

Woodturners

Revolutions

Issue No 37

May 1996

Newsletter of The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain



Graham Hughes

*Winner of the 'Food for Thought' competition at the Practical Woodworking Exhibition
held in February this year at Wembley*



The Chairmans Page(s)

Time just seems to have flown since I wrote my last set of notes, it has been a very busy time for me on both AWGB and personal work. I will try to give each of you an overview of what your AWGB has done recently and what we are working on for the future, I will outline the happenings in the sequence they have happened.

EXHIBITIONS

In my last notes you may remember I told you that I had a February meeting arranged with a potential sponsor for the staging of a Touring Woodturning Exhibition. Well that meeting took place and has given your Committee plenty to think about, a considerable financial offer to the AWGB has been made to stage a major International Woodturning Exhibition in 1997. The sponsor does not want to be involved with a Touring Exhibition which was our original aim. However the offer made would make it possible to stage the largest and best Exhibition of turned wood ever mounted in this country. With this in mind we have accepted the offer in principle, since then an on site meeting at the potential Exhibition venue has been held. The cost of the venue for mounting such an Exhibition and all the add on costs are considerable, at this time the sponsor is reviewing this situation. The AWGB has a Sub-Committee set up and has drawn up a working package of our requirements to take the whole thing forward.

1997 is our Tenth Anniversary so we want to do something special, an Exhibition as outlined would certainly be that. If all goes to plan we will look at Touring some of the best work to four or six venues around the country, for which we will be looking for funding from a number of sources.

NVQ's

I mentioned in my last notes that another false dawn seemed to have broken on this issue, two of our members made contact with very helpful suggestions and ways forward. However the way forward was already being paved, a 1.00am conversation in a hotel bar in Stravanger, Norway with Stuart Mortimer ascertained that seven meetings on a hand woodturning NVQ had taken place in the past year, and a document was being drafted. Our new Secretary Peter Einig made contact with the Working Party Chairman and 50 Consultation questionnaires have been received, forty plus have been sent out to members who we feel can contribute.

WEMBLEY PRACTICAL WOODWORKING SHOW.

The AWGB mounted a creditable display of members work, and ran a turners help Clinic. The stand was busy as usual and was manned and run very efficiently throughout by members willing to give up their time to steward the display and run the clinic. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to each and every one of you. At this time we are not sure if our involvement in these shows will continue as previously, the new ownership of Practical Woodworking and Woodworker has yet to inform us.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL WOODWORKING SHOW GLASGOW March 22-24th

Our members from our Scotswood Branch ran and mounted a similar display at this show and from what I hear did a great job on behalf of the AWGB. To all of you who stewarded and demonstrated on the stand I would like to say a big thank you, without this grass root support there can be no AWGB. See George

Hunters report elsewhere in
Revolutions.

BRANCH MEETING & AGM

March 3rd saw a very busy day, the Branches met in the morning for a general meeting and to elect the two representatives they needed for the main Committee. George Hunter of Scotswood was re-elected and Richard Barnes of Worcester was elected, welcome aboard, it's going to be a busy year.

You all knew before the AGM what changes and re-elections there were to the Committee. To recap yours truly was returned to the Chair, Frank Clarke was elected having served for some time in a co-opted capacity. The biggest change saw Hugh O'Neill stand down as our Secretary, a post he held for some nine years, that is some record of service, Hugh has contributed much over the years to the AWGB's development. Hugh would be the first to admit he was not always easy to get in touch with at times, and some things found themselves on the back burner. That said Hugh committed massive amounts of time to the AWGB's cause, his day job work load was heavy and stressful, he even moved house on the pretext of retirement, well at least from the day job. He now seems busier than ever, Hugh enjoy your retirement and thank you for your efforts on behalf of the AWGB. With Hugh's departure we welcome Peter Einig to the Secretaries hot seat, Peter has been Membership Secretary for the past twelve months and has often said he wants more work to do, well he has certainly got that now, as he has both jobs. He left the April committee meeting with a lot more than he bargained for, that's for sure.

That brings me to the Treasurers post, Len Grantham continues under duress, he wants to lose the job, but it seems no one wants it, Len has been our Treasurer since 1987. We had to co-opt him back this time as there were no nominations, please, please, we have to find a replacement soon, we can't go on relying on Len's goodwill. If there is any one willing to take the roll on

Continued on Page 4

The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

Executive Committee

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Articles, letters, tips, adverts etc featured in this Newsletter do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

If you object to your name, address and telephone number being held on a computer belonging to the AWGB, then please write to the Secretary. (Address Above)

The following woodturning videos are available for hire to members.

Turning Wood	Richard Raffan
Turning Projects	Richard Raffan
Bowl Turning	Del Stubbs
Hollow Turning	John Jordan
Bowl Turning	John Jordan
Cutting & Sharpening	Chris Stott
Turning Bowls	Chris Stott
Turning Boxes	Chris Stott
The Basic Box	Ray Key
The Capsule Box	Ray Key
The Finial Box	Ray Key

Slide Packs of the 1989, 1991, 1993 Loughborough International Seminars. - Slide Pack of the Hay-on-Wye exhibition

To hire any one video or one slide pack, Please send 2 cheques one for £5 for one week's hire and one for £30 as a deposit which will be returned on the safe return of the video or slide pack.

