

# REVOLUTIONS



ISSUE No 24 February 1993

The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

## Chairman's Report

My notes in this issue will concentrate on two main points, the next Loughborough Seminar and the 1993 Practical Woodworking Show at Wembley. However, other matters from committee meetings will be outlined briefly.

The first of the two major items of these notes:

### PRACTICAL WOODWORKING SHOW WEMBLEY 4-7 MARCH 1993

The magazine has asked this Association to join with them in organising a high profile charity event in aid of the charity The Sue Ryder Foundation, which cares for the sick and disabled. The Foundation has 84 homes in 15 countries, and must surely be a worthwhile charity to support.

Please do your best to send in some work for this.

### TURN A SIMPLE BOWL

The simple bowl (to include platter style dish) should be:

1. limited to a diameter of about 10"

2. usable - broadly functional

3. of any wood

- This event is open only to members of the AWGB

- All entries are non-returnable.

- You may send in as many pieces as you wish - the more the merrier.

- All entries will be sold either at the Show, or at Loughborough '93.

- A panel of AWGB members, including Bert Marsh, will price all work submitted. Panel members are excluded from the awards.

- The member raising the greatest sum will be given Life Membership of the AWGB and will receive a plaque from the Magazine.

- The event will be well advertised outside of woodworking magazines, therefore opening woodturning to a wider audience.

Please package your pieces to withstand the selected transport. Please address all parcels clearly and fully and send to: Eric Ditchfield (AWGB), c/o Pickfords, 15 Invincible Road, Farnborough, Hants., GU14 7QU. To arrive after 7 February and before 25 February 1993.

We would like to see a whopping great response to this. After all, you have the pleasure of making the piece. The eventual buyer will have the pleasure of using the piece. And both maker and buyer have the added pleasure of knowing they have helped others less fortunate.

SO COME ON, I KNOW YOU CAN TURN A SIMPLE BOWL, SO

PLEASE GIVE IT YOUR BEST.

## Contents

2 Chairman's Report

3 AWGB Structure

Ken Spencer-Mills

4 Branch News

6 Ball and Socket

Alex Burnett

7 Letters

8 Design

Geoff Heath

9 Timber

11 Advertisements

**Articles, letters, tips etc. do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the AWGB**

**Chairman Tony Waddilove**

11 St John's Court London Street

Swaffham Norfolk

**Treasurer Len Grantham**

1 Duncan Court Lord President Road

North Berwick East Lothian EH39 4RJ

**Hon. Sec. Hugh O'Neill**

5 Kent Gardens Eastcot

Ruislip Middlesex HA8 8RX

**Editor Isabel Winstanley**

19 Briar Close Magor

Newport Gwent NP6 3QL

tel 0633 881715 fax

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The other main item of these notes is Loughborough 1993. Once again we are holding our INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR at the Loughborough College of Art & Design. The college have been really helpful in providing us with the facilities that we need to make this what we think will be the best yet. Yes, I know about the meal queues, but the organisers are currently looking at possible ways to reduce this problem to a realistic minimum.

As at previous seminars, there will be a wide range of lathe demonstrations, chainsaw demonstrations, critiques, slide presentations and various other events.

The overseas demonstrators are: from the USA, Giles Gilson, a highly innovative designer and turner of the classic form. He makes adventurous use of lacquers and other finishing techniques. Also from the USA is Bonnie Klien - small work, jewellery, threading, chatter, etc. From Eire comes Liam O'Neill who probably needs little introduction to us. From Germany comes Hans Weissflog, a trained designer who is perhaps best known for his boxes.

From Britain we really have a great mixed selection of turners.

Ray Jones - who will forget Ray at the 1991 seminar, super demonstrations of his spindle work - and I know we shall get as good again. Next, Bill Jones (not related to Ray), very much ornamental turnery, and you will have read his articles in 'Woodturning'. And next, Tobias Kaye, well known to all I guess, and I am sure he will not be 'sounding' (get it? - sounding bowls?) off to us here. The next UK person is Melvyn Firmager whom many of you will have seen at your own branch this year. If not, then you will know of his superb hollow forms. And then there is Maurice Mullins, and I think that he must be too well known to many of us to require further description.

OK, now for the main efforts resulting from committee meetings. By the way, I do have to say that although it may seem to you that we take too long to make things happen through committee, we do ask you to understand that we try to seek out members or branches' views before taking final decisions. Additionally, there are various elements of legal liability for committee members. As such, most of the committee steer away from just taking decisions which have not been thought through and have not benefited from

careful planning.

There have been two committee meetings since my last notes. The matters under discussion revolve in the main around the status of branches and what the AWGB provides for its members and its branches. These questions have to be resolved without delay, insofar as any changes to be proposed need to be put to AGM (provisionally planned in Midlands for 18 April 1993). In essence, there is a call to devolve some control and management of your Association to the branches and this must be considered very carefully if it is to happen at all.

