubbing well in, allowing it to dry for about half an hour. The picture will then have a shiny surface and this should be lightly sanded with a flour grade paper until all the traces of the gloss have been removed. The surface will now be covered with a fine white powder which can easily be wiped off with a soft cloth. Repeat the procedure and burnish with a cloth and you should have a surface as smooth as glass which can either be waxed or French polished. Note - sanding sealer should not be used when it is intended to oil polish the picture.

The sanding sealer has no colouring effect on the picture, it being completely transparent when sanded, it does however bring out the natural beauty on the various grains.

In conclusion, here is a list of finishes which have all been used successfully by marquetry workers:—

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SETS CONTAINING—

4 ozs. Polish plus Catalyst
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ALL IN ONE CARTON 6/6

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REPAIRS (without stripping old polish) surface blemishes in furniture: white discolourations, scratches, dents, chips, cigarette burns, pale patches, damaged veneers, etc. Also produces the master craftsman's finish from raw wood.

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For Normal Use:

FINISH

White French Polish

Bleached Beeswax

Eggshell Varnish

Raw Linseed Oil

Cellulose (Gloss or Matt)

METHOD of APPLICATION

Brush or Rubber

Cloth or stiff brush

* *Brush*

* *Rag*

Spray

And For Heat and Waterproof Use

FINISH

Rubbing Varnish "Valspar" Clear

Lacquer

METHOD of APPLICATION

* *Brush*

* *Brush*

**These have a slight darkening effect and are therefore very useful for marquetry work on reproducing furniture or where an antique appearance is desired.*

It is useful to remember that gloss finishes give the best degree of protection, and they can always be "softened" by rubbing down lightly with fine pumice powder.

This next article is actually a Reader's Letter from 1956 written by a Mr T. E. Warren of Reading, here is what he had to say on the subject:

"There are several ways in which you can finish your Marquetry picture, such as eggshell finish, honey wax finish, bright finish, or semi-matt finish. From my experience as a professional French polisher—having dealt with quite a number of different veneered surfaces in my time in the trade—I don't think that there is any better finish than the honey wax or the semi-matt one which you can obtain with the use of wax.

First obtain a block of bleached white wax from any first-class oil stores. Most books

advise that this should then be heated, but it is not necessary to do this. All that you have to do is to shred the wax up, with a very sharp knife, as fine as possible, and put it into a tin or glass jam jar. Then pour a pint of white spirit—"turps", I would suggest turps substitute—into the jar and you will find that the wax dissolves very quickly and after a day will be ready for you to use. I would like to mention that the thinner your mixture is, the better it will be, but don't make it too thin or runny.

Before using the wax polish, you should prepare the surface of the picture by using 00 grade sandpaper or Garnet paper until the surface of the picture is perfectly smooth. Then give a coat of clear white French polish to seal the grain. When dry fill in the grain with Plaster of Paris and rub off the surplus when thoroughly dry. You will then need to oil it over with some white oil—not linseed, this will have a tendency to discolour your veneer.

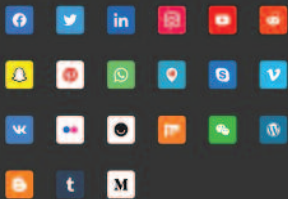
After you have done this and are satisfied that you have wiped off the surplus oil from the surface- this is very important as if not done will cause the picture to "start" or "sweat" after polishing and will spoil the finish—you can start applying the polish.

Use a piece of white, clean, rag and allow the polish to soak in well. Then with a piece of flannel burnish the surface. This means a lot of hard work for the finish improves with the amount of burnishing you do. If the picture has too much gloss after you have done this you can dull it down with a very fine grade of wire wool, fine pumice powder, emery powder or silex. This will give you a finish which looks very effective indeed.

I would point out that the powders should be brushed on in the direction of the grain and not across it as otherwise scratches will show and spoil the appearance.

If any member wishes to have more information on this way of finishing a picture I shall be only too pleased to help them."

More historic finishing advice to come with our Autumn edition of The Marquetarian.



Social Media Officer Karen Russo



At the time of writing this report we now have well over 600 FaceBook members. But do note that these are only FaceBook members, not Marquetry Society members, as some of them have mistakenly assumed.

There has been some amazing work appearing there, such as this marquetry piece (yes, it is indeed marquetry as we know it). This is very finely detailed and it represents Ares and Aphrodite in an amorous embrace. How such close and detailed cutting has been achieved is amazing. From what I understand, it was all hand



cut. That must have taken a really steady hand to say the least!

Our FaceBook page now invites visitors and contributors to the page to become new members of the Marquetry Society in an eMag membership capacity. This gives them the opportunity to become actual Marquetry Society members at a reduced membership cost. That eMag membership does not get a printed copy of this magazine, they only get an electronic PDF copy sent via email.

By the time you read this report the International Marquetry Exhibition will have concluded. I hope to have met and said hello to a great many of you. Your comments will have been noted and advisory ones will, with any luck, have now been put into practice.

Karen.

VIC'S MARQUETRY TIPS

Do you suffer with a sticky mess left after removing a piece of tape that has been left too long on your piece of marquetry? I often do.

Well, here's a method for removing adhesive residue left behind by sticky and masking tape. Take a clean lint-free rag, soak it in turpentine and apply it to the residue, making sure that all the residue is covered. Let it stand for about one or two minutes, depending on the amount of residue. Then resoak the rag and gently rub the residue and it will all disappear. If any should remain, repeat the procedure until it has all gone.

After all the residue has gone, wipe the surface dry with a dry clean cloth and let the object stand for about one hour to allow the turpentine to evaporate.

The result is a clean surface ready for the final finishing and as a bonus, you get a preview of the appearance the piece will have when the final finish is applied.

One word of CAUTION!! Don't soak the piece too heavily as this tends to soften the wood and takes longer to dry before the final finish can be applied. Experience will provide the correct amount, but, for the novice, caution is our byword here.

Independents' Corner

As you are now probably aware, our Independent Member's Secretary Robin was taken ill not long before the spring edition of *The Marquetarian* went to print. Robin had submitted his piece for that edition, but sadly had to retire from the post shortly after.

We added a request for a new Independent Member's Secretary to come forward from our Independent's ranks, but so far, no volunteers. If you have the hankering to become the voice of your fellow independent members, and there are some hundreds of you out there, why not come forward and join your other officers in the Executive Committee and become the mouthpiece for the interests of all of you, our independent members?