Please make both cheques payable to AWGB.

Application for hire should be made to: Ken Allen (Address Opposite)

AWGB LAPEL BADGES

(Brass & Enamel)

Send Cheque etc, to:

Frank Clarke (Address Opposite)

COST £2.50 inclusive of post and packing

MAKE ALL PAYMENTS TO AWGB

**Copy deadline for the next edition of
Revolutions
1st August 1996**

please contact Len or myself for a chat.

Motions: These were notified in 'Revolutions' No 36 and put to the AGM, these were approved with slight changes in the wording here and there. To all those who attended thank you, the general discussion that followed was useful to us all.

LATHE LOAN

The biggest pleasure of the day was to see the work of young 12 years old Neil Howard, the enjoyment and obvious progress during his year of being the recipient of the AWGB Lathe Loan last year, was a joy to see. We hope the latest recipient Scott Brian gets as much from it and makes progress like Neil. This is a scheme that has much merit and would be nice to extend.

INSURANCE

A certain ambiguity in the insurance policy for members with regards teaching (ie: Students under instruction) was noticed and questioned by one or two members earlier this year. All of us I am sure thought we were covered for this activity by the policy, clarification was sort from the Broker, the upshot of which was that the old policy may not have been all we thought it was in this area, if push had come to shove.

Now however things are resolved, the Broker has this all under control with a new Underwriter, as you can see from details else where in 'Revolutions', it is doubtful that you will find better cover and value for money than this anywhere.

COMMITTEE MEETING APRIL 21st

Much time was spent on a number of the issues already highlighted. Many other issues were discussed, from the prudent use of our cash resources, ways to generate more, and how to off set some of our costs. Last year we continued to send out 'Revolutions' to 'lapsed' members longer than we should at much cost, this year we are not doing that. On April 21st we had 400 'members' who hadn't renewed, each has now had a letter (a job Peter didn't expect),

this is a much more cost effective way than sending Revolutions out calling for their non paid subscriptions. When you say 400 members have yet to renew it sounds bad, but membership is far healthier than normal at this time of year, we are only 200 down on last year's closing figure of 1580, my guess is we will finish the year with our largest membership for a number of years. It would be nice to finish with a figure close to 2000 by the end of the year, maybe that's a bit ambitious, but lets go for it. We have targeted the turners supply business with membership forms and holders, now we are looking to our members who do craft shows or have retail shops, if you can help on this one contact Frank Clarke. We have charged Chris Lindup to come up with membership boosting ideas other than those being pursued. Also we have charged Chris to come up with ideas that reach out to involve more youngsters in woodturning through the AWGB.

Presented to the meeting in draft form (Mike Dennis) was a small welcoming handbook for new members. Modification and consideration underway.

All Branches should now have the greatly expanded and updated Branch Handbook 1996 now 43 pages of information, with new sections on members offering Tuition and those who undertake Commissions, also a detailed list of Branch Support services from the AWGB. Its all good stuff and Mike Dennis should take a bow for his work on its presentation.

A new 20 page Branch Start Up Pack is available from Ken Allen, this is also an impressive presentation by Mike. The information has of course been collected and originated by a number of people with most input coming from Graham Lovett, Ken Allen and yours truly. We are looking into providing each Branch with an official AWGB certificate.

On a personal note can I say thank you to the Cumbria Woodturners Association who gave me a warm welcome (friendly I must add) to their AGM in April. Also the South Cheshire & Staffs Branch for whom I recently demonstrated, who again gave such a warm welcome.

REVOLUTIONS

Some ideas that were voiced at the AGM and seemed to find favour, as they did when I asked the Cumbria group what they thought. Product reviews etc, by members, not just by one person but by two or three to get a balanced view. Product Flyer inserts in exchange for contribution to the mailing out costs of Revolutions. These are a couple of ideas we are looking at to offer a better service but at the same time cutting costs.

SEMINAR

Our Bi-Annual International Seminar is next year and a Seminar Sub-Committee has been set up and is working on making 1997 every bit as good as 1995, hopefully even better.

PLEASE NOTE THE DATES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO AUGUST 8th 9th 10th 1997 Venue: University of Warwick.

FINALLY

I understand that Graham Hughes our prize winning turner from Mid Staffs has been extremely ill, (he won first prize at the Wembley P.W. Show) but happily is now on the mend. We all wish you well Graham, keep entering those competitions you have got many more prizes yet to win.

To all of you who took the trouble to speak to me at the Practical Woodworking Show, many with kind words thank you.

