

An Interview with Liz Felton

We talk to the woodcarver of Balmoral, Liz Felton: An Australian who fell in love with woodcarving in Bali. Liz retired from woodcarving at the age of 83 and is now the grand age of 88.



Wombat in Rosewood

When did you first become interested in woodcarving?

Whilst on holiday in Bali in 1975, I was very impressed with the woodcarvings that are part of the Balinese culture. I came home with some woodcarving tools and a rough piece of tulip wood which some 30 years later became my Balinese Lady sculpture.

Did you take any lessons or were you self-taught?

It took me some 11 years to find my first teachers. In Sydney - in those days - they were few and far between. They were professional woodcarvers, their trade being handed down from one generation to another, a father and son from Holland, their names are Peter (deceased) and Laurens Otto, who have carved major works, e.g. 'Coat of Arms' in Parliament House. How fortunate was I! They taught me the rudiments of how to hold, control, direct, and sharpen the tools. Laurens now lives in Toowoomba, Qld, still holding workshops.

The next teacher was Graham Bull who held classes in Chatswood, where I



spent many happy hours, befriending and enjoying the company of other students. Thank you Graham.

Peter Colville took Bettine Silver, one of Graham Bull's students, and me under his wing until he moved to Burringbar, New South Wales, where he is teaching woodcarving and jewellery making. Peter is a professional photographer. Thank you for your creativity, Peter, and your wonderful input.



Platypus with Stand, Figured Australian Red Cedar and driftwood



Balinese Lady in Tulip Tree from Bali



Bowl in New South Wales Cedar

My most recent teacher was Ernie Perkins, well-known around Sydney for his superb carvings. Thanks for your help, Ernie.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

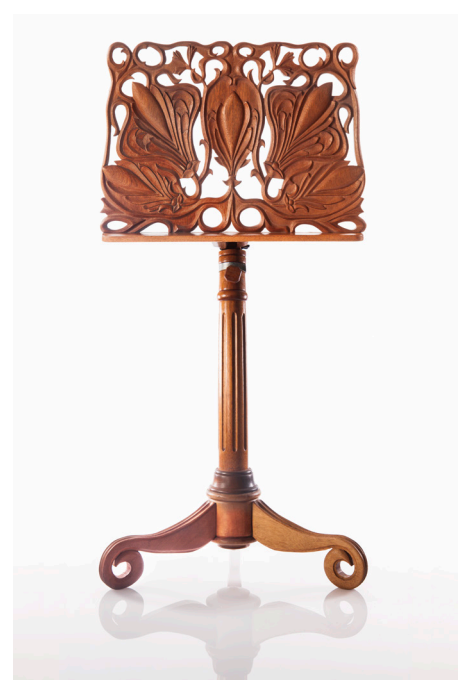
I would now like to acknowledge my daughter, Jan, for her creative designs for some of my carvings, such as the butterflies, flowers, the bowl, the Balinese lady, the book-ends, dolphin relief and hand-mirror. Thank you for your patience and for being there for me.

All of the photographs reproduced here, have been taken by and are used with the kind permission of Carsten Burmeister, the partner of Liz's daughter Jan. Please visit Carsten's blog to see more of his work

www.carstenburmeister.com

Liz has this to say about Carsten: 'I am honoured and grateful that you have given your time and also to think me worthy to be included in your blog. A great big thank you, Carsten and a great big hug.' To see some more photographs of Liz's carvings, please visit this site:

<http://lizfelton.tumblr.com>



Music Stand in Brazilian Mahogany



Clock in Brazilian Mahogany



Butterfly Picture in Silver Ash, backed and edged with Myrtle