You will certainly be most welcome, that's for sure. Just get in touch with any of the committee members and we will set the wheels in motion for you. All contact details are on the inner front cover listing.

In the meantime, your editor and other contributors from the executive will be your temporary mouthpiece until a new Independents' Secretary comes along.

Many of you Independent Members (Indies) out there on your own are often looking around for advice and guidance on various aspects of marquetry, most often on where to purchase veneers and equipment such as cutting blades and glue.

Group members naturally have such things available from their group shops, but Indies have no such luxuries.

All is not lost there, just either email: info@marquetry.org with your question or ring one of us and we will be only too pleased to help you.

Designs for marquetry projects. Well, if you have access to the internet, go to our own website, sign in to the "Enter Protected Area" box at the bottom of the Independents Page, using the current password found on page 4 of *The Marquetarian* and then check out the online designs library we have there. We have many hundreds of designs available there and they are all presized at A4, so will fill a sheet of A4 paper natively when printed. Some of the designs also have a recommended veneer list to accompany them, so very helpful to those having difficulties selecting appropriate veneers.

Veneers, these days, can easily be purchased via the internet, the vendor on the opposite page is one such supplier. I have used this supplier often. Glues and finishes, plus sanding and/or finishing papers and all suchlike things can be found on Amazon (for example) so, no problems there. For marquetry tutorials, there are Peter White's tutorial DVDs of course, plus for those going online, there are copious tutorials of all grades to be found on sites such as YouTube. Just check them out.

Still can't find that perfect veneer?

Then why not visit Wood Veneers ebay shop at
www.ebay.co.uk/str/woodveneers
where you can find everything you could possibly
need from veneer boxes, sample packs,
individual samples, veneer tape and so much more.

If you can't find what you need from our 1500
plus listings just contact Wood Veneers and
we will aim to cover your bespoke requirements

Phone : 01277 890616

Email : info@woodveneers.co.uk

MARQUETRY TOOLS

Magnifying Lamp

A very highly useful piece of equipment for the enthusiastic marquetarian. It sure helps if you are attempting a miniature picture. You need all the help you can get hold of when working that small. The light and the magnification really do make all the difference.

These magnifying lamps are available in all sizes, magnifications and prices. You can also get them with screw clamps on them for fixing to the edge of your desk or work table, thus making them fully secure and unlikely to be knocked over.

The others have weighted and solid bases. These you can move about on your desk or work table as needed. I use one of these.

These days many, or probably most of them, are powered by LEDs rather than fluorescent or incandescent lamps.



But, whichever you opt for, this is a very useful piece of marquetry equipment.

The 2023 International Pictures

Thanks go to Peter White for taking the Photographs



Left: 116 - Class 1 - 31 x 23 cms

“Puddle (aft Escher)” by Mike Hale of the St. Albans Group

PG: *The veneers worked well together to produce an attractive abstract picture and some intricate cutting is done well. Not sure how some of the patterns in the veneer were achieved.*

EM: *Interesting design.*

Ed: *This is a jolly good piece of abstract work that rather caught my eye. The background veneer is fascinating, it has a rather spectacular grain pattern.*

Right: 748 - Class 7B - No size given

“Mountain Landscape” by Zsolt Nagy an Independent Member

EM: *An outstanding piece of work.*

Ed: *An excellent example of applied marquetry. It looks to me like a box or a container of some sort, but I can't see any catches or hinges on it.*

So, I could be wrong and it is a solid chunk of timber with delicate marquetry decoration. Perhaps Zsolt will write in and tell us, I would really like to know.

The mountain picture on the top is beautifully cut and mounted. Some nicely delicate marquetry seen here.



Judges' Comments

The initials used for the Judges are:

(EM) *Enrico Maestranzi*

(NM) *Neil Micklewright*

(PG) *Philip Green*

(Ed) *Our Editor's alternative views*

(AM) *Artistic Merit Judge*

The judges' comments are taken from their own notes. Editorial notes are based on different selection parameters to those of the exhibition judges and are related to the exhibit's presentation in this journal. However, where elements of any 'non-awards' work stand out to the editorial eye, these will be mentioned in the text.

Right 515 - Class 5 - 38 x 47cms

“Micklegate Bar, York (after John Chapman)” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

EM: *Superb.*

PG: *A lovely very busy market town scene with lots of fine detail work skilfully carried out.*

Ed: *As always, Les has come up with yet another masterpiece. The perspective and detail is superb, it really takes your eye into the scene. Wouldn't you love to explore those shops and streets? I bet the ale houses would be fascinating to visit.*



Left: 811 - Class 8 - 30 x 23cms

“Robin” by Ivor Bagley of the St. Albans Group

PG: *Good use of the three veneers to produce this excellent portrait..*

Ed: *Okay, this is just three veneers, but doesn't it look as if there is more? But there isn't, it is just the three.*

You can recognise the sitter straight away, it is a superb likeness. It just goes to show that you can indeed, make a very convincing marquetry portrait from no more than three different veneers. A nice one.

Right: 126 - Class 1 - No size given

“Tranquility” by David Kelmanson of the Sutton Coldfield Group

EM: *Some rather nice work here.*

PG: *Captured a lovely peaceful country scene with nicely cut houses, the overhanging tree branches are a little heavy and a different veneer choice could have been better.*

Ed: *Very clean cutting here, no noticeable gaps anywhere to be seen. Grain direction used to good effect. Nicely observed.*



Right: 403 - Class 4 - No size given

“Belle Toute Lighthouse” by Penny Greaves of the Meopham Group

NM: *Nice picture - lacked contrast. Light veneer joints are difficult to keep clean. More care needed for next year!*

EM: *Nice Art Deco style of border and marquetry.*

PG: *Like the way the natural veneers have been used to construct this picture, would have been okay with a little less frame.*

Ed: *Ah yes, I recognised this view instantly. Been here many a time. Once seen you can't forget this view. I think they even used it for a TV series at one time.*

Nicely done with grain direction contributing to a convincing perspective. Excellent.



