



**Australian Government**

**Department of the Environment and Heritage**



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Australian National Botanic Gardens**

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## **A Bodger's Workshop**

The Australian National Botanic Gardens is currently hosting a remarkable demonstration of traditional 'Chair Bodging' by students of the National Insitute of the Arts Woodworking School at the Australian National University, Canberra.

Under the guidance of Howard Archbold, students will handcraft their own Windsor Chair in an open air workshop at the Gardens over the three-week period, ending 19 March. Students will demonstrate the traditional use of chair making tools including the pole lathe, an ancient foot powered wood turning lathe used to create the decorative legs, stretches and spindles. Other important and original tools of the trade include the drawknife, spokeshave, adze, scorp and the froe and maul.

Howard Archbold is a visiting artist at the National Insitute of the Arts Woodworking School at the Australian National University and runs his own business 'Rare Chairs' where people can learn to make their own chair using the original design of the faithful English Windsor Chair. Howard teaches the skills our pioneer forebearers used to create and design furniture – no power tools here!

"The significance of demonstrating the craft of chair making in the open air of the Australian National Botanic Gardens is to try to reproduce the outdoor 'workshop' environment used by bodgers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. Windsor chairs were made in natural bush surroundings where the materials were directly at hand" said Howard.

Visitors are invited to observe the open air workshop at the Australian National Botanic Gardens and chat with Howard and his students about this wonderful historic craft. For further information contact the Australian National Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre on 6250 9540.

The Bodger's workshop is part of the Gardens' Public Art Program.

**For further information, please contact Paul Ziesing, Communications Officer on (02) 6250 9538 or 0418 955 661 – [paul.ziesing@deh.gov.au](mailto:paul.ziesing@deh.gov.au)**