



Monaro Timber News

The monthly newsletter for people who love timber

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Timber resource.

Our timber resource, and I'm speaking here from the position of the producers, has changed significantly over the past ten years. There are many more national parks now and restrictions on areas within state forest areas as to what can and can't be harvested. All this has meant there are less logs available to sawmillers and some species are almost unavailable. For a range of reasons many of the trees being harvested now are much younger than they used to be. All of these factors have an effect on what merchants like Monaro Timber are able to offer. If you have a look at flooring in particular you will see that many species are harder to get at times, generally lighter in colour than in previous years and also exhibit more natural features such as gum vein and pin hole borer. The visual grading standards for Australian hardwoods defines Select Grade, Standard or Medium Feature and High Feature. Many of the saw mills have variations on these gradings, which is allowable. Select Grade is becoming more difficult to achieve due to the changes already discussed and many saw mills are currently producing a Standard and Better Grade which is a mix of standard and select. The ratio will vary from mill to mill but it is usually about 70% select and 30% standard. One of our main suppliers of hardwood flooring, Australian Solar Timbers, is going to introduce a Light/Moderate grade in their 19mm range in July. They will retain for a period of time both their Light Feature (Select) and Medium Feature Grades but these will probably be phased out in a year or so. This is all a response to the changing resource and you can expect the rest of the mills to breathe a collective sigh of relief and follow suit. Prices for Select Grade are set to rise dramatically very shortly so I expect more people will be considering the Light/Medium Feature Grade. This is already the main grade in the 12mm Timberlay flooring and has gained very good acceptance by our customers. If you are thinking of a timber floor then you should talk to us about the grades available and if you are currently considering Select Grade don't leave it too long as this grade won't be getting any cheaper.

Machining timber.

Last month I talked about a machining job we took on which proved to be extremely difficult due to the abrasive nature of the timber. This month we had a go at dressing some very old hardwood supplied to us

by a customer. We have a "no recycled" policy in our workshop because handling this type of material is quite specialised and we aren't really set up for to do it. Having had a look at this particular job I thought we would be fine as we had recently machined tonnes of Spotted Gum and Iron Bark for the school of music job. As timber gets older I'm sure it gets harder because after half a dozen boards the blades on the moulder were stone cold DEAD! If anyone has any thoughts or evidence regarding hardness versus age of timber I'd like to hear from you. I've been told the outer layer of old timber can become case hardened but I must admit I'm not sure how all this happens. If you have some answers please send them in so I can share them with the rest of the readers.

New stock.

If you are chasing 25mm Tasmanian Blackwood we have a pack due in any day. It is random in width from 75mm up to 250mm. A few weeks ago a pack of 200 x 38 knotty Hoop Pine turned up instead of the clear grade we ordered. Even with the knots this is an excellent product and this grade is very cheap. Currently it is still in a pack so if you are interested let us know and we can discuss prices, especially for a volume purchase. Our clear grade also arrived and is in the rack. Do you use timber beading to finish off your floors? We keep a standard profile which is 19mm x 6mm with a bull nose edge. There are a number of species in the rack and we can run to order if necessary. In light of the fact that some flooring prices are set to rise in a month we have stocked up on a few products. Give us a call to check current stocks as they change daily. Over the past month we had fresh stocks of a number of furniture timbers arrive including Brush Box, Jarrah, Tas Oak, Danta and Spotted Gum. Due in any day is American Walnut and Rock Maple. As always, if you need anything let us know. Cheers *Shaun.*

Questions or comments? E-mail us at shaun@monarotimber.com.au or call 02 6280 6467

Drop in at 46-52 Townsville St Fyshwick.
8.00—4.30 weekdays.