Left: 744 - Class 7B - 30 x 25 cms

“AIFN Box” by Carol Martin of the St. Albans Group

NM: *AIFN - a special box? A lesson for the sand shapers - well done*

EM: *A well made box.*

PG: *A well designed box showing good marquetry skills. I like the central banner and lettering particularly. The small miniatures inside are nicely done too.*



Ed: *Is that a glass top inset into the lid of this box? It looks probable from the photo. We are left wondering what AIFN denotes - could it be “Association of International Foods and Nutrition?” - I rather doubt it though.*

Right: 113 - HC Class 1 - 58 x 38cms

“Tranquility” by Joyce Hopkinson of the St. Albans Group

EM: *Some good work here.*

PG: *Yes, has captured the tranquil scene with nicely cut work. A little more thought with choice of veneer for the reflections would have given a better overall impression.*

Ed: *It is indeed a pleasingly restful scene, very calming. Accurate cutting with no visible glue lines. Well done, it deserved its award.*



Right: 518 - Class 5 - No size given

“A European Eagle Owl” by Colin Roberts of the Chelmsford Group

EM: *Well-chosen veneers.*

PG: *Like the use of natural veneers, which are skillfully cut in to produce the plumage on this owl, and the background shows the bird off really well.*

Ed: *Another of Colin's well crafted marquetry pictures. Lots of fine detail and very clean cutting. The owl seems to be studying something in the distance with interest. European eagle-owls combine fast and powerful flights with shallow wing beats and long, fast glides. They also soar on updrafts, displaying a type of flight similar to that of soaring hawks like the red-tailed hawk.*



Left: 533 - HC Class 5 - 20 cms

“R.I.P. Queenie” by Ivor Bagley of the St. Albans Group

EM: *This picture of our late Queen is very convincing. The likeness is spot on. The perforated scalloped edges of the stamp are superbly done with total accuracy - not a perforation out of place.*

PG: *A lovely piece of work, an excellent portrait of her “Late Majesty” and the banner at the bottom is beautifully cut.*

Ed: *You cannot mistake this portrait for anyone else, it is so accurate. Nice work on the banner, accompanied with some beautifully constructed text. Good award winner.*



Right: 320 - Class 3 - 21 x 28cms

“A Village in Kent” by Allen Horrocks of the Sutton Coldfield Group

PG: *This quiet village scene has some nicely cut houses*

EM: *It gives a pleasing picture.*

Ed: *A pleasant Kent village scene which depicts a sight you can still find often in that country. Nice and calming when compared to the hustle and bustle one encounters in the cities like London - that's for sure!*



Right: 712 - Class 7A - 59 x 47cms - “Our Father” by Ivor Bagley of the St. Albans Group

NM: *There is only one person who could think of doing this - great idea, great marquetry*

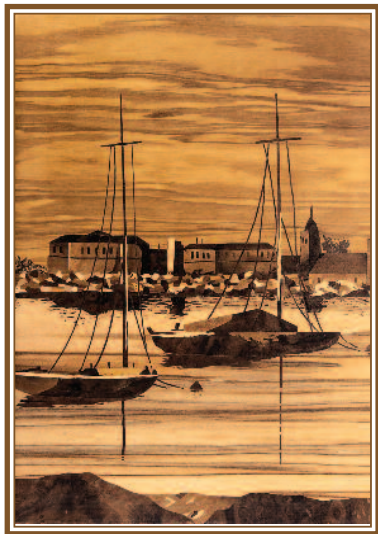
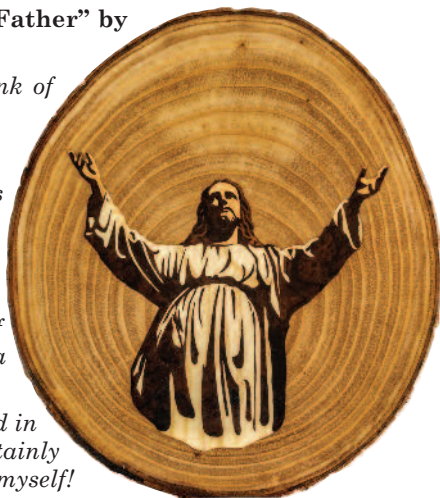
EM: *Beautiful work from Ivor.*

PG: *A beautifully cut figure of Christ. It has achieved a natural look to clothes and hair. The shadows are well cut to produce the face.*

Ed: *Inset with the help of a Dremel I believe.*

Another of Ivor's specialities is this style of work. Very inventive and somewhat unique in a marquetry sense.

Who can forget those guitars Ivor has decorated in a similar way over the last few years? I certainly haven't, being something of a guitar fruitcake myself!



Left: 802 - Class 8 - 29 x 32cms - “The Monastery” by Malcolm Smith of the Chelmsford Group

NM: *Three veneer pictures don't come much better than this - unfortunately one did this year. Definitely one for the 'art lovers' amongst us*

EM: *Shows excellent cutting and veneer choice.*

PG: *Good use of the chosen veneers and excellent cutting skills has produced this very atmospheric scene.*

Ed: *A most pleasing tranquil scene which blends the three veneers in a most picturesque way. The golden hue of the scene gives the impression of twilight, very restful. One of those pictures that would give a most calming effect to any room in which it was hung. The grain patterns of the veneers are wonderfully used. In any other year this would have been an award winner in my opinion.*

Right: 705 - Class 7A - No size given - “John's Box” by Gail Munden of the Chelmsford Group

EM: *This box is really good.*

PG: *An attractive geometrically decorated box with good balance of the design.*

Ed: *Yes, this is a lovely box. Very clean and beautifully applied marquetry.*

The sheen of this box gives the impression of a wonderful satin finish, it looks superb with a smooth tactile looking finish. Excellent work.



Right: 812 - Class 8 - 51 x 23cms

“Nice Ups” by Gavin Turnbull of the Scotland Group

EM: *It's all in the careful use made of three veneers only. Nicely done.*

Ed: *A very attractive and, shall I say, simplistic style of marquetry work. Just a few lines defines a most attractive young lady - very clever design.*

Cleanly cut with a smooth and flat finish.



Left: 401 - 3rd Class 4 - 24 x 26cms

“Model in White (after Vettriano)” by Diane Etheridge of the Chelmsford Group

NM: *What looks like a simple picture, isn't (the devil is in the details). The pictures within the picture, the books and last, but*

not least, the veneer for the slate fireplace. I liked this a lot and I bet Jack would too.

