

Living With Parkinson's Disease.

And Tryin' To Make Wooden Toys For Kids.

In me shed takin' up a lot of shelf space I had over fifty 1/24th and 1/25th scale model truck kits that I had collected over the years and had always intended building, but I knew that this was now goin' to be a hobby that I'd ever do again because one needed steady hands and I'd never be able to do them justice so I took the wifes advice and put them on ebay and sold the bloody lot.



Above is a N10 Volvo tractor unit that hauled a Industrial Waste Tanker, below that a Mack DM800 painted up as a U.S.A. Army Truck hauling a D8 Bulldozer on a low loader trailer. The unfinished truck was a Japanese Fuso that was goin' to be attached to a 40ft shipping container trailer. The trailer unit loaded with bags of cement was painted up in a local truckin' firms colours which I had intended to be hauled by a R Series Mack which never got built.

I spent hours and bloody hours on the internet lookin' for something that I could possibly do but I couldn't find a darn thing that interested me and I kept thinkin' about me power tools and making wooden kids toys. I did consider makin' fishin' lures again that I use to make when I did a lot of fishin', but going to my old fishin' spots was now outa the question so I tossed that idea out.

On the internet I started looking at small wooden toys and started runnin' the idea through me head, that if I made smaller simple toys the less time I'd spend with a power tool the less chance I had at gettin' into trouble. But then makin' smaller toys might be more harder than I was visualising but I decided to give it a try, so back to me workshop I went because I really didn't want to sell off all me power tools. I looked at smaller toys from another angle as well, if a child could take an off cut of 4x2 and use their imagination to see it as a car or bulldozer then simple toys a child could turn into what ever they wanted it to be.

I started lookin' out side the bubble I was now in and viewed a lot of jigs that people had put up on youtube to use with power tools, not all jigs shown were built for safety reasons but from them I could see some advantages that some could help me with. While lookin' at the many small wooden toys offered for sale on the internet I found a simple little racin' car that I liked, not all small toys I viewed I liked and if I was goin' to make toys I wanted to enjoy makin' them and not just to give me something to do.



As you can see it is quite a simple toy and can be made with very few of me power tools. The first part I cut out was the body, there were no measurements to follow so I just went with what I thought would be suitable. The body was 159mm (6 1/4") long x 32mm (1 1/4") wide and 33mm (1 1/4") high and would be cut out with my table saw. Like most wood workers who just dabbled in buildin' the odd thing I didn't have feather boards because like most I use to be able to handle what it was put to the table saw to rip to size.

One would think that cutting timber at smaller sizes would be more difficult and pose a lot of problems but I found meself more confident because by keepin' the table saw blade from protrudin' too far above the timber push blocks I had made from scraps of timber (which I have from past stuff ups) kept me tremblin' right hand pretty safe. I have always been right handed and I now use me steady left hand to do as much as possible. I found in the end that cutting me timber in shorter lengths meant I spent less time at the table saw, where if I was rippin' a length of timber to size say a meter long when I changed hand positions or moved my body around if my right hand did something crazy and unexpected me left hand often struggled to keep control of the timber and that was when the proverbial often hit the fan.

When it came to puttin' the slight angles onto the front of the car those I did with me miter saw, with the help of small clamps, gaffer tape and scraps of wood it was quite easy to do. As for the rest of the little pieces needed me many push blocks I had fashioned up did the trick. The wheels of the car I did with me drill press and hole saw attachment, I did have some problems with the drill press at times when my balance and leg problems wanted to act up so I again fashioned up some pretty weird lookin' blocks of scrap timber and with the help of clamps and gaffer tape (no workshop should be without Gaffer Tape) I was able to fashion me wheels. It wasn't a fast build and yes I did have some close shaves but I got there in the end and with all me digits intact.

The best tools I have currently in my workshop would have to be, 'Sandpaper' and 'Gaffer Tape', I have plenty of sandpaper of different grades and while I use painters masking tapes and double sided tapes the old gaffer tape is used often and gets me outa many a jam. The most dangerous tool in me workshop is the common old 'Hammer', in my hands it can be a deadly weapon now days and if me left hand and fingers could talk they would have heaps to say about it. I don't like the idea of puttin' nails into wooden toys built for kids, even those secret nails that are not visible can pose a danger for a kid. If there is something that you don't wanted a kid to find you can bet your boots they'll find it, wooden toys are just as likely to get broken as a shop brought toy and I'd rather pin glue parts of toys together with small wooden dowels. Using me drill press to get all me little dowel pin holes exactly were I wanted them was a problem but again with the help of gaffer tape, scraps of wood and clamps I managed to get everything sorted out, the little spacers behind the front wheels of the car I fashioned with the help of sand paper.

While not the first wooden toy I have ever built, this is the very first I've built since my young fella was a little kid forty two years ago and wanted a chainsaw just like his Dad had. I'm very proud of this little racin' car and will always keep it as a reminder that it doesn't matter how bad my health condition gets if I don't give up I can achieve my goal of being the 'Grey Haired Old Bastard That Lives In The Bush And Makes Wooden Toys For Kids'.



Take Care, Stay Safe and Travel Safe.

Hooroo

Keve (The WIZARD of OZZ).

2017.