Royal Red Cliffs Golf Club

The story of the new Bar

I had been asked if I could adjust the front double glass and aluminium doors that led out from the bar area onto the outside alfresco area as they were rubbing on the new concrete step and ramp. Tom Ryan was painting the walls in the bar area.

Tom and I struck up a conversation based on Tom had a vision (dream) of a new bar. He went on to say that the bar should be built out of old recycled timber and materials, He then went into specifics/specifications that we should use recycled timbers and Corrugated Iron and reiterated it should be rustic / handmade / oldy worldly.

The challenge was set.

I then put out the word of anyone knowing of an old house being demolished so as we could use the old Tasmanian oak studs or rafters. Bruce Mathieson stepped forward and said there are some old Oregon timbers that were once a pergola down near the green keepers shed. I had a look, it looked reasonable timber, but at the same time a few of the old school suggested using the old signpost timbers that had been given/donated to the Golf Club by Vic roads depo in Red Cliffs some time ago.

I found/shown two bundles of posts that were strapped with metal banding and were rough sawn about 200mm x 100mm x 5.000mm long (I was unable to tell what type of timber they were) so I returned with a chain saw and cut a sample about 300mm long and took it back to my workshop and dressed it on all four sides. The conclusion of the species of timber from myself and at least two others, Bruce being one of them, was that it was very similar to that of Mountain Ash.

These again were stacked to the side of the green keeper's workshop in amongst the aluminium can sacks and other things. I was told to speak with Phil Shaw and ask if he could, with the frontend loader tractor, lift them out into the open. Phill spoke with me and said he had to cut the metal strapping as the bundles were too heavy for the tractor to lift, he also said I'd better have a look, as termites (white ant) were present in the timbers.

On inspection of the posts, I was able to pull them apart only to find a mass of white ants in the middle of all the posts. The posts were not completely kiln dried timbers and I think, due to the length of time the timber had been stored and close to the ground made it easy pickings for the termites.

Back to the drawing board. Tom and I meet. We discussed what we could do and agreed to use the best of the worse damaged timbers and make a feature out of the white ant tracks that would be exposed.

I then went back to the timber posts and pulled them all apart for two reasons, to sort out the best posts, as we know white ants do not like day light so kill as many as possible without using chemicals. I also cut them down in length to make them more manageable to manually handle.

The next step of this project. To find someone who could mill (cut) the posts into 50mm x 200mm slabs (planks) of timber. It turned out to be a long exercise as a special type of band saw is required. Both Tom and I knew one person whom I contacted and was very helpful over the phone but an attempt to meet him did not eventuate so after about the 4th attempt, we started looking elsewhere. A member of the golf club whose name fails me (my apology) put me in touch with Blueys Tree and Stump removal (Anthoney Pay) so I loaded up my trailer with the posts and took them to his yard in Merbein South I put Bluey in the picture as to what we were going to attempt with the timber and to save my pride a little bit in what the hell I was I doing with white ant damage timber. Bluey was very understanding and said he would do it for $100,00 (this was on the **11/09/2022)**

After a few days. Bluey called to say he had finish cutting the posts into planks, I went and picked them up and took them back to my workshop. The timbers were quite moist where they had been sawn as the band saw blades have to have water running over them when cutting. I set up a tent like structure over the stack of planks on carpenter stools and with spacers between each layer of planks. This was to help dry out the timbers, so they did not warp/twist and bow too much. Every few days I turned each plank over so as to equal out the drying process of each plank, this took a few weeks (the tent structure was a tarp which hung over the top and down the sides but allowed air flow under the tarp and around the planks)

Next step was to dress each plank. The band saw blade cut was not quite true and gave the planks a small wedge shape look, One edge was a bout 40mm the opposite edge was about 50mm in a 200mm width, I used a table planer (electric) to dress each side of the planks (face sides) This took a considerable amount of time as each face had to done 4 to 6 times which equals 12 times through the planner per board and there are 12 full length boards in total, each being 4 metres long.

Next step was too true up the planks (straighten) as some of them were bowed, and at the same time square the edges with the face of the planks. I straightened one side of each plank and then ran the other edge through a table saw, then dressed each edge.

Next step was to lay out the boards in the same manner as they would be fitted and glued together, checking that the joins were butted up neatly, I then set out and marked where each joining biscuit was going to be (500mm centres) down each side and at the ends of every board/plank.

There are two tops, one being the main longer top and the other the shorter return top when each of the tops were glued and cramped together. They were left for about a week to allow the glue to fully dry and the timbers to heave/adjust into their positions.

Next step was to prepare the bar top surface which was mainly done by hand using a hand cabinet scraper/shaver tool and sandpaper, this was to try and keep the surface rustic looking/oldy worldly. Then using a resin with a black dye, I literally injected into the sap veins/tracks left by the white ants. This again was left to dry out completely over a few days. The resin expanded as it dried and had to be again box scraped to level it off with the timber tops surface.

I then put one coat of clear resin over the complete tops to seal the timber and protect the surface when the top is installed. It will need more coats after installation.

The bar wall frames were premade and painted by Tom and myself in my workshop and transported to the golf club.

