

# Revolutions

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN  
Issue No 108

March 2014



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Sorby 'Turnmaster'**

**See page 22**



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## FRONT COVER

Oyster bowl and  
pearl  
in Laburnum.  
Gregory Moreton

## DATA PROTECTION ACT

Your personal details are held on computers belonging to Executive Committee members. Your details are held purely for the use of the Association and are not passed on to any third party. If you object to your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address being held in this manner then please contact the Secretary.

## Chairman's Notes

Am I allowed to begin with "well, I'm glad that's over?" No probably not! I trust though, that you all had a good Christmas and New Year break, and I wish you all a wonderful 2014. Having a young daughter, Christmas is really her time, as it should be, but the older I get the more I seem to resent the break; the loss of working time, the loss of routine, the loss, dare I say it, of the sanctuary of the workshop! Let's face it, you could work all day in the workshop and still partake of silly quantities of cheese and wine in the evening, without all the hullabaloo. But it's over now and a new year has dawned. So what will it bring?

Largely, like most of you, I don't know, but there are some things that are a given this year. We have the AGM looming (more on that later in this edition), planning and preparations for the 2015 Seminar are already underway, and a substantial change in the way the Association take woodturning "to the masses" has already earmarked large portions of time and energy for many of the committee.

For some time we have been looking at the type of shows we attend, and the feeling has grown that we are largely "preaching to the converted". We have taken a bold step and decided to change tack in an effort to reach the general public. We feel this could have very positive results in terms of taking the product of what we do, to a new audience, and perhaps also fostering an interest in learning our craft. We believe, and hope, that this could have positive effects on every aspect of turning: increased awareness of what we do, an increased appreciation of the art and skill of the craft, and ultimately a higher profile for the product of the craft.

**The first of these new outings will be at the West Country Game Fair at the Royal Bath and West showground on 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> March. So if you're in the area go along, view the travelling exhibition, and show your support.**

As ever, individual workloads never seem to decrease, and with this in mind we are actively looking for "shadowing" support for the Regional Reps, and possibly other committee posts. So if you think you have something to offer and want to get involved, perhaps with a view to fully taking over a role in the future, please contact the Secretary and declare an interest. (NB: We already have shadows for the SE and SW Regional Rep posts.)

The officers of the Association receive a surprisingly high number of queries throughout the year, some being easily dealt with; others take a little more thought and consideration. One such came in just recently.

There is an elderly chap in Sevenoaks, Kent with "medium Alzheimer's", who is a "talented amateur but losing confidence" and is in desperate need of

a mentor to help in his workshop. This is obviously a difficult situation, and not to be taken lightly, but his daughter, a talented and respected artist in her own right, is keen to try and find somebody to help her father continue his hobby.

So if anybody can help, or knows somebody who might, please reply or email me at: chairman@awgb.co.uk, or better still give me a call.

Have a safe, healthy, and productive New Year.

## Treasurer's Notes

### Membership and Gift Aid

Many of you will already have renewed but if you haven't this will be the last copy of Revolutions we will issue to you!

We have held the membership at £16 for this year and if you haven't renewed please complete the membership form you will find elsewhere in this issue. If you are a taxpayer please tick the Gift Aid box and sign and date the form before sending it back to Paul Hannaby.

When we became a Company and Charity in 2012 we had to open a new bank account and our old account was closed in March 2013 so if you had your standing order returned by your bank this is the reason.

If you pay by standing order or bank transfer, please make sure you have the correct amount - £16 and the correct account – Santander, Sort Code 09-01-28, Account number 32277785.

Please don't forget to pay – reminders cost time and money!

### Seminar 2015

Yes we have started planning already and in response to the feedback from the last seminar we shall have two more rotations in 2015, fitting an extra one in on Friday afternoon, to avoid the hanging about that many of you commented on last year, and we will replace the trade slot with a rotation on Sunday afternoon. We will be discussing with traders a new pricing scheme to encourage them to attend and we hope you will support them by spending your savings on their stands!

Most importantly from my perspective (and possibly from yours) is the cost. It is my intention to provide only en-suite accommodation and I hope that I will be able to reduce the price to between £375 and £390 per person for the full weekend. Last year we had to pay additional monies to the university because they served more lunches than planned – we don't know why - but for the next seminar whatever you

book, be it half day, full day or full weekend the cost will include lunch.

### Voucher Scheme

Having told you how much the seminar will cost it's perhaps time to start saving. To help spread the cost we are offering a voucher scheme. So for your birthday or Christmas present (or both) you can ask your nearest and dearest for a Seminar Voucher. We will sell these in multiples of £10 and they can be obtained directly from me at face value – simply send a stamped addressed envelope and a cheque and I'll send you a voucher back. If you buy a voucher in the web shop we will have to charge you a transaction fee and postage as we do incur these additional costs.

When you book you can send the voucher(s) as part, or full, payment. Vouchers cannot be exchanged for cash, neither can we refund the value if you decide not to attend. Of course, if we cancelled the seminar the vouchers would be refunded.

### Donations

Many of you have sent me donations after you have attended a training course. Please accept our thanks for these. Your donations are added to our development fund which helps to provide more courses in current and future years.

## Shadowy Figures

Following a committee decision it has been decided to appoint John Brooks from Treknow Woodturning Club to act as assistant to South-West Regional Rep, John Aitken. In the South East, Colin Smith a member of Cambridge Woodturners has been appointed to assist Brian Partridge.

## Border Woodturners' Open Day

The Border Woodturners' annual open day and inter-club competition was held on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October at the Brampton Community Centre.

The inter-club competition had entries from Cumbria Woodturners; Eden Valley Woodturners; Northumbria Woodturners; Wear Valley Woodturners; Scottish Borders Woodturners, and Border Woodturners. The winners were Cumbria. Second were Border and third were Wear Valley. The competition was judged by Russell Gibbs, the Northern area representative of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain. This was Russell's first visit to the open day and he said he was most impressed with the entries to the competition. Russell also awarded a number of highly commended certificates to pieces in the Border Woodturners members' display.

An increased number of visitors enjoyed turning demonstrations by Tommy Blythe and Colin Edgar both of whom did a number of pieces, and even managed to sell some of the results straight off the lathe.

Peter Parker did a demonstration of piercing work. Mark Raby held a well attended colouring and finishing clinic, while his wife Lisa did a brisk trade in materials to compliment Marks work, and also found time to demonstrate pyrography. Martin Pidgen, a regular at the day, did a steady trade in timber sales. Time & Pen, a company based in Scotland sold turning sundries and Rotur, from Wales, also attended with specialist turning equipment. Both had brisk sales throughout the day.

The excellent catering was, as usual, provided by Karen Ballentyne from Haltwhistle, who did sterling work in providing refreshments throughout the day.

Ian Forster, Border Woodturner's President, said he was delighted with the turnout and was pleased with the work the members had put in to make the day such a success. This was evidenced by the increased number of visitors, the sales of members' work and the fact that a number of new members signed up on the day.

Anyone requiring more information should contact: Brian Conchie on 01387 265608 or Malcolm Ferguson on 01228 546999

## Time for a Change

### Lionel Pringle

The day has finally arrived when I feel that it is time to hand my editorial baton on to somebody else. I have been editing the AWGB newsletter since the Spring of 2006, which equates to 30 plus issues. It is my intention that the December 2014 issue **will be my last**, unless of course somebody with marked enthusiasm steps up to the breach and is prepared to take on the task earlier than that.