PG: *Has captured a wistful look on the model's face with some fine cutting of the veneers.*

Ed: *A beautifully balanced version of a Vettriano picture. The grey harewoods used for the shading on the white cloth are just the right depth of grey. The mix of the slightly tanned harewoods reflect the colours from the models upper body and arm.*

Right: 605 - Class 6A - miniature

“The Young One” by Brian Freeman of the Sutton Coldfield Group

PG: *A super miniature of a galloping zebra, really captures the movement of the animal, a great use of fragmentation to give the background.*

Ed: *Quality in miniature work, once again, shows through in Brian's artistry in this genre of marquetry. The fragmentation and mix of colours in it, is very convincingly done. The appearance of grass and foliage is quite amazing. The size of the fragmentation particles must be microscopic. It sure does work.*



Right: 318 - Class 3 - 54 x 39cms

“Facing Each Other” by Gavin Turnbull of the Scotland Group

EM: *Clever picture well executed. Veneer choice superb*

PG: *Nicely cut piece work with an interesting frame, takes much looking at to 'get it'.*

Ed: *A wonderful idea of two birds in flight facing each other and in the process making a pretty girl's face. Gavin sure does come up with some very interesting ideas for marquetry subjects. Excellent.*



Left: 519 - HC Class 5 - No Size Given

“HMS Victory Preparing to Sail” by Colin Roberts of the Chelmsford Group

PG: *This beautifully cut galleon is worthy of recognition, the detailed work is of a very high order.*

EM: *A study in detail work.*

NM: *Much to admire in this picture - a study in fine detail cutting.*

Ed: *Colin sure does some really good nautically-themed marquetry work. Quality cutting. Note the small row boat in the lower right corner it certainly gives scale to HMS Victory.*

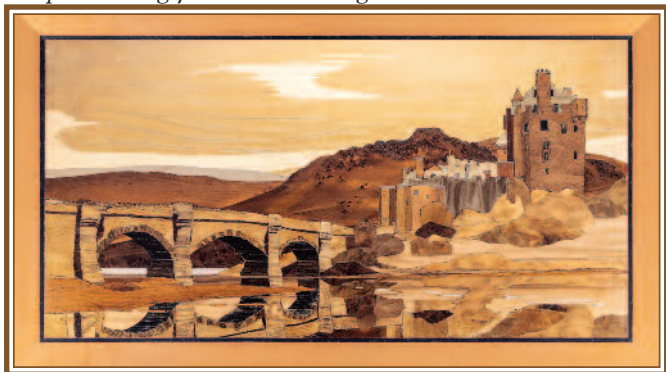
Right: 510 - 1st Class 5 - 18 x 21cms “Eilean Donan Castle” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

EM: *A truly believable landscape showing first class cutting.*

NM: *Outstanding work.*

PG: *Natural veneers are used well in this picture, particularly the hills in the background and the reflections seen on the water.*

Ed: *A really good landscape picture. The sky veneer in particular certainly does a superb job. A jolly good composition. Magnificent picture.*





Left: 139 - Class 1 - No size “An Unexpected Encounter” by Zsolt Nagy Independent

PG: *Much good work in this piece achieving depth to the scene by the skillful use of the natural veneer for the background. Deserved some recognition in what was a very large competitive class. Perhaps a little more contrast in the colours would have given a better overall effect.*

Ed: *I do like the faded appearance of the trees and leaves in the background, it really works superbly well. Excellent.*

Right: 702 - Class 7A - 21 x 29cms

“A Coastal Inlet” by Malcolm Smith of the Chelmsford Group

PG: *The combination of coloured and selected natural veneers works beautifully, an excellent piece of work to produce this idyllic coastal scene.*

Ed: *A very clever design idea. It works really well with a most pleasing presentation. It's a most calming coastal scene.*



Judges' Notes on the Cover Pictures

Front Cover - 535 - Art Veneers Award Class 5 - “Just One Run Needed” by Jean Robinson of the Sutton Coldfield Group

EM: *A beautiful scene.*

NM: *Another fine piece of work.*

PG: *A very busy picture with lots of work to admire both in the cutting and use of veneers.*

Ed: *A most splendid depiction of a country-based cricket match.*

Sitting back watching the match on a lazy Sunday afternoon with a couple of your chums and a G & T or two, or perhaps a pint or two of beer, and watching the runs mounting up for your chosen side. What a way to while away a few hours.

Back Cover - 808 - Class 8 - “Daniel Craig as James Bond” by Les Dimes of the Harrow Group

EM: *A quality portrait.*

PG *Has captured the menace of 007 with an interesting angular cutting of the veneers..*

Ed: *Just been watching one of the Daniel Craig James Bond films, and I have to say that Les has captured Daniel's 007 perfectly. The nomenclature “licensed to kill” seems to fit this portrait of Les's perfectly. Daniel, or should I say James, looks to be prepared to dish out the ‘just desserts’ to the bad guys. Menacing or what? A nicely moody portrait which works perfectly for the chosen subject. Well done.*



Readers Letters



Storing Veneers

Hello Alan,

I have only recently become a member of the Marquetry Society and, at the moment, I am mainly concentrating on getting together my materials and tools etc. One item I am about to make is some sort of veneer store either in the form of a box or set of racks.

Could you please advise me as to the best way of doing this to keep my veneers together and in good condition. Could you also tell me what the measurements of the largest single piece of veneer are that I am likely to obtain. I would like to know this so not to make this item of storage too small.

Michael Thompson

Hi Michael,

Thank you for your letter. Taking your last question first. The largest size piece of veneer you are likely to buy could be 10 feet x 2 feet so the first question you will have to answer for yourself is are you prepared to cut this down to say 3ft. lengths? Full leaf is the standard size of veneer that Capital Crispin supply.

The best way of storing veneer is flat on shelves weighted down with a flat board and kept in a temperature and humidity-controlled atmosphere. Not many would go to those lengths, but do try and keep them in a cool room, out of the sun and it is worth putting the larger pieces under boards to help keep them flat. I would prefer a rack system to a box (except for very small pieces say less than a sq. ft. in area). Now where you go from there will depend on the amount of veneer you have and the amount of work you are likely to do. Estimate for about 10 times more than you have now and the rack will be full in a few years' time so allow for further expansion. I would try and keep any shelves to a minimum of 18" wide - 2ft. would be better. Chipboard is quite suitable.

Any member who has made veneer storage systems for themselves are invited to send details to this magazine for the benefit of others.

Alan.

Winners' Certificates

Dear Editor,

The annual National Exhibition must be the high point of the Marquetarian's year, but with the opportunity of submitting a winning entry open only to a few. Every society has its elite, which must be encouraged, but many active and valuable members at club level may never win recognition for their work. I believe that interest wains when you know your entry does not reach the very high standards required even at local level. Would it not be a good idea to extend the range of certificates to include for mounting or cutting etc; then perhaps a more representative number of entries would be submitted. With a wider range of entries potential members would be able to relate and may become our future elite.