The other main subjects viewed by the committee have been the implementation of a rule that all branches need in future to be 100% AWGB members; and the collection of subscriptions at a branch level. In addition, we have considered additional ways in which we can subsidise or grant aid more benefits for members.

All these proposed changes do involve substantial modifications to the way the AWGB is operated. The changes have to be right first time. This means that a great deal of time has been spent by the committee getting it correct.

*Tony Waddilove*

## EDITORIAL

### Hello

and welcome to another issue of *Revolutions*. There is a variety of reading, from the forthcoming competition to an assortment of letters and an illustrated project by member Alex Burnett. Keep writing in, *Revolutions* wants to reflect members' interests and their

'doings'.

The AGM this year is in the Midlands, we hope that this means there will be a bumper turn out of members to represent the grass roots of the organization. Remember it is your organization and it is important we hear what you are saying.

*Isabel*

### Worshipful Company Competition

Most branches have now organized their local heats for this important competition. If yours has not then started to jump up and down! We really do want to make a major response on this one to show the Worshipful Company that we really are serious about turning.

*Hugh O'Neill Hon. Sec.*

# A New Structure for the AWGB ?

## Ken Spencer-Mills

The AWGB was founded on the basis that it would represent the interests of the individual woodturner, both amateur and professional and promote the purposes of the Association.

Since woodturners are scattered all over the British isles the major problem facing the Association is one of effective communication with all its members. This might have been achieved by a first class monthly magazine, preferably with an international flavour, but this would have required editorial, management and financial resources beyond those available.

At an early stage in its history the AWGB encouraged its scattered members to form local Branches. These grew and flourished and now are the chief means of furthering the purposes of the Association. The Membership Rules and Constitution were drawn up so that the individual members would elect an Executive Committee and Officers to run the day-to-day affairs of the Association. There was no provision for the future Branches to play any part in this process.

The Executive is very hard working and meets nearly every month and its expenses account for a large proportion of the Association's expenditure. Nevertheless there are communication difficulties as seen by the sometimes stormy meetings with Branch representatives and by discussions on a single Branch/AWGB subscription and 100% membership lasting over year with opposition from several Branches.

In an attempt to put matters right the Wessex Woodturners Association passed a resolution to be put before the AGM of the AWGB calling for the setting up of

a council of Branch delegates to run the Association. However, on reading the Rules it was clear that such a resolution could not be accepted from a Branch. Therefore, as individual members, Ken Tettmar and I have submitted the following resolution for the AGM.

"In recognition of the key role now played by the Branches in furthering the Aims of the AWGB and to facilitate communication between the Branches in achieving these Aims, it is proposed that:

The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain adopts a new Constitution and Rules to enable its business to be conducted by a Delegate Council consisting of one delegate from each Branch affiliated to the AWGB. Each Branch to elect annually one delegate to the Council.

The day-to-day affairs of the Association to be conducted by an Executive Committee and Officers elected annually by the Council from its members.

Such funds as the Council may need to conduct its business are to be raised by the Branches by means of a per capita levy.

The new Constitution and Rules should be drafted by July 1993 for discussion by the Branches prior to adoption at an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held in October 1993."

The new Rules would need to make provision for current AWGB members who are not members of a Branch, possibly by attachment to a regional Branch. The AWGB has no hard information as to how many members fall into this category, so if you are one it would help to let the Treasurer know. It has been suggested that there

could be just a handful, or even half the membership, some 800 turners!

Another most important category of members without whom we could not achieve our aims is the professional turner. They do a great deal of work in the Branches and their views on these proposals would be most welcome.

The implication of the resolution is that individual membership of the Association would not be a requirement, since the Branch itself would be an affiliated member. The question of 100% membership would not arise. The Branches would be able to control the Council's expenditure and therefore the levy by means of their delegates.

My object in writing this article is to stimulate a discussion on the structure and future of the AWGB in advance of its AGM. I know that there is a great deal of support for this resolution and I hope that many of you will come up with detailed suggestions for the new Rules and Constitution.

**Ken Spencer-Mills**  
45 High Street  
Hinton St George  
Somerset TA17 8SE

Ken is chair of the AWGB training sub committee, he has recently written new National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) for woodturning.

### Branch Organizer

A new organizer has been appointed. Ken Allen can be contacted at: 90 Peakes Road  
Etching Hill Rugeley Staffs  
WS15 2LY



# BRANCH NEWS



## The Vikings Return!

Dick Dowsett writes

Many people will remember that one of the demonstrators at the last Loughborough event was Johannes Rieber from Norway. Following a successful day's demo in August '91 by Johannes, an idea was born that a group of Norwegian turners should visit us in East Anglia. Johannes could see the benefits to be gained by being in an association such as ours.

We suggested that since we were already formed into a group, it would be easier for them to visit us first, and begin to act and think like a group during their journeying. What Johannes did was to gather together a number of his pupils both past and present. Most of them hadn't met until the planning meeting a couple of weeks before they came.