This is not a task to be undertaken lightly, for two to three weeks every quarter the collating, editing, querying and chasing will take up a fair amount of your time. You will need to have a better than average knowledge of computers, both in text and photo manipulation, some experience in producing a local branch or club newsletter will help, but production of 'Revolutions' is quite a few steps on from the 'Microsoft Publisher' scenario. We are currently using Adobe InDesign CS4, but it would be sensible for a new incumbent to move on to CS6.

You will also need a good understanding of the English language as a large proportion of submissions will need licking into shape grammatically.

I have always found that it is best to use a local printer/distributor, (always useful to have someone you can swear at personally when things go wrong), but if a successor is happy to continue with the existing setup I am sure our printers would be pleased.

So there you have it, the end of an era approaches, unlike on previous occasions I will not be having my arm twisted to take on another AWGB role, so this will be the end of my association with the AWGB at top level.

Interested parties should make their official submission to the AWGB Secretary, but I am of course willing to have discussions with anybody who wants to get a better feel for the job.

## Norfolk Open Studios

### 24 May - 8 June

Nick Arnall is known widely for his pioneering decorated work, he has also written 90 articles for GMC publications and his first book "Contemporary Woodturning Techniques and Projects". This year he is taking part in the Norfolk Open Studios event, this is a great opportunity to visit Artists and Crafts people in the Norfolk area to see where they work and live.

At Nick's workshop and gallery you can see, handle and purchase finished items or discuss his motivations or even talk or book woodturning courses, a great opportunity not to be missed if you are interested in any aspect of woodturning, make a date to visit Nick's workshop.

He will be open at the weekends during the Open Studio event May 24-26, 30-31 & June 7-8 10:00-17:00hrs: other times by arrangement. To see more about the open studios event in Norfolk visit the web site: <http://www.nnopenstudios.org.uk/>



How do those dead bugs get into those enclosed light fixtures?



## AWGB Beginner's Course

Barbara Hurley

Having always had a love of wood in all its forms, and at the grand old age of 63, I decided to give myself a weekend away from the drudgery of everyday life and learn how to turn. So after driving from pretty Hertfordshire to picturesque Stanton in Worcestershire, I met my fellow Turners John Birkett and Ben Stiles, fellow enthusiasts, both owners of their own lathes. I had only ever seen them at craft fairs and the like, never actually touched one.

Three of us arrived in good time for a 9.30am start, at what must be one of the most picturesque locations in the area. Stanton Guildhouse is near Broadway, high on the edge of the Cotswolds with wonderful views for miles. The workshop, behind the old house, is well equipped with lathes, other woodworking tools and the mandatory kettle for tea and coffee making. In my experience it is unusual to find Art/Craft venues equipped this well.

Our tutor for the day was Chris Eagles, a convivial and experienced teacher and woodturner who led us through the basics of safety, tool sharpening, and spindle turning. Chris took it all in his stride and did not "talk down" to any of us, making us feel proud of our poor efforts. He is a good lad, explaining the "how, what and why" at every turn.

An excellent day and so enjoyable, for a finale, the sunset on the Cotswolds in Autumn as we were leaving was breath-taking.

Thanks to Chris for a pleasant and interesting day, and thanks to all for their company. It would be nice to think that we could return sometime for a slightly more advanced course. We would all recommend a day at Stanton Guildhouse with Chris Eagles for would-be turners, definitely a day to remember.



**Still smiling broadly at the end**

## Training Novices from Norwich

Ron Lansdell

Earlier in the year the Norwich Woodturning Club announced that there would be a chance to take part in a days training under the tuition of a professional woodturning instructor sponsored by the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain and asked for the names of those interested. I put my name forward and was lucky enough to be accepted.

Early (for me) on Saturday morning I drove to Sprowston Old Peoples Club with a car laden with what seemed like most of my workshop, to find Roger Groom already there and starting to set up the room for a days tutoring by Andy Coates.



**Roger Groom - teaboy. An essential element**



**Getting down to it**

The morning and early afternoon were spent in learning about the tools and how to turn an oblong piece of timber into a cylinder, make coves, beads, fillets and "V" cuts, and drinking Chris's coffee. For the latter part of the course we were able to do a small project and decided to make toadstools from branch wood. None of us had attempted a toadstool before, and after a demonstration by Chris we set to work and, with Chris' help, and more coffee, all produced passable examples; all different, but that was just the students showing their artistic sides. A quick clean-up of the shavings and it was time to leave. We now have some practice to do to build on what we have learned.

Whilst unloading my lathe and equipment, other students started to arrive to join in setting up the rest of the lathes and equipment around the hall. Having completed this, Roger took our orders and returned with a tray of coffees and teas and a general discussion started on the prospects for the day. Prompt at 9.30 the floor was handed over to Andy who took us through the proposed programme for the day. He then mounted one of the Ash bowl blanks, as supplied to each of us by Roger, onto the club lathe using a screw chuck and showed us how to true up both the outside diameter and the front face. He also put a spigot on to aid mounting the blank into the scroll chuck later in the day. Throughout he was giving safety tips and showing us exactly how to present the tool to the wood. For this initial stage a long grind bowl gouge was used. After completing this first stage he sent us to our lathes to repeat what he had just demonstrated.

Having seen Andy's bowl gouges close up, some students, including myself, realised how different the grind on our bowl gouges were compared to Andy's, so, before we started turning, a lesson was given in tool grinding using a jig and most of us had the profiles reground. Although I have the same sort of jig, I obviously had never used it properly to get the correct shape for the cutting edge. When I started to turn the blank to shape, I found my nightmare tool had now become very user friendly.

It was Andy back to the club lathe for the next stage which was to shape the outside of the bowl to a perfect arc ensuring that the projected bottom of the arc finished inside the spigot. Andy discussed the pros and cons of turning from the middle out and vice versa and settled on turning from the outside as being the better of the two options, although the opposite perhaps, gave a slightly better finish as the gouge is then cutting with the grain. Having shaped the bowl we then talked about a final clean of the surface using a variety of scrapers, but after demonstrating these and using a round edged skew chisel presented on the angle, we came to the conclusion the latter gave the best finish. Off to the lathes to shape the bowl, I found I now had a much improved understanding of just how to approach the curved shape of the bowl and finished up with a shape I had never been able to obtain before. For this stage we used a conventional grind gouge. Whilst we were performing Andy came round helping to improve our technique, giving us tips and encouragement and praise where it was due.

On the run up to lunch we were shown how to clean up the spigot and put in a centre mark ready for removal from the screw chuck and mounting in the scroll chuck. With the blank now secured in the scroll chuck, hollowing started from the centre taking each cut with a long ground gouge twisting it as it was fed in, to make the most of the side bevel at the bottom of the arc. We were advised to use these cuts as practise for the final cuts.

After lunch it was back to the lathes to complete the shaping of the inside of the bowl. On completion with the gouge, we had a lesson on the use of internal scrapers and how to reverse chuck the bowl and finish the foot by removing the spigot and making a convex base so the bowl sat nicely on a flat surface. Andy also showed us how to recover a bowl which had been hollowed too deeply, by carefully re-cutting the base of the outside curve & incorporating the spigot into the foot. We all then proceeded to finish the bowls as shown. We did have time to do a small amount of sanding, but most would have to be done at home.