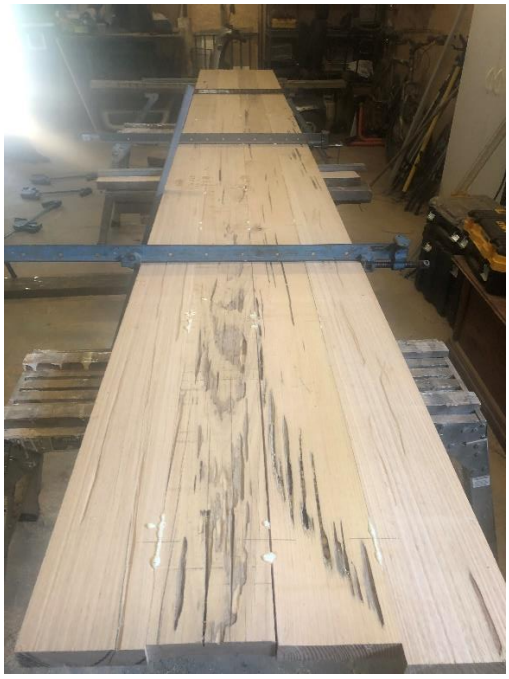
Demolition day there were a few guys to give a hand to pull down the old existing bar and remove the debris, and our thanks to Hand electrics for removing and re fitting all the under-bar wiring.

Construction of the new bar was. completed by **Project manager** Tom Ryan, **Construction Manager** Ken Evans, and the **Apprentice** Nevel Birch on the **10/08/2023.**

10/08/2023

Posts having been made into planks to the right is the milling machine (can see white ant damage along the edges of planks)

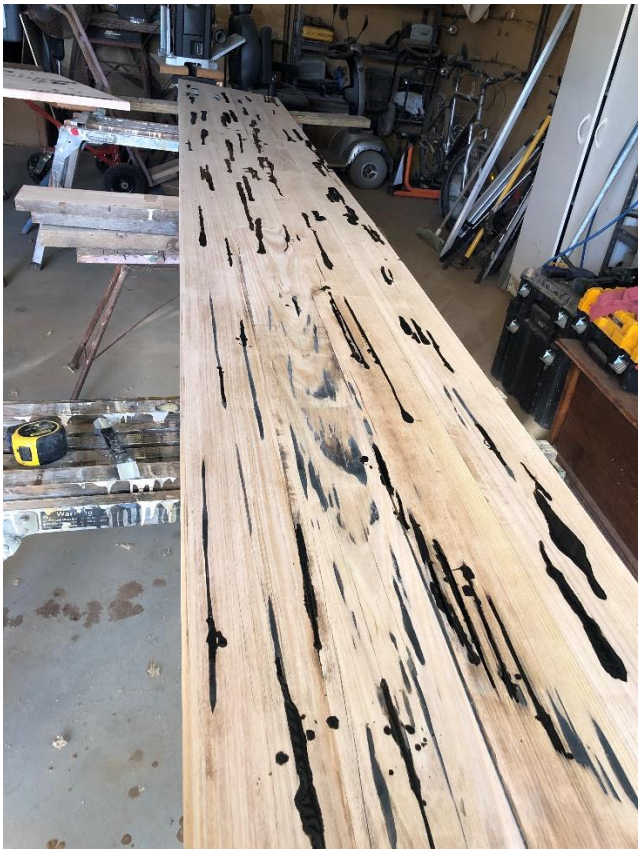
White ant damage timber planks after being dressed.



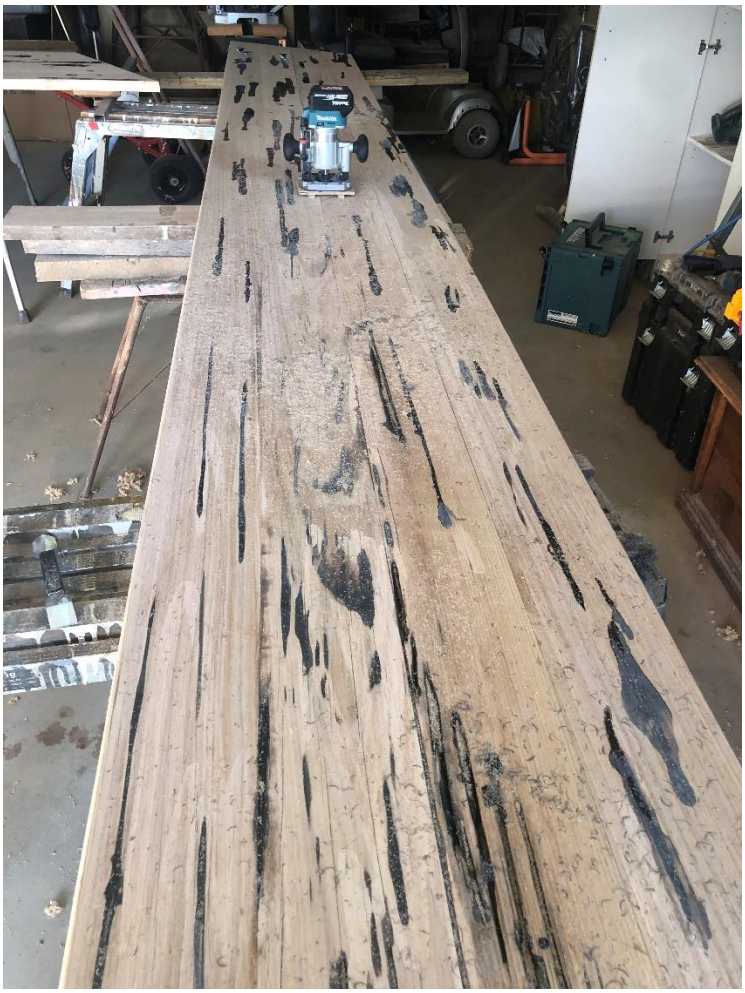
Bar top boards selected and glued together and sash clamps pulling them together.

After a few weeks clamps removed and board cleaned up with hand cabinet scraper.

Black dye mixed with resin then injected into white ant tracks in the bar tops.



The black dye expanded as it dried out.



Leveling the black dye back to the timber top surface

The project Manager with the finish product. 10/08/2023