On 18 September 1992, eleven Norwegians arrived to be whisked

away by their pre-selected hosts. we had been given miniature c.v.s on each of the guests and we tried to match them to ourselves.

On the 19th hosts and guests gathered at our usual demo site - the women disappeared on a quick circuit of the local East Anglian beauty spots - then the shavings began to fly. An endless succession of turners from both countries stepped up to the lathe. It would be hopeless to try and list every subject covered. We had a wonderful day!!

It was interesting to note in watching our visitors, that their general technique and approach to any problems, witnessed to their having the same instructor. On this occasion Johannes did not have his hook tool with him, but contrived to use some of ours in unusual ways!

The women arrived back in time for the barbecue at which we all ate ourselves to stand still. The day concluded with a showing of some slides of the excavation of the Viking Longboat at Sutton Hoo, a subject of great interest to all.

The final day of their week end visit was spent at Henham Hall Steam Engine Rally. The weather was kind and our visitors had a marvellous time! We had to drag them away to get them to the farewell dinner held at a local pub. The invitation for the return match was issued and accepted which helped alleviate the general sadness at saying Goodbye the following morning to our newfound friends.

**Dick Dowsett is secretary of the North Suffolk Branch**

### A New View of Woodturning

*Dennis Carey writes*

Once I visualised a woodturner as a quiet sort of man with steel rimmed glasses on the end of his nose, working away in a rather untidy workshop with shavings around his feet and sawdust covered cobwebs in the corners, all lit by the yellow glow of an oil lantern throwing grotesque elbowed shadows on the wall behind. Recently I have formed a very different picture:

One thing I have noticed is that the average age of some of us entitles us to a pension book. So, I have formed the impression that there are a number of mad geriatrics with wispy grey hair wafting in the breeze, rushing about the countryside in hobnailed boots and waving chainsaws. If they have eyesight anything like mine,

heaven help any poor old cart-horse that happens to be standing quietly under a tree. His legs will be cut off and sawn into four before he can say neigh.

What they are after is the biggest log they can cart home. And when they get it there; do they make a dozen porridge bowls? Not on your life. After consulting the Guinness Book of Records, they rough out the biggest single blank they can manage. Then they mount it on a lathe that would be the envy of a ship's turbine turner. Next they do a fair representation of a cavalry charge, waving a three foot long high speed steel gauge.

The outcome of this frenetic activity, so far as I can make out, is a massive paper thin bowl that will probably warp, and at least two sacks of shavings. Perhaps they should be in the woodwool

business, then they could sell the shavings and give the bowls to their daughters to bathe their babies in.

*Re-printed from the Middlesex Newsletter.*

## NEW BRANCH

### Suffolk Mid-Coastal

Arthur Baker reports that a new branch started, on the 7 January, in the Suffolk area, as the other group in the near by area is over subscribed. Their chair is Albert Lain a professional of many years, but there are members who are amateurs as well as several professionals. New members are welcome. Contact Arthur at The Hollies Snape Road Sudbourne Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 2AT 0394 450244

# BRANCH NEWS



## Scotswood

'Scotswood' held its 5th whole day seminar in October '92 and once again were hosted by Jean Burhouse Furniture. There was a packed house to see Melvyn Fermager.

Melvyn proved the point once again, that our professional woodturners are imaginative, good communicators and not afraid to experiment. The audience were quite tense (unlike Melvyn!) as he demonstrated the art of hollow form turning by touch, faith and of course, considerable skill. His willingness to share his experience with us was reflected by the interest shown in his specialist tools and equipment. Not least of all, his amazing selection of wall thickness gauges made from old wire coat-hangers brought gasps of amazement from our (largely Scottish) audience.

## High Peak Branch

Fred Corney reports a lively branch of fifty members which meets the first Friday of the month at the Civic Centre London Road Stockport at 7.30. Fred extends a warm welcome to any one who would like to join them.

## West Pennine Branch

This thriving branch, meets on the

first Friday of the month, at St Andrews Church Rochdale. Contact Colin Wilson 86 Sheriff Street Rochdale OL12 6JY tel 0706 46347 for further details.

## Dorset Branch

This branch is steadily growing in membership, variety, content of meetings and enthusiasm, reports Derrick Hilton. Meetings are arranged for February and March Contact Derrick on 0202 823212.

