

News from the Jersey Employment Trust

Acorn Woodshack is so Racc'moder

A tree lost during Storm Ciarán has found a new purpose thanks to a collaboration between local organisations. Report by **Caroline Spencer**

RACC'MODER. It's a word from Jèrriais which means "to mend, make new, revive, or bring back to life".

It is also the name of a social enterprise set up by Xanthe Hamilton to explore innovative uses for fallen timber from Storm Ciarán.

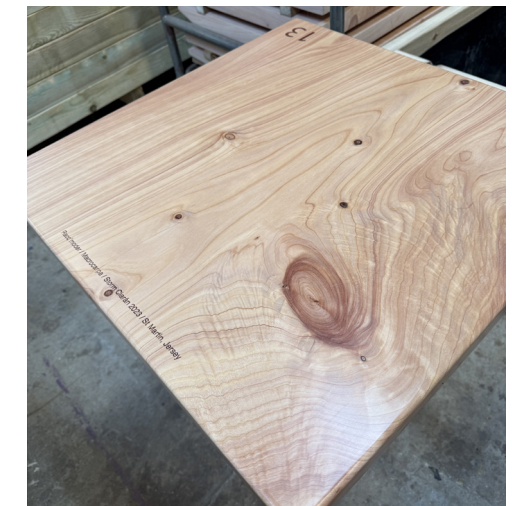
And now the word is appearing on new tables at Cooper & Co, crafted from a macrocarpa tree that fell on private land in St Martin during the storm and processed by the Acorn Woodshack.

David Warr, from Cooper & Co, explained: "Macrocarpa is a hardy cypress native to Monterey, California. It is a magnificent species, capable of living for more than 200 years. Sadly, the life of this tree was cut short by Storm Ciarán on the night of 4 November 2023. It was one of thousands of trees felled across the Island. But in its death, a new chapter began."

Having heard about Racc'moder, David ordered 17 new tabletops for his café at Castle Quay.

The roughly cut slabs were sanded, bevelled, oiled and varnished at Acorn's Woodshack before a laser-cut inscription was added, telling the story of the tree.

"Years of exposure to the elements had turned the outer wood a dull silver, but hidden within the trunk was extraordinary beauty," David said. "As each plank emerged from the saw, the excitement became impossible to ignore. We knew immediately that this was something special."



■ Each table top bears an engraving that displays information about the wood



■ David Senior (left) and Ian Florence (right), from the Acorn Woodshack, with Xanthe Hamilton and David Warr

mediately that this was something special. "A magnificent tree has been immortalised in a table. Everything about this table is local. It encourages skills, builds resilience in the economy and raises awareness."

Xanthe added: "Acorn Woodshack have been an amazing partner. David Senior is an incredibly talented craftsman, and it's been a real pleasure to work with him and bring his skills and experience into the project. There's also a wider impact to the project, as by working with Acorn we're able to support their broader aims of providing meaningful work, training and development opportunities for Islanders with a disability or long-term health condition. It's a really good example of how local organisations can work together and create value beyond the project itself."

David Senior said: "It's been an interesting and beautiful journey. Several coats of diamond-hard varnish have revealed beautiful grain, some of which resembles marble, clouds, water currents and even close-ups of the planet Saturn. Each table-

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It's been an interesting and beautiful journey. Several coats of diamond-hard varnish have revealed beautiful grain, some of which resembles marble, clouds, water currents and even close-ups of the planet Saturn. Each tabletop is unique

David Senior

top is unique. The Japanese have a term for it, wabi-sabi, finding quiet beauty in natural, unrepeatable patterns."

There are two further benefits from the project. Now that Racc'moder has its own portable timber mill, it will take its sawdust and wood shavings to the Woodshack to make into briquettes, an environ-

mentally friendly fuel that can be sold to generate income.

And the next step? The table tops that are being replaced at Coopers will be donated back to Acorn.

In fact, Xanthe said, Racc'moder could just as easily describe Acorn itself. "It's so Racc'moder, Acorn," she said.

First jobs

JET Ambassador Juliette de Guelle

MY first Saturday job at Midland Stores remains one of the most valuable experiences of my career.

I was lucky enough to work with an amazing team who really helped shape my approach to work. They taught me what great customer service looks like, how to handle more challenging situations such as dealing with unhappy customers, and the importance of taking the initiative rather than waiting to be told what to do. If there was a gap on the shelves, you filled it; if there was a task to be done, you got on with it. More importantly, I learnt what half a pound of bacon looked like.

I genuinely loved the job and enjoyed it so much that I continued working there even after starting my first full-time role in finance. Looking back, many of the lessons I learnt at Midland Stores – customer focus, teamwork, resilience and initiative – have stayed with me throughout my career. ● Juliette is now executive director at ZEDRA.



■ Val Gavey was greeted by her friends at Les Amis and Acorn, as well as her heroes, the Stormtroopers and the Jersey Fire and Rescue Service, after her eighth skydive

A storming welcome in St Aubin's Bay

ISLANDER Val Gavey did her eighth skydive on 23 August, to be met in St Aubin's Bay not only by all her friends at Les Amis and Acorn, but also by her heroes, the Stormtroopers and the Jersey Fire and Rescue Service. With a glass of champagne in hand, she said she cannot wait to do another charity jump next year.

She is raising money for Acorn's plastics workshop, which she attends.

There is still time to sponsor her by visiting: <http://tinyurl.com/Skydive26>.



Safety – down PAT...

■ Acorn Reuse PAT-tests all electrical items prior to putting them out on the shop floor. When we needed a new PAT-testing device, Integrity's Charitable Trust paid for one. Pictured here are Acorn technical team leader Ian Florence and Acorn's PAT tester Chic McCabe



'We are grateful to those who raised concerns'

AFTER a former Acorn employee admitted stealing £1,176 from the social enterprise, Acorn's management have stressed that they take any breach of trust extremely seriously.

In the Magistrate's Court this month, the employee was given a community service order after admitting one count each of larceny and embezzlement.

JET executive officer Penny Shurmer said: "We recognise that this case may be disappointing to those who support Acorn through donations, volunteering and fundraising. We take any breach of trust extremely seriously and maintain a zero-tolerance approach to theft, fraud and the misuse of the charity's resources."

"We are grateful to those who raised concerns and assisted with the investigation. Protecting donated stock and funds is vital, as every item and contribution enables us to continue supporting the people who rely on our services."

JET leader to step down

THE executive officer of the Jersey Employment Trust, Penny Shurmer, will be standing down from her role in November to focus on her health and wellbeing.

During Penny's tenure, JET has continued to grow its reach and impact while navigating a period of rising demand, increasing complexity and financial uncertainty.

Under her leadership the organisation has helped hundreds of Islanders into work, expanded volunteering and employer partnerships, championed sustainability, and led initiatives that generated millions of pounds in social and economic value for the community.

Dan Perkins, acting chair of the board of trustees, said: "On behalf of the board of trustees, I want to thank Penny for her outstanding dedication and commitment to JET. She has led the organisation through a demanding period and has been a passionate advocate for Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition. We wish her every success for the future."

The board will shortly begin the process of recruiting a new executive officer.

Get in touch

■ If you have a story that you would like to see on our community or feature pages, please email thomas@allisland.media with a few details and preferably a contact number so we can give you a ring