Having completed the bowls we then had a discussion on finishes and suitable woods to use for food bowls, such as ash, beech and sycamore left untreated or finished with food safe oil or similar, well cured before use. Andy uses untreated wooden bowls as everyday cereal and soup bowls and said that after a while they obtain a natural patina and are virtually impervious to water.

All in all it was a very useful day and worth getting up early for. Thanks to Roger for arranging the day, Andy for his excellent tutoring, the AWGB for sponsoring it all and to Jon Simpson for the photographs.



**Two views of a completed bowl**

To end a final quote from Andy. "People should take more advantage of group sessions like this. Novices can be stuck at home, but when you bring them into an environment like this they are able to make rapid progress. When you can see others having similar problems to yourself, you begin to feel more relaxed about what you are doing. It's all going better than I expected and there have been some dramatic improvements already, it makes you realise that days like this really are worth doing".



# Woodturners at Amberley

Keith Greenfield

After eight years in the planning and fund raising procedure, West Sussex Woodturners have self built a new 90sq metre workshop, to stand adjacent to the old workshop they had demonstrated in for the past 20 years within the grounds of Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre.

From the cast slab which was paid for by a local building foundation fund, the construction took eight months to complete, allowing us to use it for the 'hands on' kids activities that run in collusion with the museums 'Santa Days', for three weekends during the run up to Christmas.

The brief given to us by the museum's trustees was that the completed building should demonstrate two different build periods and styles, to compliment the 1920 period wood yard. Plans were drawn and donated and passed both council and museum guidelines. Then materials were costed and full thought given to raising the money required. Over 150 applications were submitted to various bodies, but with cash being tight they were mostly declined. Several turners donated items for sale and there was a donation pot which often had ten pound notes tucked in, all of which helped to swell the coffers. Eventually the build was started.



## Stages of construction

We had professional help from a fellow turner to cut and raise the roof then we over-clad the outside before cutting all the high performance urethane board to fully insulate us.

We hand made the windows to match the period design, they looked rough, but we knew they would look the part once stained black and glazed and they do.

Great thought was given to the internal layout, we wanted six individual cubicles to house our collection of small lathes, and also to use on the kids days, we also had two full size lathes, plus our demonstration lathe. We decided to have a designated sharpening area central to the workshop.

The areas were laid out on the floor, then adjusted, then altered again, and again, and again. I must stress there were eight of us each throwing their ideas and thoughts in, the final measurements were taken and signed off by all of us.

The cubicles were built, each with a low door and an observation safety glass window and separate electrics. The main demonstration area was constructed with an off-cut of kitchen worktop, storage cupboards were built behind with shelves above to show off sales items.

The next major project was to paint with an Intumescent coating the ceiling and walls to comply with building regulations. The floor was painted to make sweeping easier. It was all beginning to look really great, just the small jobs left, door catches, door stays, and window cleaning to name a few.

As I stated earlier, we opened in time for the museum's Santa Experience, we only had one small detail remaining, that was to make it look Christmassy, a couple of hours hanging decorations took care of that. External lights adorned the front, we all felt proud, bring on the kids!





On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December we opened with a little trepidation, we need not have worried, we were complimented by many 'returning customers' on what had been achieved, museum staff and trustees paid us a visit and they too were amazed. A snagging meeting was held at closing time, the only complaint was 'there is nowhere to hang my coat in the cubicle', that has since been rectified.

Our long term intentions are to hold tuition sessions here by using it for our club beginners and anyone wishing for taster sessions. We have already been approached by a scout troop and a school to host instructional courses and these are being followed up.

Our old workshop is to be altered internally to house the vintage lathes both belonging to the museum and those collected by us, this will then become 'A History of Woodturning'. This will be a walk in the park, after what has been achieved with the backing of the whole club and a volunteer work force.



**Waiting for the onslaught**

## **Planning for the Future**

Peter Martin

Much has been made over the recent past about the need to encourage the younger generation to take an interest in woodturning. We, at Kent Woodturners, have conducted classes for juniors, we have attended a number of scout jamborees and there have been volumes written in relevant publications, about the need to look to the future if the hobby is to survive.

Personally I have seen no evidence that these activities have created an interest in woodturning amongst the young. Those that we have taught have shown initial interest but have not been seen since they attended the classes that we ran. We gave numerous scouts tasters at recent jamborees but again there was little interest shown after the event. A few of the youngsters that we taught purchased lathes and were given membership to the AWGB. They have not been seen since and I would be very doubtful whether the membership that they

were given has ever been used.

We have contacted a number of scout groups offering our services and, indeed, the AWGB have attempted to have a Woodturning Badge added to the scouting achievement record. We must bear in mind that this is competing against numerous other achievement awards and has no more significance in assessing whether we are reaching the younger generation.

Kent Woodturners even share their workshop with a local scout group which does not seem in the least bit interested in what we may have to offer.

We should remember that, at this young age, we are competing against, girls, sport, school, music, fashion, computer games and numerous other activities that command their interest. As they get older, careers, marriage, children and just the very act of surviving in this chaotic world will provide all the excitement that young adults will require.

It is not until later in life when the world gets a little slower and demands upon your time become more of your own choosing that it is likely that you may turn to woodturning as a hobby. I do agree that having shown the youth of today what is available at some time in the future we may have created an interest but, if we are looking upon recruiting large numbers of youngsters in our lifetime, I fear we will be very disappointed. It is also somewhat doubtful whether they will even remember that they shared an experience many years ago.



**David Reeks instructs some new members of Kent Woodturners**

Kent Woodturners have now decided that the future of our Club is to encourage new and potential members by providing a professional training in the rudiments of safe, enjoyable woodturning. We are running a series of day long training courses for those who feel that they require some support to get the most from the hobby. David Reeks is conducting the courses and, so far, we have had 24 members who have made good use of what we are providing. At least we have the benefit of seeing the results of

our labours when these members present their work at future exhibitions and attend meetings where they contribute towards the activities that we provide.

Surely this is the future of the hobby which, if we do not look after the immediate future, will likely not be around when the training that we have given to the youth of today comes to fruition.

This is a personal view but, having taken part in a number of youth training activities, I now believe that my time can be better spent looking after the needs of those who can immediately benefit from the effort put in and the time expended.



**Don't listen to those stories about the skew chisel**

## **"Dipper" Bowl Turning**

Peter Stubbings

What do you do with those little ceramic or plastic bowls that individual crème Brule's are sold in by the supermarkets? Lovers of these little French desserts will most probably have a stack of free bowls at the back of the cupboard because "we might need them one day!"

We have found a use for these as inserts in bowls which can be used with a dip for crudités, or, more commonly, Crisps or Tortilla Chips, photo 1. They also make a very useful and different gift.

We started with a beech blank measuring 200mm x 62mm. This was turned and faced with a bowl gouge before cutting a 60mm wide bevelled recess to hold the bowl when turning the inside. The outside of the bowl was then shaped, sanded, sealed and then waxed. The fine finish shown in the photograph was achieved using Simon Hope's pro-sanding tool with interchangeable arbours (which really do speed up the whole process), down to 600 grit, followed by cellulose sealer and carnauba wax, photo 2.

Before reversing the bowl on the chuck the ceramic insert was measured for width with callipers, photo 3 and for depth using the home-made depth gauge shown in photo 4. When measuring the depth it is important to ensure that the ceramic bowl is above

the finished inner turned bowl to guard against staining it with the dips, and to give a good grip when lifting the ceramic bowl out.