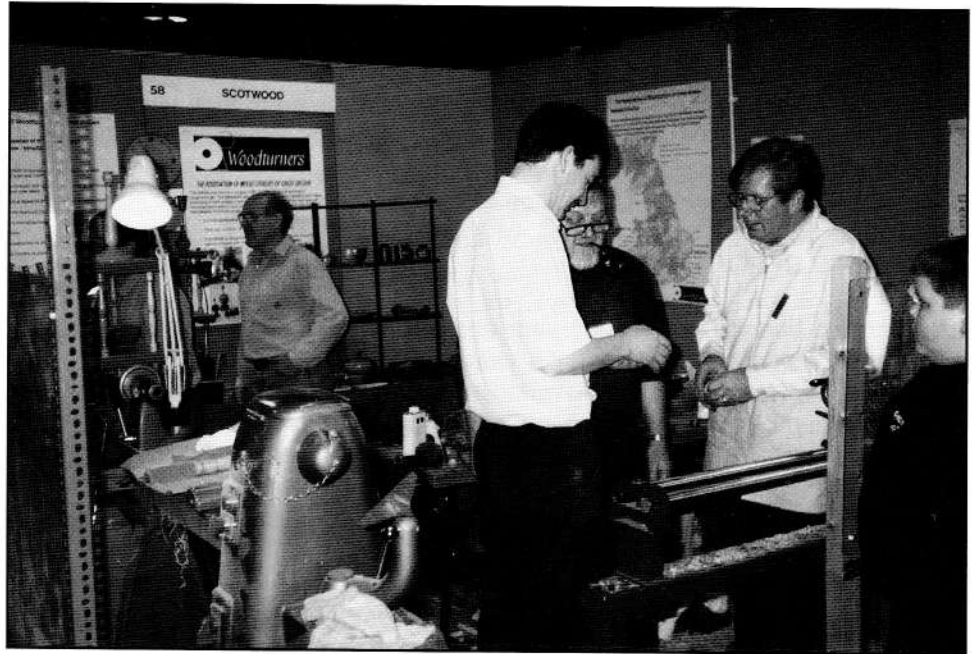
ORBITUARY

It is with great sadness we have learnt of the death of Charlie Caffery The Irish Woodturning Guilds Secretary. Charlie will have been known to many of you as he was at our Warwick Seminar and also at the NEC show. He was a wonderfully warm and friendly man who worked so hard for the woodturning cause. He will be greatly missed by those who knew him. A letter of condolence to his family has been sent from the AWGB.

National Woodworking Show - SECC Glasgow March 1996.

We were able, for the second year, to take up organiser Ken Salter's offer of a Stand at the Glasgow Show to promote the AWGB and "Scotswood".

Our members from the Glasgow Area Local Group offered to organise the Stand, which was more eye-catching than last year thanks to AWGB display boards loaned specially for the Show and additional posters designed and printed by one of our members. An exhibition of work by the Glasgow Group was the icing on the cake.



Thanks to Graham Burhouse (from Jean Burhouse Furniture), who supplied us with two lathes, woodturning demonstrations took place throughout the three days of the Show. This proved to be popular with the crowd but less so with the "sweeper upper".

We had heard, on the grapevine, that

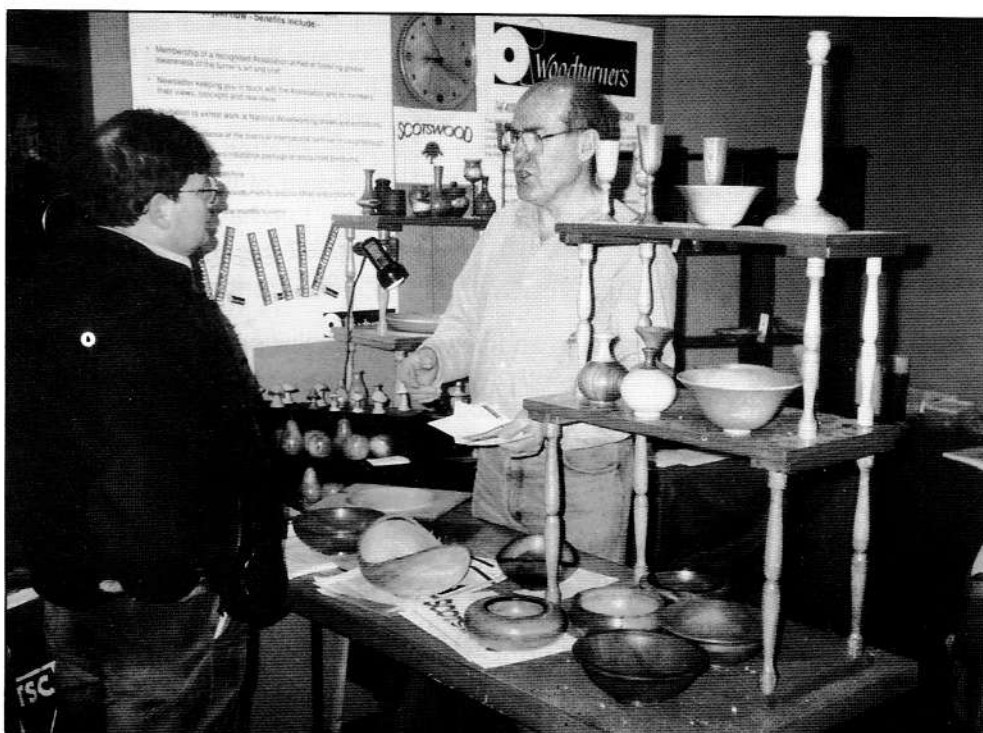
when the AWGB take a Stand at a major woodworking show one very senior member of the Executive Committee (with very recent close ties with "Scotswood"!) tours the Show "cadging" in the nicest possible way - items to be used in the woodturning demonstrations. Not to be outdone, straws were produced and our man was duly dispatched.