Keith Watkins.

Dear Keith,

From a practical point of view, it would seem to me to be difficult to extend the range of the classes to much more than we have now. We cater for absolute beginners, intermediate and advanced marquetarians; for those who like to do tiny pictures, or pieces of furniture or parquetry. At the coming National at Hatfield Park the number of prizes that the judges can award in each class is of a suitable amount to reflect the quality of the work. Techniques such as cutting and mounting are all taken into consideration when the judges assess a picture. In any competition there are winners and losers, but I would have thought that there were few marquetarians who make a picture solely for competition, most I suspect make a picture for their own

enjoyment and then enter it for the competition if they are satisfied with it. If it doesn't win a prize one can usually see why it didn't and endeavour to make the next one that bit better or the confidence to attempt something a bit more difficult - the 'if Joe Soap from Cuttem on the Mud can do it, so can I' attitude. Perhaps this again raises the question, is Marquetry a sport or a pastime?

Group members do have the advantage in that they have local competitions which are smaller and more intimate than our National. Worst off of course are the non-group members who rarely see anyone else's work except as photographs in a magazine or on the internet (our website for example) - not the same thing at all as seeing the actual picture.

Alan.

Useful earlier articles

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your continuing good work for the Society and the Marquetarian.

Firstly, I'd like to say how much I treasure the latest issues of the Marquetarian. I'm sure most non group members appreciate the types of articles written and would welcome more special issues on certain topics. I am sad at the strong reaction against such 'beginners' issues (mostly from Group Members). It is obvious that they have a substantially greater opportunity for seeing and using, not only equipment, but methods, materials etc. (including back issues of Marquetarians) of other members in their group. I say to them, spare a thought for isolated non-group members - especially new members who rely on the journal and their own resources. The first fretsaw machines I saw, were at the earlier National Exhibitions some years ago, and then an article a few issues ago. My copy featuring a home-built donkey saw will be the most used until I've built my own machine.

You recently mentioned that you have made "Marquetry for Beginners" available as a PDF computer file. Would it then be possible to gather the best articles

from the early Marquetarians and have them printed in booklet form or in downloadable PDF form? I'm sure this would be an invaluable asset to all members who have missed out on a lot of good information stored in those early issues. I'd be willing to pay a lot more than a tenner for such a booklet or PDF.

I've seen mentioned a book called 'Introduction to Marquetry.' Could you send me details of this book and others that I may not have heard about. I have 'The Art and Practice of Marquetry' and have sent away for "The Modern Marquetry Handbook." Maybe a listing of these books on Marquetry would be useful for other members.

Now my problem! I've just laid a picture using sycamore, and after removing the tape and sanding, I found some black 'spots' in the wood. Is this the tannin in the wood, reacting with some metal dust (or particle in the chipboard I used as a baseboard!) (There was an early article on Harewood back in the 1980s I have been told, could that be reprinted?). I presume there is no way of removing the spots, but is there any way of preventing this from happening again, i.e. removing tannin from the wood before cutting?

P.Higgs

Hi P. Higgs,

Yes, I guess that the stains in your wood are the reaction with some metal in the veneer (broken knife points?) or particles from the press, glue spreader, steel wool etc. etc. Try touching them with dilute acidic solution. This could remove them as it will take all the colour from harewood. I know of no way to remove the tannin from the veneer. Try and find the cause - the source of the iron particles. It could also be glue.

I'll see what can be done about reprinting useful old articles. The main problem here is the time needed for researching them. There are now many thousands of pages from 70+ years of Marquetarians to search through to find appropriate articles!

Alan.

SAND SCORCHING

Using a Laser Cutter

Part 2

by Leo Sarsam

In this mini-series we are looking at producing the 'laser cutter sand scorching effect' controller program using the CorelDraw software. But, there are other vector graphics programs you can adapt for the same end result which will work as well for this job. A piece of freeware is Inkscape, this works well.

You can download and install it for free from the following web address:

<https://inkscape.org/release/inkscape-1.3.2/windows/64-bit/msi/?redirected=1>

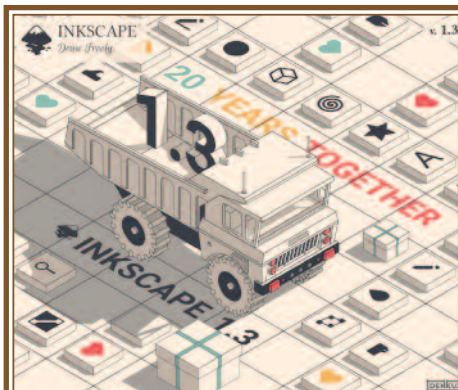
As earlier mentioned we will be using the LightBurn software when it comes to the burn stage with the laser cutter. CorelDraw is being used for producing the end bitmap graphic for the LightBurn program to use to control the laser burn.



Conventional sand shading tools

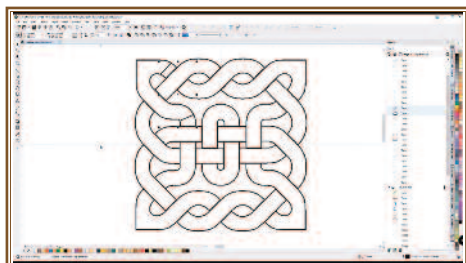


Celtic design using laser cutter sand shading for 3D effect

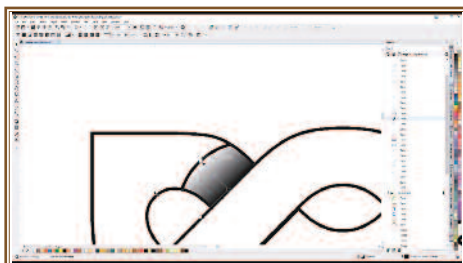


Inkscape freeware Graphics Suite

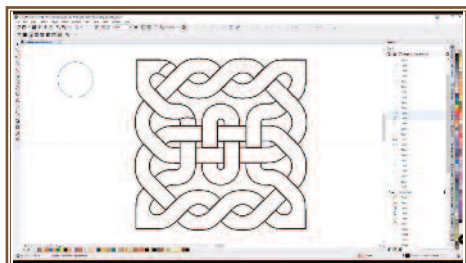
CorelDraw and other vector graphics programs will produce very linear and perfectly graduated effects which will look superb when it comes to the end result. But, if you are steady with your mouse or graphics tablet, you could produce a likeable result freehand with a standard bitmap graphics program such as Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro, or one of the many others out there. One useful freeware program which is very popular is Gimp. This one gives excellent results which are comparable with most others.