## Avon & Bristol Branch

Bob Barrett reports a smooth running branch with a variety of events, including a talk from the Tewksbury Saw Co who told them all they wanted to know about bandsaws. The branch held an exhibition in October sponsored by ICI for their open day at the Sevenside works, thanks to member Simon Keen who works for the firm.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Middlesex

Feb 11 Nick Perrin Lace bobbins and miniatures

Mar 11 Finishing

April 8 Selection of winners of

Worshipful Company of Turners exhibition

May 13 Keith Rowley Thin walled goblets

June 10 Critique and item for Middlesex Show

July 8 Dennis Carey

tel 0932 241982

## Kent

Feb 18 Ian Sandford demo

Mar 19/20 Chris Stott demo

Apr 15 AGM

tel Diane Cheney 0303 249005

## Surrey

Feb 21 Melvyn Firmager day demo

tel Bob Weir 0276 29479

## Hampshire

Feb Tyme lathes

March Turn-in

April AGM Brian Hannam - drying wood

May Beginners night six short talks

June Ornamental turning

Apologies to the well established Hampshire branch for 'gremlins' spotted in last issue of *Revolutions* by its secretary Brian Hannam. tel Brian 0256 25621

## International Lathe-Turned Objects: Challenge V

The Wood Turning Centre in the USA is organizing this international competition.

Applications are currently being accepted for an international competition to select significant lathe-turned objects produced from 1991 through June 1993. These objects, which exemplify the cutting edge of the lathe-turning field and reflect the artist's search for new expression, may include work in any medium from wood to metal to plastic. All submissions will be juried for an exhibition scheduled for January 28 to April 1994 in the Philadelphia area, to be documented in a published catalogue. Approximately 75 objects from the exhibition will be selected to travel extensively throughout North America through January 1997. Jurors will include an artist, museum curators, and one or two craft and art representatives.

Further details from Albert LeCoff PO Box 25706 Philadelphia PA 19144 USA, or a copy of the notice is available from the editor of *Revolutions*.

# BALL and SOCKET JOINTS

## Alex Burnett

One day in my workshop I was making a number of knobs for a set of cupboards I had made. The difficulty with this is that unless you can readily see the previous, or sample knob, I find that, with my somewhat modest skills, they all vary in shape and size from an onion to a stumpy parsnip. It was therefore time to manufacture a device to hold a sample of whatever it was I was attempting to duplicate.

As I was going to be looking at this soon-to-be-manufactured item, as well as explaining its purpose to passers-by, I decided it had better look respectable, and below is the method I used. I hope it is of use to someone else. Looking at it, I think the idea could quite easily be utilised as a lamp support - anyway, this is how it goes.

In order to be able to select the best position to position my 'exhibit' I wanted a universal joint system; I elected to use a ball and socket joint at the knee and another towards the clamp end.

To make the balls:

Decide what diameter you require - about 2" works OK - then turn a cylinder about three and a half times that in length and to the selected diameter; cut part way through with a parting tool, leaving 3 cylinders of the correct diameter and length (equal to the diameter), rather like a short string of sausages. Whilst the lathe is turning, mark a line around the cylinders at the centre of each; now knock the corners off the cylinders to partly form the balls, remove from the lathe and part off each of the cylinders.

On the line drawn around the circumference find the centres on each side and mark them with a bradawl; use a small drive and

mount the cylinder on these new marks; the cylinder is now standing upright between centres.

Position a light behind the cylinder and switch on; cut away the shadow to be left with a ball. It really does work"! That's how I made the balls - now for the sockets

Cut two rectangles of wood about 3/4" thick 2" x 6"; mark the centre of each depression which will take the ball, leave about 1" between the balls, and drill a small hole through at these points; get out your face plate with a wooden disk attached, turn the lathe and mark the centre. Push a bradawl through one of the holes into the centre hole of the face plate and fasten the rectangle (off centre and very securely) to the face plate; scoop out a hollow to match the diameter of the ball - this only requires to be about 1/4" to 3/8" deep. Repeat this process at the other socket locations.

Drill a hole in each ball to take a length of dowel. I found 9" to be as good a length as any, but better a bit too long as it is easy to cut down later. The bottom of the first dowel simply pushes into a socket drilled in a piece of wood which is screwed to the bench in a convenient position behind the lathe.

To make an easy to use as well as better-looking wing nut.

In a piece of hard wood about 1 1/2" by 4" drill a small hole in the centre; using an appropriately sized spade bit drill a shallow depression to take the collar of a T nut; enlarge the hole right through the wood to take the shank of the T nut; drive the T nut into place; shape and smooth to your liking. This will be the wing nut to tighten up the joint.

Drill a hole through the centre of one of the rectangles the same as that for the T nut shank; on the other drill a hole to provide a good tight fit for the head of a carriage bolt; make sure the T nut is of the same thread!

The balls are the hardest of the items to make, but worth the effort as well as being very interesting to do using this method. The T nut wing nuts can be made in various shapes and sizes, and I have found that they out preform the humble wing nuts by far for amount of torque which can be applied, as well as appearance.

For the business end which holds the item for copying I made a jaw which uses an elastic band to maintain tension. See the diagrams for clarification of any difficulties.

It remains to the individual to shape and smooth off the corners to suit their own preferences.