With the bowl reversed on the chuck the inside of the inner bowl was marked out, and then the parting tool was used to provide "safety" cuts on the edge of the bowl and the inner bowl, photo 5. The inner bowl was hollowed out with square scrapers before hollowing the outer bowl with the bowl gouge and round side scraper, photo 6.

When hollowing the inner bowl make frequent checks with the callipers and the depth gauge to ensure a snug fit for the insert, allowing a margin for the final finishing when sanding by hand. The insides of the bowls were sanded down to 400 grit before sealing and finishing with three treatments of food safe oil, photo 7.

We have used the same "bowl within a bowl" technique to produce bowls for olives, making a central small bowl for the cocktail sticks. We also found a "free" plastic insert which was used for another bowl, and are on the lookout for a plain glass insert – any suggestions would be gratefully received.







## Irish Woodturners' Guild Seminar

Russell Gibbs

I was lucky enough to be invited to attend the IWG seminar to represent the AWGB. The much-anticipated three day event featured a wide range of national and international demonstrators including Dennis Keeling, Joe Laird, Robert O'Connor, Joey Richardson, Les Thorne and Marcel van Berkel. As well as demonstrations, there were also a wide range of trade stands in attendance.



The winning piece from the Seminar Instant Gallery



larrived at Knock Airport (the airport built on a swamp and on the top of a hill!) and was picked up and taken to Sligo by a local chapter member. The seminar was to be held in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Rosses Point Road, Sligo and I was soon tucking my luggage away in my room then getting to know the lie of the land. I was introduced to a host of people including the Committee of the Guild and the Demonstrators most of whom I had not previously met. Joe Laird the IWG Chairman soon had me on the right road and made sure that I could not leave the Emerald Isle without at least one pint of the 'Black Stuff'.

The very full demonstration programme was held in rooms in the conference suite and during the short breaks between sessions I was able to meet and get to know a good number of the attendees. I attended a demonstration in each of the sessions allocated, with the exception of one two hour slot when I was kindly given a tour of Sligo and its locality by a very knowledgeable member of the Sligo Chapter. I managed, amongst other locations, to Visit Rosses Point a very beautiful landmark and also the resting place of the famous Poet William Butler Yeats at Drumcliff Church, on my whirlwind tour.

Every one of the demonstrations that I attended was both interesting and entertaining, in particular I was impressed with the skills of Marcel van Berkel from Holland.

It is said that the Irish know how to enjoy themselves and with this I can concur, whether official speeches in the formal dinners or down time in the hotel environs I was brought into the fold and felt a part of the seminar.

I have to say that this being my first visit to Southern Ireland I could not believe the incredibly warm welcome and sense of camaraderie that I found there, I will at the first opportunity be jumping on a plane and visiting again. My sincere thanks to all the Committee, Demonstrators and Attendees for making me feel so welcome.

I would without hesitation recommend that should any AWGB member be in a position to attend any future Irish seminar for a day, or the weekend, then they should go for it.

## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

### Stewart Wales

Staffordshire and South Cheshire Woodturners Association are celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year and recently took a vacant shop in the centre of Newcastle under Lyme for two days to show what the club does and what sort of things are produced. The general public responded wonderfully, upward of 500 people came in to discuss woodturning and find

out more about the club and quite a few indicated their intention to attend the next club meeting.

Mike Willis arranged for the use of the shop with the local council at a very reasonable charge. Members brought an amazing selection of work to display; those who helped over the two days were stunned at the sheer quantity of items displayed.



### The Mayor and Mayoress show an interest

The Mayor and Mayoress of Newcastle under Lyme attended on the first day as did the area representative of AWGB Russell Gibbs, they all indicated they were well impressed.

The shop was ideally situated for the purpose and the event was enjoyed by all. Many of the members present got some turning done as well. All in all it was a great two days.



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## SAW Annual Open Day and Show

### Jennie Starbuck

Despite extreme weather warnings for later in the day, everyone booked and expected arrived at the Mytchett Centre on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October for the 18<sup>th</sup> annual SAW Open Day - a big improvement on last year when, at the last minute, three traders dropped out.

Traders braved the elements to bring a wide range of timber blanks, planks and tools to the show and there were plenty of turners for members and visitors to watch, pieces of turning to look at, things to do and people to chat to. The club was very grateful to Axminster, John Davies with Simon Hope, Flutterby Crafts, PW timber, Surrey Timber, Jon Warrender and Proops for making the effort to come in these cash-strapped times.

Stuart King entertained visitors with his humorous slant on the history of woodturning and anecdotes about his work with Time Team whilst demonstrating his effortless turning skills. The other professional turner 'wowing' the crowds was Andy Coates, currently the Chairman of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain. He produced some really excellent pieces whilst explaining to the crowds watching him, all the technical details of how to achieve the same results in their own workshops!

Also taking part were members of four other woodturning clubs - Cheam Association of Woodturners, East Surrey Woodturners, Forest of Bere Woodturners from Havant and Orchard Woodturners from Kent. They joined in competitions and set up some club stands including demonstrations of turning and some incredible exhibition pieces. This year's winners of 'the President's Gavel' trophy for an inter-club table-top competition were Forest of Bere Woodturners with a magnificent and varied display of work, themed on Halloween with spiders and webs! The other clubs will have a lot to do by next year to compete with that! Howard Overton from Orchard Woodturners won the Open Individual competition again this year with a very technical and absolutely beautiful segmented vase.

As well as the afore-mentioned competitions, SAW held its own annual competition which celebrated the work of its members over the past year. Stuart



**Andy attracts a crowd**

King and Andy Coates judged the competitions and certificates were handed out at the end of the day. The club then celebrates all of the successes in a trophy presentation at its club night on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

A new and very popular addition to the event was a practical crafting table run by Flutterby Crafts selling lots of Jo Sonja products. It was busy all day with groups of visitors trying out decoupage while other visitors looked on.

Two other clubs took part. The Southern Fellowship of Woodworkers had a display including old hand tools and superb joinery - and for the first time, the Guildford Model Engineering Society set up a stand, including part-built and finished model trains. SAW has participated in their summer show for the past two years and it was excellent to have them join us. Their amazing display provoked a lot of interest and 'closest' model engineers really enjoyed being able to talk to like-minded enthusiasts. The halls were packed and there was a great deal for visitors to see, do and find out about.



**Alfie hard at work**

Three SAW club members, including SAW's youngest member, Alfie Bradley Nesbitt, also turned during the day on a club lathe to entertain the visitors. Alfie, aged 10, has been turning on his own and demonstrating for nearly two years. He walked away from the club competition with a huge sheaf of certificates and rosettes celebrating his successes. As he was turning (very sensibly) in a full face mask and respirator, it was interesting seeing the reaction of visitors to the little 'Martian'. It is difficult to accept that someone so young can have the confidence and presence to entertain visitors at the show - but he did!

Club members provided tea, coffee and cake to visitors from the kitchen in the centre and excellent hot food was supplied outside by Dave from 'Simply Fresh'. The addition of an outside mobile caterer meant that everyone could all indulge in their passion for bacon butties without filling the centre with





**Alfie and his haul of awards**

black smoke, setting off the fire alarms and causing an evacuation and a visit from the fire brigade (as happened last year!)



**The winner of the open spindle competition by Robert Grant**



**Rodney Goodship's winning piece in the open face-plate competition**

From the main hall, it was easy to forget about the blustery weather. The sun was shining and it was delightfully warm for the time of year. However when clearing up started and the hall doors were opened, a chaotic whirlwind of wood shavings from the floor around Andy Coates' lathe made everyone aware of how lucky the club had been with the weather and gave the people clearing up the challenging job of sweeping it all up – they had to catch it first!