He became adept at dodging missiles but, apart from minor cuts and some bruising, came back with a very commendable haul.

The Show was bigger and busier than last year with a lot of interest shown in our Stand - we have already recruited several new members. A good rapport developed between "Scotswood" and many of the other exhibitors, contributing to an enjoyable experience for all.

The "Scotswood" committee would like to express their thanks to all who contributed to the success of the Stand and especially to Charles Anderson (the Glasgow Local Area Group Co-ordinator) and his team:

Eric Malley
Bill Latto
Ian Robinson
Jim Boulton
Bob Irvine
Derek Smith
Mike Candlish
Wilson Howie



AGM News from Uxbridge.....

By Peter Einig

Thirty two members attended the AGM on 2nd. March and saw Ray Key re-elected as Chairman, Len Grantham agreed to be co-opted as Treasurer, as there were no nominations for his post, but insists that the Association must find a new Treasurer as soon as possible.

After ten years as Secretary Hugh O'Neill stood down and Peter Einig was elected. Frank Clarke was elected on to the committee after serving as a co-optee and will continue to look towards liaison with the Suppliers and Traders who support the AWGB. Richard Barnes and George Hunter join the Committee as Branch representatives, Richard for the first time and George after re-election.

All the other members of the Committee remain for a further year.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Last year had been an interesting year and had seen some new faces to the Committee. The Committee had worked exceptionally hard through the year.

Bert Marsh, Don White and Tony Waddilove had been invited to become advisors to the AWGB after helping the AWGB for a number of years. They all accepted.

NVQ's have been a topic of conversation for some time and still remain so.

The AWGB is increasingly being turned to as the organisation that matters in the world of turning and we remain at the helm.

We attended four shows through the year and a number of comments were made about the impressive display of work provided by members. But work must be properly submitted for display. The clinic held at the NEC and Wembley was specifically asked for by the organisers and continues to be an important feature in their shows and the only non commercial stand. It is impossible to run these stands without the support of the stand makers and their professional approach. AND without the support of a number of traders who provided us with equipment and supplies this would not be possible for us to attempt. THANK YOU.

The traders have further supported the AWGB this year with advertising in REVOLUTIONS. This is a new area and has been well received by traders. One of these areas was the calendar which I have wanted for a number of years. A number of traders have offered discounts for members and this will be followed up and published in REVOLUTIONS.

The Branch Liaison Officer and Representatives have continued to keep in touch with all the turning groups we know. This has provided a more open style of running the organisation and is coupled with better lines of communication. So we have ventured along some new roads in many respects.

REVOLUTIONS is going from strength to strength due to a lot of man hours from Mike Dennis and Frank Clarke, who sells the advertising. Mike's professionalism as editor has made the traders more than willing to accept Frank's offers for space in a quality newsletter. It has also created extra revenue.

This all leads to a better shop window and a solid base from which to compile new initiatives and sub committees for specific topics. After speaking to the Branch delegates before the AGM the major concern was getting members to stand for committee positions but it was a very positive meeting and we are looking forward to the future in a positive manner. We started the year with 17 Branches and finished with 20, and 1580 members.

The International Seminar at Warwick was the best yet and a number of letters have been published in REVOLUTIONS. The venue was a major plus and allowed the demonstrators to give an excellent account of their methods. Their work and other items auctioned made £1267. For the first time the raffle raised £1000. Len had got his figures just about right and we made a profit of £11.

Next year is our tenth anniversary and we hope that the seminar will be a little different.

We have been offered a substantial amount of sponsorship to stage an International Exhibition of turned work next year. The offer has been accepted in principle and we are liaising with the sponsor. If agreed we would anticipate that it will promote all aspects of turned work, even a light pull. It will encompass all turners in the UK and have an international flavour. We hope that it will run alongside the Seminar and thereby create a very interesting weekend. Once again we are going into an area that is new to us but it has been agreed to explore the possibilities and produce a plan for approval by the sponsor.

Three turners who have supported the AWGB have already been mentioned. There are two others who I would like to mention, Hugh O'Neil and Len Grantham.

Len has agreed to be co-opted this year as Treasurer, unless some comes forward. Getting rid of the membership side of his duties has helped him make this decision but he still wishes to stand down. Len's involvement at the Seminar and workshops is invaluable. Thank you.

