



David Strasdin inspects a stair stringer from the work table of the Morbidelli X5 now on his Llanelly shop floor in South Wales



The simplicity of programming on the Morbidelli X5 has changed the attitude of the entire workforce at Strasdin Joinery to CNC technology

## Morbidelli Author X5 - Strasdin Joinery's Phoenix

**T. Richard Jones & Co., also prominent in the school as well as office building and fitting out sector, were the first customer of Strasdin Joinery a quarter of a century ago and are still among the most prominent. When the factory burned down, it was this Swansea based construction contractor that took up the insurance company's challenge to get Strasdin Joinery back up and running again within twelve weeks!**

When the Morbidelli X5 Author was commissioned around 12 months after the blaze it raised the manufacturing bar at Strasdin Joinery - the quality of output rose, work that would previously have been expensive handwork procedures were mechanised and management was able significantly to value add its output. Now, for example, Strasdin can machine process timber expressly for the installation of sophisticated hardware - doors for the incorporation of multiple security technology, for example - that would previously have been heavily

skills-dependent and therefore expensive - sometimes prohibitively so, in the pre-Morbidelli days.

"Also," says Nigel Furneaux, "staircases that used to take skilled joiners two to three days to build can now be turned out by a machine, virtually unattended, at the rate of better than two a day. As stairway specialists routinely quoting day to day domestic building projects priced in a range from £1,000 to £10,000 and for civic or office buildings for very much higher stakes, these are crucial manufacturing advances that make Strasdin Joinery that much more competitive in the marketplace.

The simplicity of the programming and its day to day use on the new Morbidelli work centre has also fundamentally changed the working attitudes of almost everybody at the factory. It has proved so easy to program and to operate that the technophobic fear that existed within a traditionally craft driven workforce has been replaced by easy and enthusiastic acceptance of up-to-the-

minute CNC technology.

"Customers like ours expect the best from their suppliers and while I couldn't quite say that they're not interested in how we achieve it, they're much more concerned about the quality of the work that arrives on their sites than how we actually do it. The idea of craftsmen in aprons with pencils behind their ears might still be appealing to some, but when our architectural joinery arrives on site and the customer can see that as well as being beautifully made, it arrives on schedule, is superbly fitted and finished and is properly protected so as not to sustain transit damage, preconceived ideas about tradition don't then matter so much."

With the benefit of hindsight, Nigel Furneaux now readily concedes that the new Morbidelli X5 Author does indeed do the jobs of that 'dozen or so machines' that did not make it to the post-fire acquisition list. And emphatically he also now says, it does everything better, faster and more easily than those other machines ever could have.

It is probably fair to say that

the new Morbidelli X5 Author is now the beating heart of Strasdin Joinery, having replaced so many of the company's traditional processing machines and revised so many of its working practices. Asked about future expansion plans at Strasdin, Nigel Furneaux will say only that when growth comes, it will be in the form of another Morbidelli - not necessarily the same model, but another Morbidelli - supplied by Machine Sales Limited.

"We won't look anywhere else now because even if a slightly better technology solution were to enter the marketplace, we would still only want machines at this level of importance to be supplied by MSL - people we trust implicitly for continuity of service or tooling, for maintenance and for the unbeatable working relationship that we have built with them. We're so happy with our Morbidelli and everything that surrounds it that we could not conceive of working differently - or in conjunction with anybody else."

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