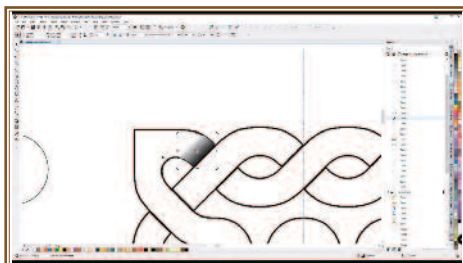
1. Shading areas are selected



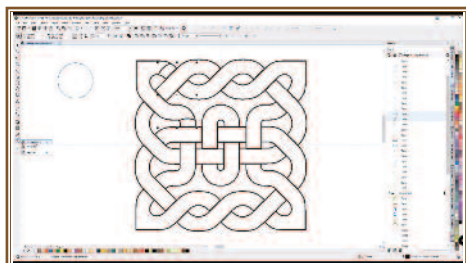
5. Gradient rotated



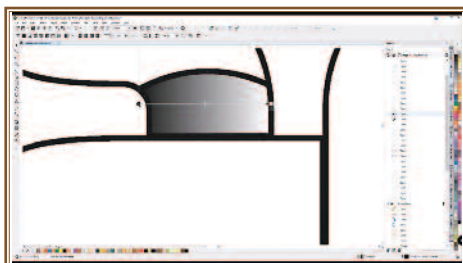
2. Gradient shading tool selected



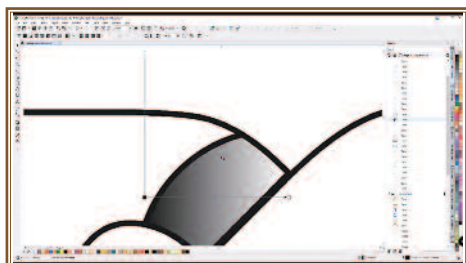
6. Border deleted - made white



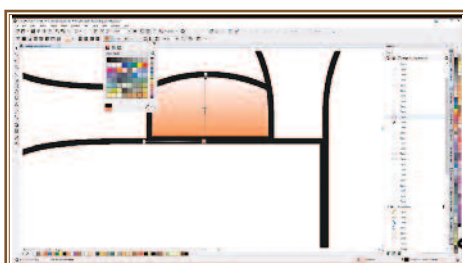
3. Using interactive tool for shading



7. Repeat for other selection



4. Shading now added



8. Choose colour of shading, but, has no use with the laser

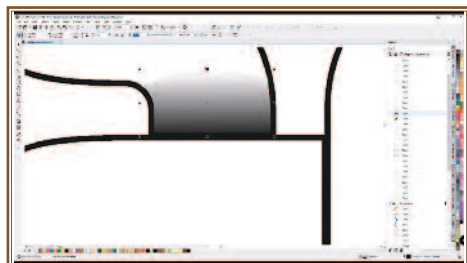
In the LightBurn software, you can burn any straightforward bitmap image onto a piece of veneer with complete ease.

It will even burn monochrome versions of photos onto veneer, it is that versatile. The CorelDraw program however, ensures

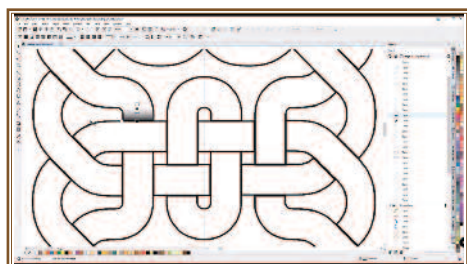
that all gradients, straight and curved lines are produced with total accuracy. They end up with draughtsman like quality when compiled with vectors, as these articles demonstrate clearly.

If, as I said, you feel confident of your freehand work, then do have a go and see what you can do freehand-wise. The only thing it will cost you is some wasted test veneer and some consumed electricity, but you will have learnt a little more about your laser cutter in the process.

A lot of the article titles in this magazine are composed using a combination of vector and bitmap work. And, we are pleased to say, this all works perfectly.

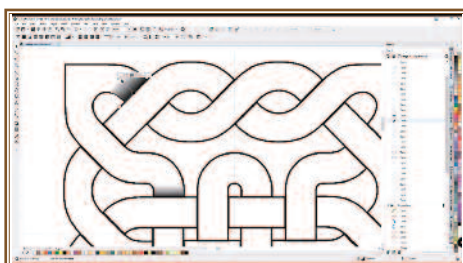


9. Delete outline

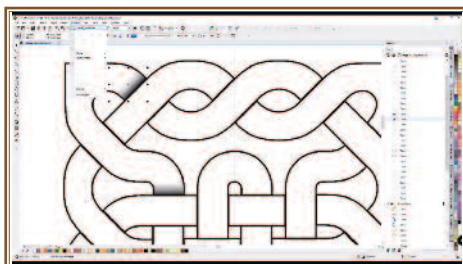


10. Change white to transparent for a natural appearance

You may have noticed in these screen captures that a lot of sub menus are inevitably brought into play in order to accomplish various tasks. If you are using CorelDraw you are probably quite familiar with these drop down menus, but for users of other vector drawing software, you will need to take note of the captions accompanying each screen capture to see



11. Changing other edge to transparent



12. Change vectors to bitmaps

what you need to do at each stage of the process. Do note that all dark areas and black lines remaining in the control design will be faithfully reproduced in the laser burn process by your cutter. So, do make sure nothing untoward remains, otherwise it will appear quite clearly on your work; and that is something we do not want - I assume!

Editors Note: As was said previously do bear in mind that the depth of burning will depend on the specie of veneer and the strength of laser beam chosen plus the speed of travel of the laser head.

Penetration of the cutter beam burn will require a little experimentation with some scrap pieces to find the best settings for you.

Too little burn strength will only scorch the surface, whereas too much burn strength will burn right through the veneer. So, as I say, a little experimentation will be required to achieve the best results. It doesn't take long to do this, and it is well worth while to ensure the end product meets your expectations.

Laying Without Tears

By Vincent Emery

In order to mount a picture quickly and accurately, I have made a simple jig which can be used for pictures of any reasonable size. It is particularly useful when using contact adhesives as it enables the picture to be located exactly over the mount. It can be made in half an hour by anyone handy, and in addition to edging and mounting a picture, it can be used to hold a picture steady when sanding and polishing.