Hugh O'Neil has put in a tremendous amount of time and effort although being elusive on occasions, but the positive

side to his efforts is much appreciated. Hugh will continue to be involved with the AWGB in a suitable role where his expertise can be best utilised.

We have this morning given Branch delegates the new Branch Packs which has grown over the year and has been made possible by the hard work of George Hunter, Tony Witham, Ken Allen, Mike Dennis and Frank Clarke.

I hope that the membership will stabilise this year and grow.

BRANCH ACTIVITIES

Ken Allen expanded on the number of Branches and those who are considering joining the AWGB.

If Branches wanted news items in REVOLUTIONS then they should be sent in plenty of time. Ken also thought that it had been a positive year and asked for questions from the floor.

How many Clubs are there? which was answered by the Chairman, 'about 50 plus are known of but we are compiling an ongoing list.' Some members not in affiliated Branches asked that contact be maintained with all 'clubs'. The Chairman explained that all the Branch delegates had a number of clubs assigned to them to this end.

AUDITORS.

It was agreed that we should look for a member of the AWGB to audit the accounts to reduce fees.
HAVE YOU GOT SOMEONE IN YOUR CLUB WHO HAS AN ACCOUNTING BACKGROUND?

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The treasurer proposed that there be no change to fees as some changes had taken place to increase revenue and cut costs. The Chairman confirmed the Committees concern over expenditure and confirmed that it was being looked into very carefully.

CLOSE OF MEETING

Ray Key asked those present if they wished to raise and topics for discussion or information;

Names of those proposed for office should be published in REVOLUTIONS.

Whilst Communications are better, the AGM is the only place that an individual can have his say.

The Committee will look at ways of tidying up submission of work for display.

Mike Dennis suggested that we should look at product reviews in REVOLUTIONS and allowing companies to put fliers in to reduce postage and printing costs.

LOAN LATHE

Ken Allen presented the work of last years recipient, Neil Howard, and in recognition of his outstanding use of the lathe, Ray Key presented him with a copy of his latest book.

The Lathe has now gone to Scott Brian who hopes to move into the world of frame gilding and turning as a career.

What is a Coolibah?

(Extracted from the Cumbria Branch Newsletter)

Immortalized in the Australian song "Waltzing Matilda" is the coolibah.

This is a name applied to many Australian eucalypt tree species. These include Flooded Box (*Eucalyptus microtheca*) Black Box (*Eucalyptus largiflorens*) and Inland Red Box (*Eucalyptus intertexta*)

Eucalyptus microtheca, reckoned to be the 'original' coolibah tree, is found in northern parts of Australia and has a rough, grey bark and very dark, almost black, heartwood with white, thread-like markings in its wavy grain. Eight species have now been identified in the coolibah group of eucalypts.

Eucalyptus burls (or burrs, as we know them) of all species are much sought after by woodturners. They grow on trunks and roots and produce highly coloured and figured timbers, examples of which are salmon gum, york gum, morrell, gimlet, black butt, yorell etc. Have you any experience turning these?

THE ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

**TRADING AND PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1995**

	Notes	1995	1994
		£	£
Net Seminar Income	9	1,278	-
Video Hire		95	85
Sale of Merchandise		578	1,558
Membership Subscriptions		15,905	-
Sundry Income		95	16,606
		<u>17,951</u>	<u>18,249</u>
COST OF SALES			
Purchase of Merchandise		203	1,526
		<u>17,748</u>	<u>16,723</u>
GROSS PROFIT	2	649	390
Bank Interest Received (Net)		<u>18,397</u>	<u>17,113</u>

LESS OVERHEADS

Equipment Repairs and Renewals	788	288
Telephone	209	204
Photocopying	307	493
Printing and Stationery	934	794
Postages	1,122	965
Travelling and Subsistence	2,265	2,425
Newsletter	8,639	5,435
Grants to Branches	1,320	1,320
Insurances	1,633	1,605
Exhibition Expenses	2,242	1,985
Bank Charges	171	144
Donations		824
Meeting Expenses and Sundries	384	428
Accountancy Fees	676	540
Depreciation	1,482	1,516
	<u>22,172</u>	<u>18,966</u>

(DEFECIT) ON INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE

TAXATION 3

BALANCE TO ACCUMULATED FUND

	<u>(3,775)</u>	<u>(1,853)</u>
	-	55
	<u>£(3,775)</u>	<u>£(1,798)</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 1995

	Notes	1995	1994
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	4	6,523	8,005
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	5	1,110	1,106
Cash at Hand and in Bank	6	13,531	14,114
		<u>14,641</u>	<u>15,220</u>
CREDITORS: Amounts falling Due within One Year	7	(4,034)	(2,320)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>10,607</u>	<u>12,900</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>£17,130</u>	<u>£20,905</u>
Represented by:	8		
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		<u>£17,130</u>	<u>£20,905</u>

NOTES TO ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1995

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention

Tangible Fixed Assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life

General Equipment	15% reducing balance
Computer and Accessories	20% reducing balance

Membership subscriptions

Membership income is reflected in the accounts on the basis of subscriptions receivable during the year

Investment Income

Investment income has been regarded as an integral part of the operating activities

Accruals

All known expenditure paid after 31st December 1995 attributable to the accounting year has been incorporated into the financial statements

NOTES TO ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1995 (Continued)

9

Chucks for Woodturning

By Len Grantham

During the last few years that I have been running the Woodturning clinics at the Woodworking Shows and over the many years that I have been demonstrating and teaching woodturning, a subject that has come up over and over again is the question of which is the best chuck for woodturners to buy.

