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Rogers&Sons is a curious blend of old and new established carpenters, with older workers working alongside younger woodworkers, experimenting with modern techniques.

Founded by Roger Yeo in 1988, the company was originally incorporated as JR & P Industries, and started out as manufacturers of system furniture.

In 2014, Roger was unfortunately diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and the Yeo brothers, Morgan, Lincoln and Ryan, decided to step in to continue their father's legacy.

They rebranded the company to Roger&Sons, as a tribute to the late Roger. The brothers also restructured their business model to focus on creating custom, bespoke furniture.

The company is now helmed by 32-year-old Morgan, who has the vision to revitalise the staid carpentry.

The Singapore Management University graduate told Vulcan Post that when he first joined the company, there were only four workers in the business. Though they were excellent craftsmen, the company did not have the resources for large machineries.

"All we had were skilled workers, so we focused on creating products with better craftsmanship and design," said Morgan.

Now, the company has a team of 21, and an impressive range of clientele, from Google to Facebook and The Warehouse Hotel.

They have also since branched out into sustainability, research and development (R&D), education and honing the next generation of carpenters.

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Giving Abandoned Logs A New Lease Of Life



According to Roger&Sons, there are around 15,000 trees slated to be felled in the next 15 years, and there is no immediate purpose for these unwanted trees.

There are various sawmills around Singapore with massive stockpiles of abandoned logs, and more than 100 arrive each day.

The stockpiles are the result of felling trees for urban development. However, due to the lack of infrastructure to process the logs into usable forms, and a preference for importing wood, these logs are simply left to rot.

Hence, under The Local Tree Project, Roger&Sons rehabilitates these abandoned logs by turning them into durable, future-proof objects and furniture.

Every part of the tree is utilised in a conscious effort to minimise wastage.

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Morgan told Vulcan Post that the team at Roger&Sons realised that in carpentry work in Singapore, there is a “high level of wastage”, and it is often “cheaper to throw things away than refurbish them.”

“As a company, we want to be more responsible in our actions and the products that we make. So, we decided to see what we could do to be more sustainable,” said Morgan.

Roger&Sons is also set to launch a furniture retail line sometime next year. Morgan shared that the focus of the retail line will be The Local Tree Project, and the furniture will be created from local trees as much as possible.

According to Morgan, Roger&Sons’ new furniture line will not be “mass market”. Instead, they plan on launching “small batches” of each item.

“The idea is that we hope the furniture will last for generations,” said Morgan.

However, sustainability comes with its challenges, especially in Singapore where convenience is of great importance.

Morgan shared that due to the company’s commitment to sustainability, slightly higher prices are inevitable. Thus, education is extremely important in helping their customers to understand that sustainable options are factored into the cost price of products.

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Educating The Public About The Craft



For the past two years, Rogers&Sons has been conducting workshops to educate and teach the public about wood and carpentry.

Besides corporate workshops and those for the general public, Morgan shared that Rogers&Sons also conducts workshops for students.

To give back to the community, Roger&Sons has also conducted talks and workshops with voluntary organisations such as SG Enable and St Andrew's Autism School.

R&D is another way Morgan has highlighted for the company to move forward. A lot of effort is put into R&D and researching on local wood, finding methods to make it stronger and more durable.

The company is also in talks to create its own sustainable adhesive and wood finishes.

Roger&Sons was recently awarded funding from the Good Design Research initiative by the DesignSingapore Council, which will be used to conduct further research into local wood.

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Reviving Traditional Carpentry



Carpentry is largely perceived to be a sunset industry in Singapore.

To add on, Morgan said that there is likely to be a lack of skilled carpenters and handymen in the near future, as many of them are older folks preparing for retirement.

Thus, Morgan has made it a mission to groom the next generation of craftsmen and carpenters.

The team is hoping to get their courses certified on SkillsFuture, and to expand their lessons to polytechnics and universities.

Eventually, they hope to open their own carpentry school and extend the skill of woodworking to anyone who is interested.

In some ways, Morgan understands the experience of being a young craftsman in the industry. When he first started out six years ago, it was tough for him to earn the respect of the other staff.

“I had to break a lot of barriers to gain their trust and respect,” he said.

“However, I don’t see that as a challenge. It was more of a journey to learn and grow myself, something like a rite of passage.”