## GRAPHICS

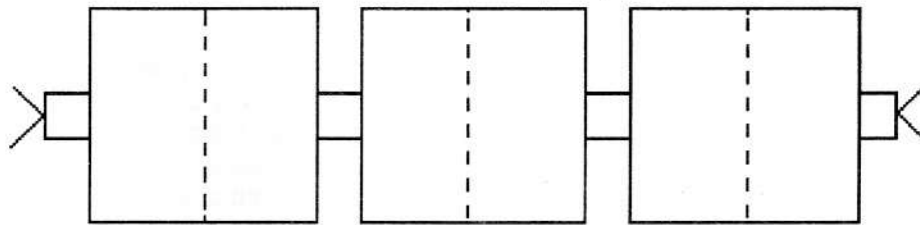
Alex submitted his article with hand drawn diagrams - these have been re-drawn, by member **Graeme Moss**, using a computer aided programme. Thanks to Graeme for all his work (it must have taken him much of his precious time), it has greatly enhanced the appearance of the article and should make life easier for those who wish to try out Alex's idea.

## Branch Speakers

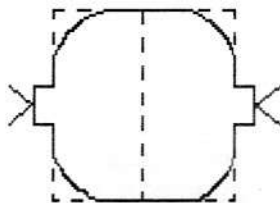
Looking for an interesting speaker for a meeting? Then contact Derrek Pyatt (address back page). Derrek, gave a successful series of club talks last year on workshop machinery, and is now planning his this year's programme

# A step by step guide

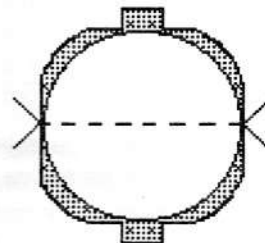
Alex takes you through the stages



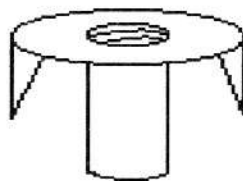
The string of cylinders between centres. Note centre lines on each 'ball'



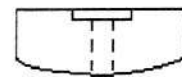
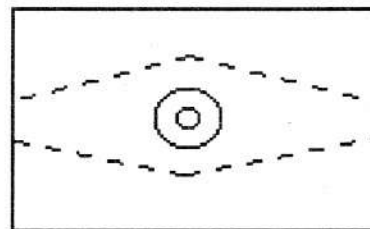
Single 'ball' with corners taken off



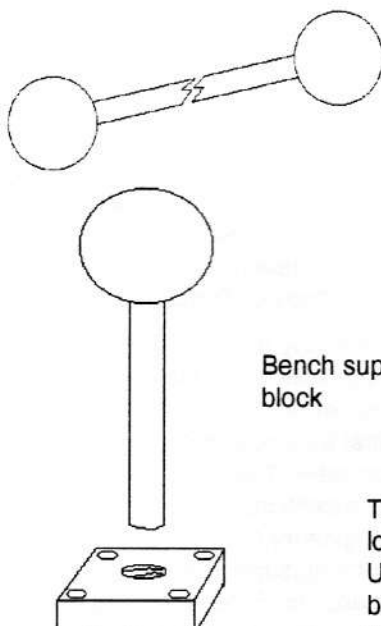
Ball mounted between centres live. light behind shows up the ball as solid and waste as a shadow



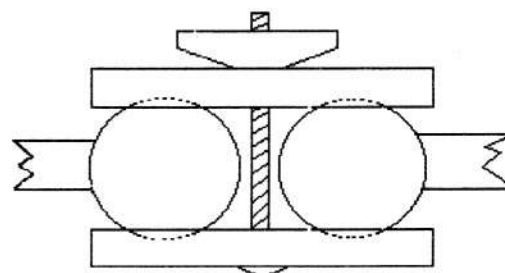
T Nut



Rectangle of wood. Wide. shallow depression to take collar of T nut. Hole to fit shank. Dotted line shows wing nut shape. Chamfer the wings to provide clearance.

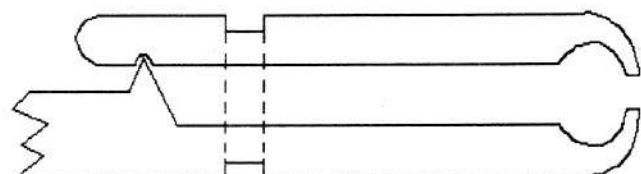


Bench support block



General view of clamping balls with wingnut

This is the very low tech clamp. Use an elastic band to provide tension





# LETTERS

**From K Beddard**  
**3 Knole Avenue Poynton**  
**Cheshire SK12 1XN**

May I, as a fellow woodturner, introduce myself as your contact for "ENDEAVOUR" woodturning tools.

I first came across the "Endeavour" company when the woodturning club of which I am a member (High Peak), were looking at bulk buying for club members.

The quality of the tools impressed me so much, that I approached the company with a view to becoming the contact between themselves and the various woodturning clubs; this they have agreed to.