The fact that there is such a wide selection of chucks available now, all of which are good and all of which have pros and cons, makes this is a question that is almost impossible to answer because there are so many variables involved and what suits one will not suit another and because we are all individuals for every woodturner who says that his chuck is the best in the world, there is another woodturner who will declare that his is the best and the other is rubbish.

In the "olden days" we did not have this problem as there were no chucks on the market, if a woodturner needed a chuck, then he made one up to suit the particular requirement.

However I digress, times change, progress marches on and there is this selection of very good chucks from which to choose, so I thought that I would set down a few words about the chucks that I use in the hope that they may be of some assistance to anyone contemplating the purchase of a chuck.

Let me make it clear from the outset that I have no intention of comparing one chuck against another. This article does not purport to criticise, evaluate or assess, it is purely a resume of my experience with various chucks.

First of all a few words in defence of all chucks. All chucks are designed and made to work efficiently within certain parameters and almost invariably when I have heard complaints about a particular chuck, on investigation I have found that the user was trying to operate the chuck beyond its design capabilities.

The first thing to say about all the commercially made chucks is that they are not essential, but having said that, I don't know how we would manage without them because they make life so much easier and because they save that most valuable commodity, time.

The chucks that I possess and use regularly are: the Axminster self entering 4 jaw with two sets of engineer's jaws and two sizes of internal and external dovetail jaws, Craft Supplies precision combination chuck plus opening and closing collets, Nova Scroll chuck with a set of Cole jaws and a variety of screw, pin, glue and jam chucks.

Screw Chucks

Probably one of the simplest of chucks to use but one which can cause problems when used in end grain if certain requirements are overlooked. The most common errors are; drilling a wrong size pilot hole in the wood, not having the mating faces of the wood and the chuck flat and being too forceful with the turning tools. My main objection to using a screw chuck with end grain wood is that I have to accept either a hole in the base of the finished piece or a certain amount of waste, neither of which I like.

I mainly use my screw chucks for the initial mounting of bowl blanks to form the secondary holding and shape the outside form. I find this method more than satisfactory for up to about 12 inch diameter.

Pin chucks

This is a very useful device for the quick loading and unloading of work. It is very suitable for holding bowl blanks with uneven surfaces such as burrs and half rounds for natural edge bowls. The hole for the pin chuck must be accurately sized, if you are using a 1 inch pin chuck then you must drill a 1 inch hole in the wood. To achieve this accuracy you should use either a Forstner or a saw tooth bit.

Glue chucks

This device is a method I use when my other chucks are restricting the design of the workpiece. It is simply a piece of scrap wood (usually plywood because it has parallel faces) glued to the base of the workpiece with either superglue or with woodworking adhesive and a piece of paper between the two woods, as was used before superglue was available. The scrap wood then becomes the means of holding the combined piece by whatever means. Once the turning is finished the two can be easily separated.

Jam chucks

This is a chuck that I use mainly for finishing the base of a piece after parting off or to remove chuck marks. I do have several hanging around the workshop, but I usually make them to suit when required. This chuck is made from scrap wood, I normally use MDF because it is very stable and offcuts can be picked up cheaply. The MDF is mounted in one of my chucks and a recess or a spigot is turned to make a tight fit with the spigot or recess of the workpiece and as the name implies the two are jammed together.

Craft Supplies Precision Combination Chuck

This was the first chuck I bought and it has given sterling service over the years. The basic chuck is very versatile having six different applications. I particularly like to use this chuck with the 3-way split ring for turning slender long stemmed goblets. I do get a little irritated by having to prepare workpieces accurately in order to fit the chuck. The smooth exterior of this chuck makes it quite safe for the inexperienced to use. The closing collets I have with this chuck are economical in keeping wastage to a minimum. There are a large range of accessories available for this chuck to improve its range.

The Nova Scroll Chuck

This is my newest chuck, it is a neat little tool whose size belies its strength. It operates in either expanding or closing dovetail mode with a movement of about 1 inch, thus eliminating the need for extreme accuracy. I use this chuck for turning bowls up to 12 inch diameter and for goblets, boxes, vases and some hollow forms. The Cole jaws, which are intended for holding finished bowls in order to dress the base, I have not been very successful with these jaws as I never seem to have the correct size. Consequently I have not persevered, preferring to resort to any other methods, but I will try again one day.