A base is required of any rigid material such as chipboard, MDF, block-board or heavy plywood, but it must be cut perfectly square all round. The size is to suit your own requirements, but 50cms x 38cms is quite convenient as this will take any picture up to 43cms x 30cms which is as large as any of us will want.

At the top and the left-hand edges are firmly screwed two square sectioned strips of wood. These should be thicker than the mounting material you normally use - 2.5cms square for mounts for instance.

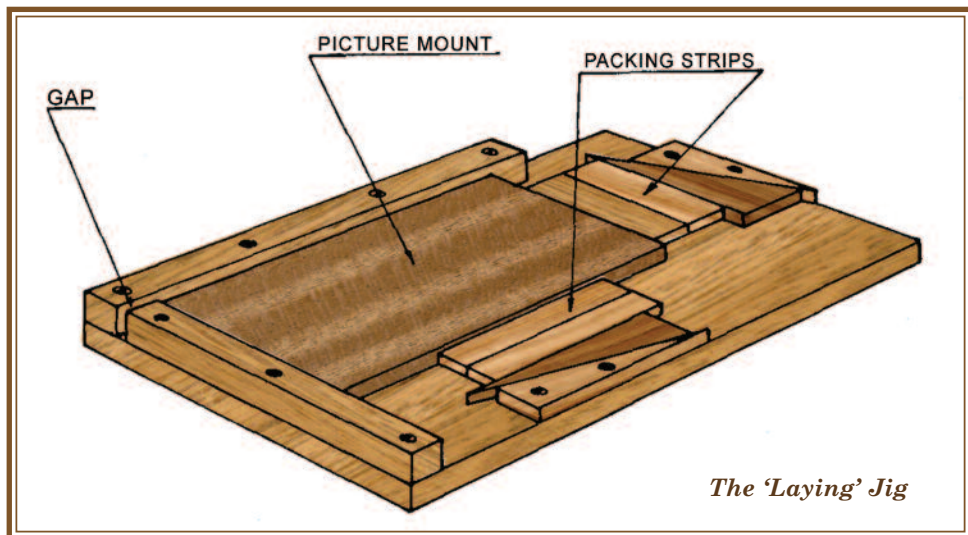
The top edging should be about 2.5cms or 4cms shorter than the length of the board.

Having prepared these two strips, we can assemble so far by first screwing the top edge on flush with the edge of the board and to the left-hand corner leaving of course a space on the right-hand side.

Now screw on the second strip flush with the left-hand edge of the board but leave a slight gap between its top end and the top edging, so that a piece of veneer will slip through easily. All screws should be well countersunk to save your hands when using the board.

Next we have to make two pairs of wedges of a thickness slightly less than your mounting, e.g., for mounts. The wedges should not be too coarse as they are inclined to work loose when being used for sanding, etc.

A slope of 1 in 4 is ideal, and a pair of wedges can be made by cutting diagonally across a 10cms x 2.5cms piece of hardwood. Having made both pairs of wedges, one pair is screwed to the other edges of the board, i.e., the bottom and the right-hand side. The wedge on the bottom is fixed with the incline



The 'Laying' Jig

sloping from left to right. The wedge on the right-hand side has its incline sloping from top to bottom. It may be necessary to alter the position of the wedges to suit very small or very large pictures, but this can easily be decided upon. The sketch which shows the picture mount held by the wedge, will I hope make all this clearer.

We also need a few strips of wood about 10cms long, and about 2.5cms or so wide, of the same thickness material as the wedges for packing pieces. The sketch shows these in use. The jig is now ready for use. It can either be screwed to the bench, held by "G" clamps or provided with a strip under its front edge and used as a bench hook.

Having cut your mount, the jig can be used to check it for squareness, by removing the right-hand wedge, and using the jig as a shooting board. To do this, hold the mount firmly against the top strip and slightly overhanging the right end. Using a smoother plane on its side, the edges can be planed true and square. For anyone without a plane, a truly square block of wood fitted with a coarse sandpaper will be equally effective.

Now return to the actual picture to be mounted. Square it, add the stringers and borders, and cut the mitres so that the picture is now complete in veneer form. Check it with the mount to see that it and the mount are the same size exactly. Cut the backing veneer, again checking it with the mount. Now cut the edging strips to exact width, but leave them a little longer than the mount - say to 1cms to 2cms. Have the adhesive ready now.

Apply the contact adhesive to the edges of the mount and to the edging strips, but do not glue the extra 1cms that you have allowed. Place the veneer on the jig so that the unglued portion lies in the "gap" at the top left-hand corner. Ensure that the bottom edge of the veneer is hard down on the baseboard. When the glue on the veneer and edge is nearly dry (follow the maker's instructions here), slide the

mount up the left-hand strip, and press it firmly to the veneer. Remove and check that all is well, remove the waste, and repeat this operation for all four edges.

Having made sure that the edges are O.K., apply adhesive to the back of the mount and the backing veneer. Place the mount in position on the baseboard as shown on the sketch, clamping it firmly in place. Again when the glue is ready, place the edges of the veneer against the top and left-hand strips without touching the mount. It helps here to have a piece of thin paper - greaseproof will do - cut slightly larger than the mount. Place the paper on the mount - it will not stick to the mount, and then slide the backing veneer into position.

When you are sure the veneer is in the correct position gently slide the paper out about 2.5 to 5cms, and at the same time press the exposed portions of veneer and mount together. Use a rounded piece of wood or a wooden wallpaper roller to press the veneer firmly and to exclude the air. Now remove the paper a little at a time until the two glued surfaces are in complete contact. Repeat this operation for the actual picture but it is advisable to protect the surface with a sheet of paper while pressing to prevent the roller bruising the softer veneers.

The jig can also be used for sanding and polishing, but for this of course the picture is obviously too low. By placing a piece of hard-board, MDF or plywood under the mounted picture (a sheet of foam rubber would protect it as well) to raise it above the level of the bearing strips, it can then still be firmly held by the wedges and packing pieces.

Note: Although I have concentrated on contact adhesive in this article, I do realise that this adhesive has rather fallen into disfavour over recent years, but if you do still use it, then this article will have been very helpful. You can, of course, use any adhesive with this jig. Just take care when aligning you work.

REPOLISHING PICTURES

By John Welton

One of the problems which even the experienced Marquetarian has to face at some time or other is the deterioration of polish on a picture that has been hanging up for a period of years.

