

Rod Cocks



The 2019 Wandi Jack DeVos Award presented by Convenor Allan Williams to Rod Cocks in recognition of Rod's "behind the scenes" work for both the Wandi Group and the Association

2019 Jack de Vos Award Rod Cocks - Member No 502

Rod Cocks, member number 502, who is a founding member of the Wandi Wood turning group, has been a positive contributor since the very beginning. Over the years he has taken on many roles, including demonstrator, committee member, workshop organiser, and convenor, as well as friend and mentor, but his greatest contribution has always been in ensuring that members of the group have access to a high-quality workshop. Wandi's workshop has been in several locations on the Wandi site, each one an improvement over its predecessor. This has culminated in its present location in The Pavilion, for which Rod was the instigator. Throughout the protracted project he always strove to achieve the best outcome for the woodturners, which resulted in an excellent facility. The recent installation of a dust extraction system, the finest in the Association, is a fitting climax for Rod's strenuous efforts over the years as well as a testament to his persistence.

Rod Cocks has served the Wandi Woodturners extremely well indeed and is a fitting recipient of the Jack de Vos award for 2019.

WAWA CoM Awards Life Membership awarded to Rod Cocks – 502

Rodney Cocks joined the Association through the Melville group in 1988, a year after he became a committee member for the Wandi Progress Association. At the time, the Progress Association was actively seeking facilities that met the needs of the Wandi community. WAWA and woodturning were always in Rod's focus. Indeed, Rod's continued and successful involvement in both associations since those times has been to the mutual benefit of both. He has been a significant contributor to the evolution of the Wandi Progress Association site and the development of wood working facilities within it.

When the Wandi Progress Association sought funding for a community hall in 1994-5, Rod argued that the proposal should include provision for a multipurpose facility which woodworkers of all types could use. Accordingly, the Wandi wood turning group was born in 1995, initially with six members – Rod and his two sons, Les Whiddett, John Lydon and Jack Pallas. Under Jack's leadership, assisted by Rod as secretary, the group grew quickly.

In these early days, the Wandi group had little in the way of machinery and tools; all was supplied by the members and carted in to hold a demonstration workshop. A car would roll up with a mini lathe with stand and it would be set up in the hall for the demonstration, tools would be sharpened at home and then honed while on the job because the club had no grinder. Both Wandi and the Association used the hall for their weekend workshops, and it became a popular venue.

As numbers grew, the demand for a daytime purpose-built workshop intensified and Rob once more organised the Progress Association to lobby the Kwinana Town Council for support. By chance, in 2004, the Hope Valley Primary School became available, and Rod played a major role in negotiating its removal to the Wandi site where it now stands, and in organising the support needed for the move from Landcorp, the Department of Local Government, Lottery West and woodturners from neighbouring clubs as well as Wandi itself. The school's covered playground area was also relocated to the Wandi site where it was lined and partitioned to become a multipurpose wood working workshop complete with wood store and a storage area for the Association's trailers and associated gear. The work was completed in 2005.

Growing pressure from users, including the need for a gymnasium facility, provided the Progress Association with an opportunity to renegotiate construction of the building now known as the Pavilion. Rod, once more, played a major leading role as chief planner, negotiator, and facilitator. The Pavilion was completed in September 2015 and is now the home for Wandi Woodturners, as well as for other wood working groups. While dust extraction and other features were included in the original design they were dropped for financial



reasons. Rod, almost single handily organised the design, funding and installation of the Pavilion's dust extraction system, a significant personal achievement.

In addition to these, Rod has created opportunities on at least two occasions for WAWA to establish a permanent headquarters for itself on the Wandi site. These did not eventuate but the willingness to assist WAWA, if necessary, continues.

Rod has retained an active membership of WAWA through Wandi since its very beginnings as a committee member, demonstrator and convenor and has through P Square Agencies become a significant supplier of wood turning accessories, not only locally but also nationally and internationally.

All through his more than 30-year membership, Rod has been a great facilitator who has created a substantial legacy. He has contributed greatly to the Association and continues to do so and is a worthy recipient of the WA Woodturners Association Award of Life Membership.

Presented by Jim Cameron September 2021