The tools are first quality "M2" grade High Speed Steel, manufactured by "Endeavour Tools" who have been sub-contractors to the major suppliers for many years. All tools are fully hardened and guaranteed on the basis of any defect or complaint, the tool will be immediately replaced.

All scrapers and skews are supplied as blanks ready for you to grind to the angle you prefer.

The prices of tools have been negotiated on the basis of bulk buying for woodturning club members (cost plus handling charge), and you will note from the price list that they are well below the prices quoted for identical tools from better known suppliers. All tools are supplied with quality ferrules at no extra cost.

If your club members are interested in purchasing these tools and order through the club as a bulk purchase, we will deliver the order to your club on a cash on delivery basis, with each tool tagged with purchasers name (if supplied), with free delivery for clubs within a forty five mile radius of Stockport, at a date and time to

be agreed. For all other clubs outside this radius, we will make alternative arrangements.

Tools will still be supplied to individuals by ordering from the above address by cash with order; however for small quantities, post and packing will have to be charged.

Being a small specialist firm, ENDEAVOUR have the facility to make "specials" from your drawings; however these would be at a premium cost.

If you are interested, please contact the above as soon as possible.

**From Hugh Aviss**  
**Crowborough East Sussex**

Readers should be aware that the Maplin 1.2 kW Power Controller cannot be used to control the speed of an induction motor, as commonly employed to drive lathes and other machinery. The speed of an induction motor is determined by the frequency of the AC mains supply and the motor winding, ie these are design features which, for most practical purposes, are not variable, and induction motors are therefore single speed machines. Another feature of the Maplin controller is that its operating principle does not support the use of a no-volt overload release switch.

Ed. Hugh sent this to a National Woodworking magazine in response to an article they had published. It is published here for members' information.

**From Reg Sherwin**  
**Stokeheath Bromsgrove**

Bill Kinsman's friend who was turning with a bedpan sounds like a clever chap. Or could it be that you were having trouble with your smellcheck?

**From Geoff Heath**  
**Mellor Stockport**

You ask about reproducing photographs. Some time ago, I did a little desk-top publishing of a booklet about my family history, and wished to include some reproductions of old photographs. I spoke to the proprietor of our local print-shop, and he advised me to have half-tone screen prints made of the photos. He was able to do this operation for me, and by printing several pictures simultaneously on an A4 sheet, he was able to keep the price down. Had I wished, he would have enlarged or reduced the pictures at the same time.

I simply cut out the screen prints and mounted them in the spaces I'd left in the script, after which the whole thing was photocopied.

Maybe this is the process your printer already uses, but if not, let me commend it to you. Photographs don't photo-copy well, but screen prints do. I suppose the same is true of offset-litho printing, if that's what you use.

Ed. Keith Goodchild of the West Pennine Branch gave me similar information. Anyone with the facilities for this out there?

**From Roger Davies**  
**Coulsden Surrey**

My purpose in writing to you is to point out an error of title on page 6 of *Revolutions*. The proper title of the Company is: The Worshipful Company of Turners of London.

This may appear at first sight to be "nit-picking", but to describe them as "woodturners" is an injustice in that their activities are much broader. They support REME, hold competitions for apprentices in the engineering industry for metal turning, support the City and Guilds Institute and engage in many charitable works.



# LETTERS

## From Bernard Rose St Andrews Norwich

(Hon Sec Norfolk Branch)

May I, on behalf of the Norfolk Woodturning Society take this opportunity to thank Trevor Dawes for his kind remarks on our seminar in issue 23 of *Revolutions*. Something along the lines of the two suggestions made by him were mentioned, but were considered to be too ambitious for a first time event and we felt that it was better to try to keep it relatively simple from an organising point of view. Even so, with so much at stake, we did not realise how ambitious we were and how much work we had taken on.

If we are to repeat the exercise in 1994, which we would like to do, we shall need to know at a much earlier date (than June/July) how many will be supporting us. If we are to incorporate either or both of his suggestions this will give rise to enough work to keep one of our committee busy on this project alone. May I therefore ask anyone who attended our Seminar and feels that something more was desirable, to write or phone me

with suggestions so that they may be considered. If you liked the programme as it was perhaps you could also let me know. If improvements can be made we would like to incorporate them, but I stress that the event we organised was primarily a learning function.

## From John Holyoak Blakeney Holt Norfolk

Correction to Tips, page 11, Issue No.23

Several people have said that they do not fully understand the directions to convert square to octagonal. For those in doubt perhaps this is easier to follow:

This applies equally to a circular saw and a band saw. Tilt the table, or saw, (relative the one to the other) to 45 degrees; abut one side of your square piece of wood up against the saw blade. Bring up the fence so that it just touches the corner edge of the block of wood which is nearest to it and tighten the fence. Now place the block of wood flat on the table, hard up to the fence. Keeping the fence in position and using a pusher stick, follow your usual safety procedures, and saw off each corner

in turn. You will then have an octagonal block of wood.