Over a few years one finds that techniques improve and one's earlier pictures seem faulty in comparison with the latest effort. I refer of course to those pictures polished with French polish. Unless polished by an experienced polisher one can see smears, "sinking" and rubber marks - not all on the same picture obviously! Improvement is therefore very desirable.

The following method of repolishing is taken from a lecture/demonstration given to the Redbridge Group a few years ago by our own Alf Murtell.

Preliminary inspection of the picture reveals that it is unwise and indeed impracticable to polish over the existing surface - this must be cleaned off completely. Begin by sanding off all the old polish until the picture is "flatted" down. Care must be exercised even at this stage to avoid scratching the veneer, so you must not use too coarse a sandpaper. Fix the picture down by edge blocks and make sure that the sanding block stays level to avoid rounding the edges. Continue until no more polish is removed when using 9/0 garnet paper. Your picture should then have a perfectly even and flat surface.

Prepare your polishing rubber in the usual way and mix a fair quantity of polish (depending on the size of the picture) in the proportion of four parts of white polish to three parts of methylated spirits. Charge your rubber with a good amount of polish.

Commence applying the polish using straight strokes of the rubber from one end of the picture to the other until the

face is covered. Avoid overlapping so that ridges do not occur. Let the polish dry off. Continue with three or four coats in a similar manner letting each coat dry. Leave for a while to dry off further and then lightly sand off any ridges that may have been left.

Continue applying polish in the same way for ten to twelve coats, letting each coating dry before putting on the next, and inspect after every few coats. Sand off when necessary.

Naturally it is essential to work in as dust-free an atmosphere as possible, and after each sanding a thorough dusting of the surface is needed. It is preferable to sand and dust in one room and polish in another if this is practicable. You should also keep your rubber in a closed tin or jar whenever it is not in use.

Leave your picture to dry off completely for at least 48 hours then continue the same treatment for another five coats.

Rub over the surface with a piece of lightly oiled (white oil) garnet paper to prepare the foundation you have made and produce a completely "flatted" surface, but not removing the polish you have put on. No pressure is required and again dusting is essential.

Now for the preparation of the final polish. Use a sparse amount of polish - this time not mixed with methylated spirits - on a new rubber, and use a little oil on the face of the rubber for lubrication. Do not use any pressure and polish with a circular movement taking care to cover the edges of the face. As the rubber dries out increase the pressure, but never stop on the face - run the rubber off the picture.

Aim to leave a slight film of oil on the picture and change the face of the rubber by moving to a cleaner piece of the rag.

Commence the polishing proper. Keeping a smear of oil on the surface go over the picture six times letting the polish dry off between each coat. Remember the edges; a straight wipe of the rubber will cover what the circular movement leaves out. It is not necessary to put a lot of polish on at this stage as the foundation already laid is of a sufficient amount. This is now being polished and evened out.

Change the position of the picture from time to time so that you don't start with the wet rubber in the same place each time. Continue polishing for another six coats maintaining a smear of oil and letting the polish dry each time.

The number of coverings depends on the amount of scratches the sanding down has left, your object being to fill these scratches completely.

Leave for a few days to harden off really well. Inspect for minor defects such as dust on the surface. If there are any they can be removed with a piece of rubbed-off garnet paper with a drop of oil. Use care and light pressure to avoid damaging the surface.

Your choice of finish is up to you! If a matt surface is required leave the picture for a week and then using finest grade wire wool rub in one direction only across the picture with light pressure until the effect is reached.

For a gloss surface "spiriting off" is the method. This means removing all the oil from the polish by methylated spirits. Use a pad with a small amount of meths and work over the polish firmly, without stopping. Continue until the gloss is free of smears.

Naturally all this care on the face of the picture needs complementing by equal care on the edges - and, if you are a purist, (such as I am - being a most definite purist!) on the back also!

In case you don't know, a rubber is used mainly when French polishing. It is a rather old method, but gives superb results.



Using a French polish rubber

The rubber is made by wrapping a piece of lint free cotton cloth around some cotton wadding or cotton waste. Place a handful of cotton wadding into the centre of the cotton rag, bring in the four corners of the way and then twist to form a pear shaped pad, ensuring that the base of the pad is flat and free from creases or defects as seen in the photo above.

If you wish to achieve a mirror finish you need to leave the French polish to fully harden for about a week to ten days, then cut the surface back with Ultra Fine Steel Wool (00000) and remove any dust with a tack cloth. Next apply a Burnishing Cream with a clean cotton cloth, polishing vigorously and occasionally turning the cloth until the required deep mirror finish is achieved.

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Please apply for these via the editor who will pass your request onto our stand in treasurer Vaughan Thomas who will deal with your order.



Readers Letters



Whoops!

Hullo Alan,

How is you is?

I have read the comments on my entry, and I am humbled to say that you are correct.

I was trying to be clever with the naming of my entry, and after googling the singular and plural, I realise that I have got it wrong.

I always thought that die was more than one dice, but you are right, more than one die is dice.

I've got to do more research or learn the Queen's (King's now!) English before I try to be a smart arse in future.

Toodles

Ivor Bagley

Saint Albans Group

Hi Ivor,

Surprisingly it seems that "Dice" is the plural form of "die." "Dice" is sometimes used to refer to a singular die. If you want to play it safe: Use dice if you are rolling two or more game pieces. Use die, if you are only using one piece.

So, you were correct in a reverse way (if that makes sense). My permanent word checker usually sorts out my untoward errors, as do my army of proof readers!

What an asset are those proof readers. This is probably one of the most accurately composed journals out there. The proof readers pick up on everything that escapes my notice. Well done them!

Alan.

Natural Dyed or Coloured Veneers

Hello Alan,

I have tried to colour or dye veneers myself using natural colouring such as beetroot and tumeric etc, with what seems limited success. I believe that I have to 'fix' the colours to try to make them permanent, but what do I use for that purpose? Can you help?

Otherwise, is there a supplier of already naturally dyed coloured veneers you could recommend? That would be very helpful to me. Thanks.

Alf Parsons

Email Inquiry

Hi Alf,

Salt, Tannins, Vinegar and Baking Soda are supposed to be good fixatives (mordant) for natural dyes. I have had good reports regarding naturally dyed veneers from Placages et Filets Gauthy (inner rear cover for details) - worth checking out.

Alan.

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Quentin Smith, 15 Newport Rd.
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Recommended Suppliers



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