The Axminster 4-Jaw Self Centring Chuck

This is the chuck which I use the most. The movement of the jaws is about an inch, it will grip round or square pieces and with a little care and improvisation, irregular shapes. It is a heavy chuck and does hold the work further from the lathe headstock bearing than any of the other chucks and for this reason is perhaps not best suited to some of the smaller lighter lathes. Great care is needed when using the engineer's jaws as they sometimes protrude beyond the body of the chuck and can give a nasty rap across the knuckles. I have used the Axminster to turn everything from the tiniest goblet to a 20 inch diameter platter. This chuck too has a wide range of accessories.

These then are my chucks no one of them is better than the others, they each have good and not so good points, I will use one for a particular application and another for something different. There have been many times when I have started with one chuck and later changed to another because I was having difficulty in achieving my objective. Chucks are not cheap, but any investment made will be soon be regained by savings in time and ease of working.

For Sale

Harrison Union Graduate Short Bed Lathe, recent new bearings and drive belt, single phase + spare three phase motor, reversing switch. To include face plates, chucks, chisels etc. £950

"Viceroy" Sharpedge 16" grinder 3 phase £195

Router Crafter (little used) for fluting, barley twists etc Including router and instructions. £120

Tumbler/polisher including Brooks 1/2 HP motor. Ideal for using offcuts for "pebbles", "eggs" and key rings. £90

Log of Lignum Vitae (very dry, best quality). Approximately 40" long by 40" circumference. Approx 2.33 cubic feet. £100

New motor and large bearings. Plans and photographs, angle iron ready to build heavy duty bowl turning lathe. £150

Selection of good quality timber to include: Ash, Rippled Ash, Yew, Walnut, Oak - various sizes.

For further information contact: Don White 01179 564931 (Bristol)

For Sale

Large quantity of air dried (over 2 years)

CEDAR OF LEBANON

Cut for woodturners by woodturners

3" 4" 6"

up to 30" wide

Any quantity

£15 per cubic foot

Contact

Dave Reeks

01932 857372

or Mac Kemp

01932 223324

Affiliated Branches

AVON & BRISTOL

Secretary: Chris Lindup, 38 Barry Road, Oldham Common, Bristol BS15 6QY **Telephone:** 0117 9325477
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of each month **Time:** 7.30pm **Venue:** Keynsham Baptist Church Hall, High Street, Keynsham Bristol

CUMBRIA WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Geoffery Cambell, Halewood, Glebe Road, Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria. LA23 3HB **Telephone:** 01539 442641
Meetings: 3rd Saturday of each month **Venue:** Varies - please write for details

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE

Secretary: Nick Bright, 9 Yews Lane, Sawbridgeworth, Herts **Telephone:** 01279 724038
Meetings: Third Wednesday of the month **Venue:** Please write for details

EAST SURREY WOODTURNERS

Secretary: David G Granger, 290 Addington Road, Selsdon, Surrey, CR2 8LF **Telephone:** 0181 657 1895
Meetings: Last Wednesday of each month **Venue:** Varies - please write for details

HEART OF ENGLAND

Secretary: Marilyn Cox, 12 Fields Close, Badsey Evesham Worcestershire WR11 5JN **Telephone:** 01386 830196
Meetings: Every sixth Friday **Time:** 7.30pm **Venue:** The Scout Hall, Tiddington, Stratford-on-Avon

HERTS & BEDS

Secretary: Mike Sheaf, 51 Hart Hill Road, Luton, Bedfordshire. LU2 0BA **Telephone:** 01582 36382
Meetings: Second Tuesday of each month **Time:** 7.30pm **Venue:** The Cork Room, Adey Fields Centre, Hemel Hempstead.

KENT BRANCH

Secretary: Chris Wilson, Longacres, Chart Road, Chart Sutton, Maidstone, Kent. ME17 3RB **Telephone:** 01622 842097
Meetings: Please write for details as date and location vary.

MIDDLESEX WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION

Secretary: David Harrop, 68 Burgess Road South, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire. HP9 1EJ **Telephone:** 01494 678201
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month **Time:** 7.30pm **Venue:** Hayes Manor School, Wood End Green Road, Hayes, Middlesex

MID MARCHES WOODTURNERS

Secretary: Paul Balcomb, Bodgers, 5 Caefelyn, Norton, Presteigne, Powys. LD8 2UB **Telephone:** 01544 267010
Meetings: First Monday of each month **Venue:** Presteigne Memorial Hall

MID - STAFFS WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Graham Allen 132 Green Lane, Rugeley, Staffordshire. WS15 2AU **Telephone:** 01889 585037
Meetings: First Friday of each month **Venue:** The Village Hall, Etching Hill, Rugeley, Staffordshire

NORFOLK WOODTURNERS SOCIETY

Secretary: Bernard Rose, 63 Belmore Road, Thorpe-St-Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk. NR7 0PR. **Telephone:** 01603 36990
Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of each month **Venue:** Fakenham High School or Beetley Village Hall, Nr Dereham, Norfolk

NORTH LONDON WOODTURNERS GROUP

Secretary: Robert Craig, 55 Woodside Park Rd, Finchley, London. N12 8RX **Telephone:** 0181-446 0679
Meetings: Third Thursday of each month **Venue:** Varies - please write for details