Would someone like to write in and explain the geometry of this?

Ed. Can anyone assist?

## From Colin Wilson

Rochdale (Hon. Sec. West Pennine Branch)

A firm impression given to us of a move towards an official policy of 100% membership, led the West Pennine Branch to convince all its members to pay the national fee. We now find that members receive only *Revolutions* (and little else by way of information and support); surely not a good return on the membership fee. I also attended a rather unhappy meeting of branch (all AWGB members?) secretaries several months ago, I have not received minutes of this meeting, or any other information. To keep members interest, will require a much improved service to the branches, and the development of *Revolutions* (for disseminating information e.g. committee activity etc.). We now urgently need an exchange of views, in an open debate, from branches and individual members as to AWGB's future.

## Design Part Four - Form Geoff Heath concludes his series of articles

We have seen how both function and fit can affect form, but in the final analysis it is our artistic sense which tells us whether the form is 'right'. One thing I have learned by going to art classes is that 'art is exaggeration'. (my words - I'm not sure that my teacher would agree with me!)

What do I mean by 'exaggeration'? Well, suppose I'm making a sketch of an old building; the sag of the roof must be accentuated, the crumbling masonry made to look even more crumbly, the dark shadows made absolutely black.

Then it really looks like an old building! If I draw it exactly as I think it is, it has no character at all.

Look back at your early efforts from the lathe. What you thought were attractive pieces now look crude and clumsy. (If they don't, either you are a genius or you're not making any progress!) I blush to think of the articles I sold to an apparently appreciative public at my first craft fairs!

What makes the appearance of an early piece so unattractive? Isn't it because the covers are too shallow, the beads too flat, and the

walls of the bowls too thick? In short, the work would look better if its features were more exaggerated, more dramatic than those which seemed so right at the time when it was turned.

Our aim should not be to 'go that extra mile', perhaps, but to 'go that extra millimetre'. We may end up putting our gouge right through the walls of a few bowls, or snapping the stems of a few goblets, but the effort will be worth it - our products will change from clumsy lumps into objets d'art!

# TIMBER



## The Beech Tree

BEECH is a Northern temperature wood and common in Britain and is one of the most commonly used hardwoods. The tree is medium to large in size, often growing to 30 metres and more. The roots thrive in shallow fertile soil spreading laterally. The wood is white to pale brown and has a conspicuous growth ring figure on flat or rotary cut surfaces, and on quartered surfaces it has a characteristic fleck due to its medium sized rays. The weight is hard to heavy, often described as medium, but it is variable. The wood has a fine, even texture and is straight-grained and knot free, the branches falling off easily to leave a clean bole. The leaves of the tree are 3-4" long with wavy edges and 6-11 veins. In summer the opened beech leaves are so arranged that they let little sunlight through and they intercept most of the rain that falls. This remains on the leaves and evaporates after a shower. This is why the woodland floor under beeches tends to be dry.

Beech is a beautiful wood to bend, and when steamed sometimes goes pinkish in colour. Also it works well, is easily turned and takes an excellent finish which makes it an outstanding furniture wood. The disadvantages are: it tends to distort when it dries: it is perishable and unsuitable for outdoor use unless it is given a good preservative treatment: when dry it will move, in some instances quite appreciably in changing conditions of humidity. Its uses include: brush and tool handles (but cannot be used for long handles subject to shock); hard-wearing domestic floors; toys, chairs, craftsmen's tools, plates, bowls, platters, etc.

## The Woodcutter

### Another offering from Treen!

Did you know that the silver birch was a holy tree revered by the Pagan Celtic and Germanic tribes. In Britain the Druids gave its name to a midwinter month. The tree was considered to have sacred powers of renewal and purification, so its twigs were used in the ritual of driving out the spirits of the old year. This belief persisted into historical times when delinquents and the insane were birched to drive out the evil spirits.

## Stop Press

**Great Yorkshire Show Woodturning Competition**  
July 13 14 15 Harrogate. Details from: Secretary General, Agricultural Soc., Gt Yorks Showground, Hookstone Oval, Harrogate Nth Yorks HG2 8PW

## Fox Farm Sawmills

### Derek Carter reports

I looked up a local supplier, who gave a talk to the HWA two years ago. Des Holmes is now running the Fox Farm Sawmills on the Whitchurch road at Andover Down. The sawmill is on the Middleton estate which has 2000 acres of mixed hardwoods and a further 800 acres at Kingsclear. These sources supply the bulk of the timber although Des has just brought a load back from the Applecross forest in north west Scotland.

Des has a large selection of timber in stock - Lime, Yew, Elm, Ash, Sycamore, Oak, Maple, and Walnut to name but a few. Also some nice examples of burrs and 50 tons of spalted beech!