The treasurer and committee were delighted that visitor numbers were up on previous years despite the weather warnings and that everyone was so complimentary about the event. The 2014 event is already booked for Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup>. Please put it in your diaries!

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### Please use block letters

Membership Number (if already a Member)	Tick if you are applying for the first time
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The membership year runs from 1st January to 31st December. Half year membership is available from 1st July to 31st December at half the yearly subscription rate. Applications received after 1st October will last until 31st December in the following year, providing the full annual subscription has been paid.

Send completed forms to Membership Secretary, Paul Hannaby, Windrush, High Street, Drybrook, GL17 9ET - membership@awgb.co.uk - 01594 544417

**Subscription rates UK members** Individual - £16 Family - £26 Junior - if under 19 on 1st Jan of membership year - Free

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Notice is given that the  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

of the

**ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN**

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will be held at

Oddington Village Hall, Lower Oddington, Nr. Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, GL56 0XD,  
**on Sunday March 23rd, 2014 starting at 2.00pm.**

There are three Trustee/Director positions on the Executive open for election:

One General Trustee.

Regional Representative, South-east.

Regional Representative, Midlands

There is one vacancy for a General Trustee. Martin Lawrence has been nominated for election.

The Secretary sought nominations for the Regional Representative positions from the Branches in the South-east and Midlands Regions. Brian Partridge and Peter Carless have expressed their willingness to continue for a further two years, and it has been established that this is the wish of the Branches in those Regions.

The Executive is experiencing an increasing workload, thus candidates to assist in the management of the AWGB in the role of Volunteers will be welcomed. Whilst Volunteers are not Trustees and do not have voting rights, they are responsible for particular functions and carry out valuable work in support of the Executive. It is a matter of regret and concern that no volunteers have come forward at the time of this publication, and the Executive urges candidates to contact the Secretary. Without additional help, the work and function of the Executive will be significantly constrained to the disadvantage of the Membership.

Under Section 324 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Articles, a member is entitled to appoint another person as their proxy to exercise all or any of their rights to attend, speak and vote at the meeting. The appointment of a proxy must be in writing and notified to the Secretary before the meeting. A Corporate member may nominate a person to attend on their behalf in writing to the Secretary before the meeting.

As usual there will be tables on which to exhibit attendee's work which they are happy to submit for judgment and selection for the Travelling Exhibition coupled with the award of the Chairman's Prize. There will also be tables on which to place tools and the like for sale. Nigel Fleckney will be in attendance with a selection of his fine timbers for sale.

The AGM will be preceded by a meeting of Members and Branch Representatives which will start at 11.00am.

**Agenda**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Acceptance of the minutes of the 2013 AGM.
3. Matters arising from the minutes of the 2013 AGM.
4. Treasurer's report for year ending 31 December 2013.
5. Chairman's Report.
6. Announcement of the result of ballot for Trustees
7. Vote on the appointment of Accountants/Auditors for the AWGB.
8. Result of ballot on any resolutions
9. Any other business



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# Brian's Turn

brianhollett@awgb.co.uk



Santa's  
goodies are put  
to the test

Your chance to  
win a Sorby  
'Turnmaster'

## Tools, Tantrums and Torn Grain

I've been busy since Christmas trying out all those goodies Santa delivered, but suffered two major surprises before I even began. The buffing kit Santa had so much trouble getting down the RevsHQ chimney turned into a pumpkin at midnight New Year's Eve. I blamed the brandy bottle until five white mice arrived the following week with a replacement, care of Mr Chestnut. Oh, and a pointy-headed Princeling called Jeanie arrived on a beanstalk to slip a glass welly gently over my new-for-Christmas hiking socks. Life at RevsHQ can be a real pantomime sometimes.

"Oh yes it can!"

### The Ashley Iles twosome

The flared parting tool, you will remember, has a cutting edge 2mm wider than the rest of the blade so that in use it produces a kerf with built-in clearance. Try as I might I found no way to make the tool bind during a cut and there is even the possibility of 'steering' the tool if you have started the cut slightly awry. With its minimal contact area there is also almost no heat build-up. I also love the way that the top and bottom edges are slightly radiused and polished so it slides easily with no risk of marking-up the toolrest.

You can see in photo 1 that the blade of the parting tool remains parallel until about 10mm before the cutting edge, where the flare begins. This extra width will, of course, get slightly less every time the tool is sharpened until it is reduced to a conventional parallel parting tool.



The second arrival from the Ashley Iles stable is their new-style bead-forming tool. I assumed, before I tried it, that being as its business end was shaped like a Bedan it would be used in a similar, bevel upwards, fashion. Having experienced a few torn-out beads

I began to wonder if, in fact it was better up the other way and, lo and behold, success followed. It just goes to show the importance of exploring the strengths and weaknesses of new kit before pressing it into service based on first impressions.

I began my practice sessions on the lighter coloured timber and, as you can see in photo 2, had a few less than successful attempts before discovering the best method (and there was another 'lost layer' of chewed-up beads, which were even worse!). The stool legs in the background (Baby Grandson's first seat.....ahhhhhh bless!) were the tool's first project, and went without a hitch, so my practice sessions proved their worth.



### Sorby Turnmaster

I chose a rough-turned apple blank as a suitable testing ground principally for this tool, but the Ashley Iles tools get a look in as well. It had remained sealed inside a paper carrier bag in the deepest recesses of my wood store for about 18 months.

As it dried the blank had moved in just about every conceivable direction so nothing could be relied on as an accurate first chucking point. It had also gained a few well distributed bark inclusions and small stress cracks, which didn't appear to jeopardise its strength or integrity.

I clenched the mis-shapen blank between a homemade polystyrene faceplate (Polly to her friends) and the tailstock centre, photo 3. If following in my gougeprints it is important to remember to give Polly a really good squeeze, as any movement after



cutting operations have begun is bound to send you down the big snake to start all over again.



I began by truing up the mounting spigot with the square tungsten cutter fitted to the Turnmaster. The tool cut beautifully but when used like a parting tool the width of the cutting edge, and shorty handle, made it feel just a little 'grabby'. Moving the cut from the spigot onto the bowl-proper my first experiment was to try cutting with the side of the cutter, photo 4. The tool continued to feel perfectly stable, with no attempted twisting motion, and the cut remained effective. As I was forgoing all the advantage of tool-length I soon returned to using the tool 'properly'. The Turnmaster's knurled ring necessitates a longer toolrest overhang than we might normally choose, but this caused me no problems and, because the gap between wood and toolrest is far bigger than finger width, I see no obvious safety issues arising from this unusual arrangement.



Because the overly-dry apple was immensely hard and the blank seriously out of true this operation was probably the tool's greatest test. The Turnmaster came through with flying colours, especially after I discovered that its favoured way of cutting was travelling sideways, rubbing the front edge while cutting with the corner. This technique soon removed, with very little drama, the 'cut-and-come-again' vibrations caused by the air gaps between high points of the out of true wood.

Once the timber had been reduced to round it was

almost child's play to cut a sweeping curve with the same square tungsten cutter, photo 5. With the chosen shape established I loosened the Turnmaster's knurled ring and twisted the cutter carrier into the shear scraping mode before fitting the nitride coated HSS teardrop cutter, photo 6. The super-hard tungsten cutters are superb for roughing out and will probably never need sharpening but the material's coarse grain structure makes them less suitable for the fine cuts needed for a decent finish. The HSS and nitride coated versions are identical beneath the skin, but the extra-hard gold coloured coating reduces trips to the sharpening station by an estimated factor of 4-5. It was now the work of minutes to refine the curve and improve the finish ready for a minimum of sanding.



