



Neville's Lowboy

Progress and Lessons learned

Cabinet maker's and Restorer's Meeting

15 September 2018

Nearly there!!



Lessons learned

- Watching a true craftsman (Phil Lowe) work gives new insight into methods
- Accuracy of work comes with the right marking techniques and equipment
 - Marking gauge
 - Marking knife
 - A good square
- The historical joinery used (Mortise and tenon cabinet design) provided an extremely accurate and robust case
 - This is critical for the traditional drawer fitting later
- The project had challenges at each step, and a number of new techniques were needed
 - Try on test pieces first : Walnut was too expensive to make mistakes!!

Transition pieces



- The legs themselves had to be right first time – no more material so carefully done
- These ‘transition blocks’ are fitted after first the front and then the case are assembled
- Made from off cuts from the legs – should have kept better records of where the different pieces came from to allow grain matching later
- The shaping and carving provided some challenges to achieve an acceptable progression from the leg shape – no scope for error
- The side transition blocks require one to work with the completed case so holding it in position needed thought



The Drawers

- The drawers must fit well into an accurate case as there is no adjustment
- If you don't like dovetails, you have a tough time ahead!!
 - Cabinet maker's dovetail layout – no router jigs work with these small pins
- Solid drawer base needs accurate plane work but the result is a robust structure
- The carving on the centre drawer proved to be a heart stopper
 - Walnut is not Jelutong !!!
 - This feature adds real value in the design, but makes one want to have a few more lessons

Hand cut edge of the top



- Shaped in stages with hand planes
 - Result is extremely elegant shape – would be difficult to achieve with routing
 - Will certainly use this again on other projects

Lastly the 'Drop Finials'

- Still at the trial stage and needing a little more practice on some of the features
 - Like carving, some further learning on turning will be on the agenda
- Finishing to come
 - Danish oil (Outside)
 - Shellac sealer and wax (inside)

Was the Group Project valuable ?

- Absolutely
 - Many useful discussions throughout
 - Learning from each other
 - Contact and input from Phil Lowe in the USA
 - Sharing of tools, jigs and facilities
 - Economies of scale with the purchases
 - With all the handwork – thank heavens for a big and versatile bench
 - Much more fun than doing the project solo