The timber is air or kiln dried - the air dried is at least 3 years old. The kiln takes timber up to 19 feet long and has a floor area of roughly 20 x 10. Kilning a full load takes around a month to reduce moisture down to around 14%.

The sawmill is well equipped with a principal saw capable of handling logs 72" in diameter and a vertical bandsaw with an 18" cut and 36" throat. Des will shortly be adding a planer/thicknesser capable of handling timber up to 26" wide. Timber is currently prepared in 2, 3 and 4" planks, and as well as supplying turners and cabinet makers, Des exports to France.

The following services are offered - log conversion both large and small, priced on an hourly charge with a minimum figure and kilning at £5 cu ft. Cost of air dried timber is around £12-£15 cu ft, and kiln dried is from £20 cu ft, but everything is negotiable!

If you are in the Andover area, it would be well worth your while to pop along and see him, especially as he is planning to expand the turning side of the business over the winter.

Derek is editor of the Hampshire Branch Newsletter

## Veneers with a difference ! Brian Robbins writes

We keep A4 sized veneer samples in a binder of clear plastic wallets. Two prospective 'craftsmen' were looking through our range when one of them remarked that a particularly exotic veneer looked the same as one on the previous 'page'. "Naw", his friend replied, "these are quality veneers you're looking at - they are printed on both sides".



## AMONGST THE 'BEACH' WOODS

### Bill Howard

Living close to the shore as I and my neighbours do, we often reflect on the amount of useful material that is washed up on Perranporth beach (not only the famous day a couple of years ago following a shipwreck, which made 'Whisky Galore' seem like a film).

Especially during the winter, amongst the plastic bottles and polystyrene foam, a considerable amount of useful wood comes ashore. Two houses away they have a Window Seat made out of perfect Yew planks, and most places have at least a Garden Bench made of one of the Mahogany look alikes.

To a "Turner" whose pals spend a lot of time walking the shore (and many of them have a lot of time in this day and age!), the beach is a very useful source of material. Especially as its main advantage is price! Amongst its important drawbacks, it normally needs drying off, the sand removes the edge from tools and, as it has often been in the water for some time, the rotting Goose Barnacles and seaweed can give an extra

meaning to "stink wood".

Usually the wood comes as billets between two and five foot long and one and six inches square. I assume smaller and longer sections are broken up by the force of the waves, although I have a plank of Pine about nine foot long in my garage.

Curiously much of the wood does not appear to have been used, and shows no marks other than some rounding of the corners due to the abrasive action of sand and rocks.

Some of the billets are spoiled or enhanced (this depends on your point of view) by the action of Ship Worm; my comment about this is that their calcium coated tunnels play havoc with tools and make the wood unreliable in longer sections.

**A WORD OF WARNING.** A close inspection of the wood for nails and other embedded material is essential to prevent accidents; I go over each piece with an electronic pipe and wire finder - to date I have not found any with current flowing.

Most of the useful hard wood is of the Mahogany type, with Oak, Ash and Sycamore being rarer.

Amongst the less common woods I have found Ekki, (*Lophira procera*, Nigeria), this is strange as its specific gravity is said to be 1.1): Keruing (*Dipterocarpus* spp, Malaya), full of resin: Apa (*Azela* spp. A. Africana? Nigeria), a very attractive wood for turnery: Teak (*Tectona grandis*, India, Asia), which seems to keep its colour well after immersion: Iroko (*Chlorophora excelsa*, West Africa), tends to splinter, pick up and loses its colour after immersion in salt water: the very occasional piece of fruit wood, which usually shows very attractive spalt and comes in the form of sections of broken branch.

Recently a rather battered 4 x 1.5 foot log yielded some of the most spectacular spalted and sea water stained Elm I have ever seen.

Up to this time I have not met Toad, Ratty, Mole, Pooh Bear or any of the other animals reputed to be found in Beech Woods.

*Bill Howard is editor of the Cornish Woodturners Newsletter*

### A.G.M.

This is to give members formal notice that the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain, is to be held at the Arden Hotel, Solihull, West Midlands on Sunday April 18 1993 at 1.30pm. The full address will be sent to members by post.

Motions for the agenda, properly proposed and seconded must be with the Honorary Secretary by the 8th March.

Nominations for the Committee should be also returned by March 8th. all nominations must be properly proposed and seconded and must be accompanied by a 50 word statement, written by the nominee, advising members of the contribution they think they could make to the Association workings.

At the end of March all members will receive a postal ballot form concerning appointments to the committee.

With this will be a short survey form concerning the future strategy of the Association and asking for

information concerning Branch membership. These are areas of vital interest to the future and everybody is asked to please complete the survey and return it.

### World Turning Conference

It will come as no surprise to readers to hear that Reg Sherwin is off to America to be one of the demonstrators at the World Turning Conference. It is to be hosted by the Hagley Museum and Library in Delaware PA in April and is organized by Albert LeCoff of the Woodturning Centre.