In photo 7 I have turned the tool right over onto its back, in order to cut as close to Polly as she will allow. Am I abusing the tool or using my initiative in my quest to give you as full a picture of the tool's abilities as



possible? You decide! Whether you try it or not I can assure you that performing this unorthodox cut gave no problems whatsoever. Photo 8 shows the finish, straight from the tool.



To make my next experiment clearer to the camera, I have coloured an area of timber and am now using the bead-forming tool to mark out an ornamental band. I have found that cutting a series of beads simultaneously, rather than individually, is a far better method of achieving a match. In photo 9 the three beads are taking shape. The tool can be wiggled a fiddly bit to left and right to aid the cut but this is no time to rush, slowly, slowly catchy monkey as my zoo keeper girlfriend used to say.



In photo 10 you will notice that I have stopped cutting a gnat's hairpiece before the summit of the bead is

fully rounded. I find that this minimises the risk of a disastrous stripping of the newly-formed bead. A quick wipe of 240 grit will soon lose the bead's tiny flat top.

Phot 11 shows the Ashley Iles parting tool relieving the sharp corner at each end of the series of beads. To good effect, I think you will agree! After a quick sanding session (120, 180 and 240 grits in a palm sander) I slopped a liberal coat of finishing oil onto the outside before reversing the bowl onto the chuck, photo 12. I have driven the tailstock centre into the floor of the bowl for extra support because the blank is still seriously out of balance.



To rough out the inside of the bowl I gave the round tungsten cutter a miss, although it would normally be the first choice for this job. Instead I put the more basic high speed steel version into bat to see how it stood up to the battering of the out of true blank. Because I wanted the extra support of the tailstock centre (with the quill at full extension) I was forced to cut with the side of the cutter to get rid of the worst of the unbalanced timber. Both the tool and its cutter took it all in its stride.

Once the majority of the unwanted wood was converted into shavings it became clear that I had a problem area of mis-placed end grain near the rim. Probably caused by a nearby knot and bark inclusion,

it gave problems on both inside and outside surfaces and nothing I tried improved matters very much. But as the finished bowl is not the primary object here, I gave into temptation to employ 'Nelson's eye' and carry on with a liberal coat of finishing oil.

That same area after oiling is clearly shown in photo 13. It's a shame the bowl has had to become a 'second'. But never mind, the lessons this bit of freebie wood has taught me are far more valuable than any bowl. The scruffy paper bag, incidentally, is protecting the lathe bed from drips of finish, which would otherwise go hard and stop the headstock from sliding smoothly.



### Conclusions

All the tools on test were well made and performed exactly as intended and the only extra tool used in the making of the bowl was a wide flat scraper to get rid of a troublesome centre pip.

Both Ashley Iles tools had superb polished finishes to the steel and all sharp corners had been expertly removed. Not all tool makers go to these kinds of lengths. My only negative comment would be that I would have preferred a little more length and weight to the wooden handles, a bit too dainty for my sausage fingers!

### Own a Turnmaster yourself

As you have seen the Turnmaster proved perfectly capable of making a complete project, to an acceptable standard and with a minimum requirement of tool-handling skills. In my opinion this makes it absolutely ideal for a newbie's first experience of woodturning. Some beginners may then continue their career in the same 'single tool' fashion but most, I foresee, would choose to go on to learn about bevels, flutes and skewers. Its on-going value to the more experienced turner, therefore, is rather less clear cut. It proved an absolute whizz at forming the awkward recess below the rim but, other than that, the tiny cutters would probably limit the tool's ability to fill the role of an everyday scraper.

In partnership with Robert Sorby we have a brand new Turnmaster seeking a new home. It comes complete with three cutter heads and is ready to give hours of woodturning pleasure. So, Revolutionaries, pin back

your ears if you fancy this useful tool to fill that gap in your own armoury.

What we need you to do is simply amuse us here at Revs HQ with your favourite anecdote. Have you done something laughable on the lathe, wonky in the workshop, had a project go pear-shaped? Perhaps you've had a crazy commission or been involved with a farcical fair.

There is no limit on wordage but I suspect most anecdotes will fall somewhere between 100 and 200 words. Entries to be e-mailed to [brianhollett@awgb.co.uk](mailto:brianhollett@awgb.co.uk), you may enter as many stories as you like but each must be on a separate e-mail, marked 'Turnmaster comp' in the subject box. The closing date for judging (there is of course no closing date for stories, just for having them judged) will be **April 1st**. The judges are to be Robert Walton, representing Robert Sorby, the Revs Editor, and, of course me Brian.

Finally, did you know that the words 'Amusing', 'Anecdote', 'Exaggeration' and even 'Fiction', all appear in the dictionary before 'Strictly' or 'Truthful' so let's make that the order of priority.... we just wish to be amused.



**What you can win, above and the full range of cutters, below**



For further details of all of Ashley Iles' range contact them on 01790 763372 or [sales@ashleyiles.co.uk](mailto:sales@ashleyiles.co.uk) Robert Sorby can be contacted via [sales@robert-sorby.co.uk](mailto:sales@robert-sorby.co.uk) or on 01142 250700. The Turnmaster can be seen in action on YouTube.

### Next time

I will be further finishing the bowl project by putting the Chestnut Buffing System through its paces. Being a virgin when it comes to this buffing lark I would love to hear from anyone out there who has hints or tips to share. Please contact me at [brianhollett@awgb.co.uk](mailto:brianhollett@awgb.co.uk) it could even make you famous(ish!).



# How not to make a chair!

Ron Davis



two bits of hardboard to the sides and had a handy jig for the holes ready for the stretchers. As always, I drilled the holes first, as it is easier to get them right in a square piece of wood, rather than in the round.

So far so good, four blanks cut from one piece of oak for consistent colour and a seat drilled ready to fit them to.

Then I started turning, number one leg, it was a nice shape looked OK until I tried it in the seat, it wobbled and rattled in the hole like a pencil in a drain pipe! I had over cut the tenon, one bit for the scrap box.

Well we are all human and make mistakes, and I was more human than usual on this project.

On to leg number two, I roughed it out, marked it with the aid of my rod and started turning, I carefully turned the tenon to the correct size and when I stopped the lathe I noted the hole for the stretcher, where it didn't ought to be. I had turned the



We recently decided as a club, to make some turned items for the local Hospice, mainly Christmas tree decorations, which we attached to a plastic tree. Having made my share I decided to make 'something else'. This something else was inspired by a visit to the club by Jeremy Laing of Trees Reincarnated. Jeremy makes reproduction Mendlesham Chairs and any other chairs the customer requires.

Now, I have made chairs before, most members of my close family had one when they were small and I have made one or two others as well, usually with some success, so armed with this experience and a whole evenings advice from Jeremy I sorted the woodpile for suitable timber and made a start.

This chair was intended for a small child, about two to three years old so it was to be small. Inspired by Jeremy's talk I thought I would try a 'Windsor' style of chair. I had the perfect piece of wood for the seat, some elm, rescued from a wood-burner when I helped to clear out a loft. Bent and buckled from being stored in a loft I was only able to rescue small pieces from it but I did get some nice bits for the seat. The timber store (woodpile!) yielded enough oak for the rest of the chair.

So I made a rough sketch, and calculated the angles I needed for the legs and set about creating this chair.

From my drawing, I worked out that I needed around 15° of splay for the legs and to get the holes at least consistent I made a wedge from scrap wood, nailed

tenon on the wrong end! Another bit aimed at the scrap box.

I went away then, and came back next day and had another go, this time getting two legs turned OK. I then started on number three (or five, depending on how you count them) I had included some narrow beads and as I had been given a beading tool I decided to use this. Now I have had fun with this in the past, but after another club demo, this time by Mark Baker, I thought I had it mastered, yeah right! The tops shattered on the beads making this leg unusable. I thought back to Mark's demo, I had the tool the right way up, it was sharp, the tool rest was at the right height, then I realised that the tool rest was not close enough to the blank so it vibrated the tool and wrecked the beads.

My aim for the scrap box was improving and this one went in first time!

My next one was OK and then I did the last one to replace number one, by now I had the technique for the legs weighed up, mark out, cut the beads first, start with the bottom of the leg and work towards the head stock, I set my callipers to a previous tenon and turned to that.

Of the four legs, guess which one I used to set my callipers to? Yep, the first one, the undersized one. Fortunately I always set the callipers a bit on the large size to allow for a bit of fine tuning, this time I just got away with the tenon and I could move on to the stretchers. I had turned one to check the angles on



my sketch, these stretchers were simple, just roughed down to size and tapered to fit the holes. I drilled the first one from the square as before and fitted it to the two legs; the angle looked right so I went indoors as it was tea time.

I went back next day and turned number two stretcher, now if you are going to turn more than one item and want them the same, then turn them at one session. Then you will use the same drill and both holes will be the same size.

One stretcher flew towards the scrap bin to join the other bits. Now my daughter has benefited from all this as she has a wood-burning stove and it has a hungry maw.

Next came the central stretcher, made as before and a success! This one was not for the scrap bin, well not yet.

I put them all together for a dry fit and they seemed OK, just a bit tight but it hung together without glue.

I looked at the seat and decided that it needed trimming, so far it was a square with no particular shape. So I took 40mm off the front, I then turned it over to find I had nearly cut through the drilled holes! This seat did not end in the bin, elm of this age was too precious to waste, may be pens or light pulls in there.

I decided to mark the holes for the legs by assembling them dry and simply marking direct to the underside of the seat. After re-drilling the holes I offered the legs again and realised I needed to cut 20mm from the stretchers to get a good fit, so I did, then found that the central stretcher did not need to be cut at all, by now the scrap bin was overflowing so I bagged it up for my daughter, much to her delight!

I turned a replacement, and as I had used the original oak I ended up with a piece much paler in colour than the legs.

I then turned my attention to the top; one thing Jeremy did say about Windsor chairs was that the top and undercarriage were independent of each other, so I considered how I would do this. I ended up with four uprights, socketed into a curved top. I turned four uprights with two beads in each and I am proud to say they were all OK.

For the back support I decided to laminate pieces of oak into a semicircle and drill the bottom half to suit the dowels I had made. I cut and shaped the pieces and glued them and after some handwork I had something like what I had wanted, along with some gaps and glue lines I did not.

Nothing for it I then reverted to a method I used some years back to make a fruit bowl. I cut six pieces of

oak at 60° and glued them to a backing board, drilled the holes for the dowels and then glued six more bits on top. I then turned the circle, carefully cutting the inner face until I turned into one of the dowel holes.

I went back to my first effort and tried to assemble this, gaps and all. Did I say that my four upright dowels were OK? Well they were a tiny bit over sized and split, adding to the warmth of my daughters evening!

By now I was tearing what hair I have left, it seemed that everything I tried to do went wrong, I had just a day and a half to finish it and I was tempted to sling the lot.

Being either single minded and determined to overcome all obstacles, or more likely, just stubborn, I set about repeating the exercise, this time I drilled the holes in the first layer, then turned it to size and then put the second layer on.

Whilst the glue dried I 'saddled' the seat, using a carving chisel to rough shape it and scraped the chisel marks off with a reground cabinet scraper, and sanded to a finish, I polished it before assembly.

I turned and polished the doughnut I have for the chair back, and cut it in half, the four uprights I put back on the lathe and using 80 grit Abranet I sanded the ends to a perfect fit. I assembled the chair and finished it on Sunday afternoon with the presentation to the Hospice due on the Monday.

I took it to the club and talked a bit about making it, and pointed out that there was enough in the scrap bin to make another chair, judging by the nods and sympathetic smiles, I am not alone with jobs like this.

On the Tuesday we took the decorations and my chair to the Hospice Charity Shop, the chair sold whilst we were unpacking! My thoughts must have shown in my face because the shop manager apologised and said that as this was a charity shop fifteen quid was all she could ask for it.

Why did so much go wrong? Was I rushing it, did one error compound the next, was the whole thing jinxed? I don't know, I was just glad to finish it. What did I achieve, apart from keeping my daughter's heating bills down? I learnt a little about chair making, and a bit more about myself, the Hospice got the fifteen quid, and that I will never make a living making chairs.

## Second Time Lucky

Following on from the previous tale of woe, with errors and cock-ups at every step, I decided to make another! This time I am pleased to announce that no wood ended up in the scrap bin other than the usual off cuts we get from every job.

I avoided the problem of valuing my work by giving it

to a friend. Her six months old daughter will one day improve the shine on the seat still further.

Apart from a vague concern for the appetite of my daughter's log burner, I was quite pleased with the outcome this time!



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To learn more about the Sovereign System visit [www.robert-sorby.co.uk](http://www.robert-sorby.co.uk) where you will also find a brief video clip.

Available from authorised Robert Sorby dealers worldwide.

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# Demonstrator Training

Brian Hollett

On a chilly autumn day five disparate souls arrived, from all points of the East Anglian compass, to a private workshop in deepest Lowestoft. Each of us had braved the journey through the surrounding Badlands from as far away as Essex in the south and Norfolk to the north. Four of these poor souls, me included, were clutching their priceless preparation notes to their ample physiques while the fifth, Brian Partridge, struggled under the immense weight of screen, projector and fear of being in charge of these (exceedingly) mature students.

The Waveney Club had arranged and sponsored this, the latest AWGB Demonstrator Training Course, and their Events Secretary David Ritchie had kindly thrown open his double-garage sized workshop, in spite of his being unable to take part himself. Eric Smith, Mike Leach and I were fairly local lads whereas Mick Francis had been invited (with a modicum of force and a longish hooked stick, I believe) to accompany Brian up from far off Essex.

After our coffee levels were officially checked and carefully topped up we spent the morning going through the rigours of presentation technique. As a part of this exercise each of us gave a five minute presentation, on subjects of our own choosing, while trying to put into practice everything we had just learned from Brian's informative talk and slide show.

After lunch, we each gave a twenty minute demonstration on the lathe. The first, from Mick, covered his favourite subject, pen making, and he tried his utmost, with little success, I'm afraid, to convince me how much fun was to be had with such projects. The biggest surprise of the day then followed when both Eric and Mike discovered they were demonstrating tea light holders. Thankfully each had come up with contrasting designs, timbers and methods. I took the floor last and managed to bore the class rigid by pretending they were absolute beginners who had never seen a skew chisel before.



**Mick Francis assembles his nicely turned pen**

We each tried to make these short demos as interesting and informative as possible, in spite of 'Sir' - and his eagle eyes - watching and taking notes feverishly,

ready to 'discuss' our strengths and weaknesses. He actually laboured under the illusion that in this way he might make four passable demonstrators out of us. The last hour or so, with David now in attendance, was filled with a general discussion on everything we had covered and achieved over the day.

I have been keen to attend a Demonstrator's Course ever since they were first instigated by AWGB and the wait for one to arrive in my neck of the woods was certainly worthwhile. I found the whole day valuable, rewarding and entertaining. Yes, we all got a bit nervous at times but soon overcame these jitters and, leg-pulling apart, everyone gave a more than successful demo on the day. All four of us left Lowestoft buoyed up with newfound confidence and ready to expand the demonstration possibilities of our respective clubs.

Thank you David for your hospitality, Brian for your knowledge and forbearance, the Waveney Club for your sponsorship and AWGB for coming up with the original idea.



**Mick, Eric, Brian, Mike and Yours Truly at close of play - photograph courtesy of David Richie**

## Get a Workshop in Your Area

There is scope for more workshops in 2014, so if you have a preference for any particular technique with a specific professional turner, or if you know of a venue in your area that could host a Member Training Workshop, please contact Brian Hensby, (details below), and he will arrange a workshop to suit your requirements.

Workshops are a **'free member benefit'**, however candidates have a no obligation option to make a donation to the Development Fund if they so wish.

For application forms, up to date details of dates and venues visit the AWGB website at [www.awgb.co.uk](http://www.awgb.co.uk) or contact our **Training Officer** Brian Hensby, phone 01297 34115 e-mail [brianhensby@awgb.co.uk](mailto:brianhensby@awgb.co.uk)





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**Saturday 29th March**  
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Beginners

**Phil Irons**  
Box Acre, Barton Road, Welford on Avon  
Warwickshire, CV37 8EY

**Saturday 29th March**  
Hollow forms from wet wood  
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Maximum 6 candidates

**Paul Howard - Brian Partridge**  
29 New Bridge Road, Tiptree, Essex, CO5 0HS

**Saturday 12th April**  
Woodturning Basics  
Beginners

**Bob Chapman**  
Birstall Woodturning Club, Unit 46 Holme Bank Mills  
Mirfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 8NA

**Sunday 10th August**  
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To book a place contact Brian Hensby: [brianhensby@awgb.co.uk](mailto:brianhensby@awgb.co.uk) 01297 34115

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# From the Tree to a Bowl

Eugene Grimley

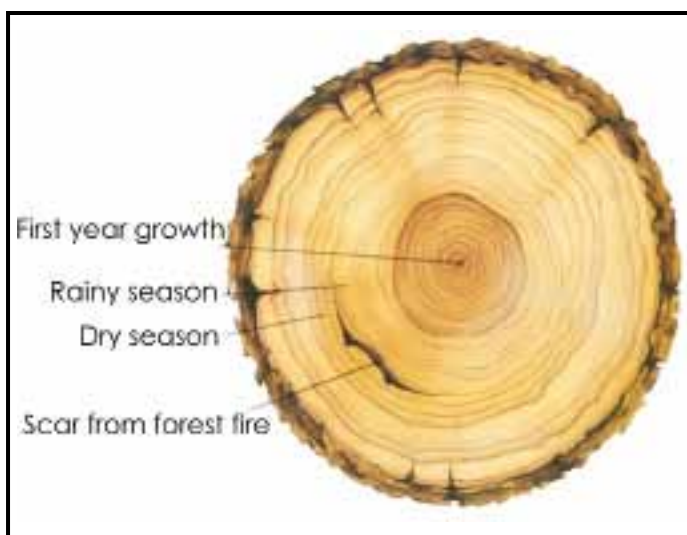
*This series of articles has been compiled from a talk given as part of the Irish Woodturners' Guild Exhibition in the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh in August 2011 and first published in the IWG Journal during 2012*

## Part 1 - The material we use - Wood

What follows has relevance to all branches of woodwork not just woodturning although my emphasis will be on those aspects that are most relevant to turners. Throughout I will try to dispel some of the more common myths (even among woodturners) – the first is that bowls are not made from rings cut from a log. Bowls made from a Monkey Puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucaria*) are an exception to the rule! Almost all the “rules” mentioned will have exceptions! We woodturners do use branchwood or small trunk sections (mainly for hollow forms) but then the wood is generally turned “green” and the centre (pith) is usually removed.

### Hardwood and Softwood

This classification is not directly related to the hardness or softness of the timber (Balsa wood - *Ochroma lagopus* - is a hardwood!), nor to the shape of the tree (another common misconception). The proper definition is that **Hardwood** comes from deciduous, or broadleaf, trees. Deciduous trees lose their foliage in the autumn and winter. Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) and Cork oak (*Quercus suber*) retain their leaves making them evergreen broadleaves! **Softwood** comes from coniferous trees – evergreen trees. Larch (*Larix decidua*) sheds all its leaves (or needles) in the winter making it a deciduous conifer! However, even these classifications are not exhaustive – She-Oak (*Casuarina stricta*) is often thought to be a conifer (the long segmented branchlets resemble pine needles and it has spiny cones which resemble small conifer cones) but the she-oak is actually not a tree but a flowering plant (of the genus *Casuarinaceae*) and the “cones” are actually fruit.



### The tree

Quite a lot can be learned from looking at the cut ring of a tree. The “annual rings” are actually TWO rings. The narrower, darker ring is winter growth (often just a fine line) and the wider, lighter coloured ring is the summer growth. Wide rings show years of good growth with mild, wet weather whereas narrow rings show poor growing conditions (as in the winter). If you count back you can tell during what years there was a good summer. With really old timber it is possible to see periods of weather similar to today but hundreds of years ago! **Heartwood** is the best (more mature) timber and is close to the centre of the tree. In some species the **Sapwood** (towards the outside of the tree) is almost unuseable as timber

## Submissions to Revs

I am frequently asked in what manner contributors should submit articles for inclusion in *Revolutions*. This information has been printed here in the past but I think that it is probably a good time to repeat the information.

Text should be submitted in 'Microsoft Word' for preference, although it is possible to work with most other formats.

Photographs may be embedded in the text if you wish to be pedantic about where they appear in relation to the text, but this is only for layout purposes.

Photographs should be sent to the editor via e-mail, or, if there are a lot of them, on a disc. They should be full size digital images, exactly as they were downloaded from the camera. **DO NOT** reduce their size in any way or send them via Picasa or any other image saving programme. Prints will occasionally be accepted if no other alternative is available, but the quality of the final printed image may be sub-standard.

Anything that is totally 'Mac' related cannot be dealt with as the editor works solely with PC's.

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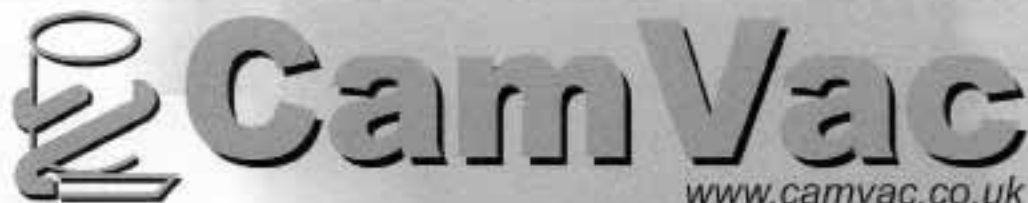


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