SCOTSWOOD

Secretary: George W Hunter, 3 Dundas Avenue, North Berwick, East Lothian, EH38 4PS **Telephone:** 01620 892293
Meetings: Varies - Please telephone for details

SOUTH CHESHIRE & STAFFS

Secretary: Barbara Fishburn, 12 St Leonard's Avenue, Ipstones, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. ST10 2 QD
Meetings: Second Thursday of each month **Venue:** Senior Citizens Centre, Hanover Street, Newcastle-U-Lyme

SUFFOLK ESSEX CAMBRIDGE BORDERS

Secretary: M J Marsh, 21 Stour Gardens, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk. CO10 0JN **Telephone:** 01787 371842
Meetings: Second Tuesday of each month **Venue:** Peter Childs, The Old Hyde, Little Yeldham, Halstead Essex

SUFFOLK MID-COASTAL

Secretary: Jeff Moss, 29 Barton Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk. IP12 1JQ **Telephone:** 01394 383569
Meetings: First Thursday of each month **Venue:** Village Hall, Marlesford, Suffolk.

THAMESIDE WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Alec Owen, 27 Leigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. SS9 1JP
Telephone: 01702 73137 (Day) 01702 74757 (Eve's)
Meetings: Second Wednesday of each month
Venue: Ridley Studios, 27 Leigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

THE VILLAGE WOODTURNERS

Secretary: Robin Buckley, 130 Garton End Road, Peterborough, PE1 4EZ **Telephone:** 01733 347296
Meetings: **Venue:**

WEST CUMBRIA

Secretary: Geoff Robinson 2 Countess Road, Bransty, Whitehaven, Cumbria. CA28 6BS **Telephone:** 01946691803
Meetings: **Venue:**

WEST MIDLANDS

Secretary: Graham Lovett, 66 Beachcroft Road, Wall Heath, Kings Winford, West Midlands. DY6 OHX **Telephone:** 01384 77398
Meetings: Every 6 weeks. **Venue:** Water Orton Primary School, Vicarage Lane, Water Orton, Birmingham, West Midlands

WEST NORTHANTS WOODTURNERS

Secretary: Mal Hill, 2 Kings Green, Prior Park, Daventry, Northamptonshire. NN11 4UB **Telephone:** 01327 72982
Meetings: Third Wednesday of each month **Venue:** Long Buckley RFC

WORCESTERSHIRE WOODTURNERS

Secretary: Walt Jarvis, 8 The Furrows, Stoke Heath, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. B06 3QX **Telephone:** 01527 876632
Meetings: Please contact the Secretary **Venue:** Droitwich High School, Ombersley Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire

News from the Branches

A new branch has now formed in Powys called "Mid Marches Woodturners" and they will be meeting on the first Monday of each month at Presteigne Memorial Hall, The secretary is:

Paul Balcomb (01544) 267010

Anyone interested in joining this branch please give him a ring. Please note that the June meeting will be held on Tuesday 4th June.

Another new branch to be known as the West Northants Wood Turners has been formed. They meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Long Buckley RFC at 8.00pm. The Secretary is Mal Hill, 2 Kings Green, Prior Park, Daventry, Northamptonshire. NN11 4UB Telephone: 01327 72982. Anyone interested in joining this branch please give him a ring

Overhead Mirrors

There are still two overhead mirrors available to any affiliated branch. They will be available after August 1996 and will need to be collected from Norfolk. Please give me a ring to reserve one on: (01889) 570373

Keep doing a good turn,

Ken Allen



**East
Surrey
Woodturners**

Our growing membership has necessitated some minor changes in organisation at the East Surrey Branch these were agreed at our second A.G.M. in March. The first important move being the election of Peter Miles as Chairman. We welcome his expertise and his dedication to the branch. Peter's photo appeared in branch news in "Revolutions" No 35 November 95 with Harry Leedham.

The A.G.M. evening fell on our second Birthday and this was aptly marked by a member's wife who made us a cake which was topped with a turned ornament in beech.

What wonderful people members wives are.

We have continued to have our "open table" in addition to the main topic for the monthly meeting. This has been a source of inspiration for the members. We are pleasantly surprised with the items that are presented under the heading "Things for the kitchen" or "a tablelamp" or "what to do with a 2" cube". The variety in interpreting the theme are and have been many, and we look forward to the continuing programme. Our last open table was converted to a competition and a prize was won in both novice and advanced classes. We have another competition planned in the autumn. Our plans during the year will include appearances at several craft fairs. We expect to have a slot at a borough Horticulture open day in June and at the annual Selsdon Wood Country and forestry fair during August. This is now regarded as our major annual event, and we look forward to it. We anticipate an enjoyable and busy weekend. The branch is also making preparations to hold our own open day during November. We would welcome hints and suggestions from association members in this respect bearing in mind that we do have a limited budget. However as I pointed out in the opening of this letter, we are growing in number and by November we will expect to have grown some more.



The Avon & Bristol Branch's new secretary is Alan George whose phone number is 0117 - 9697338.

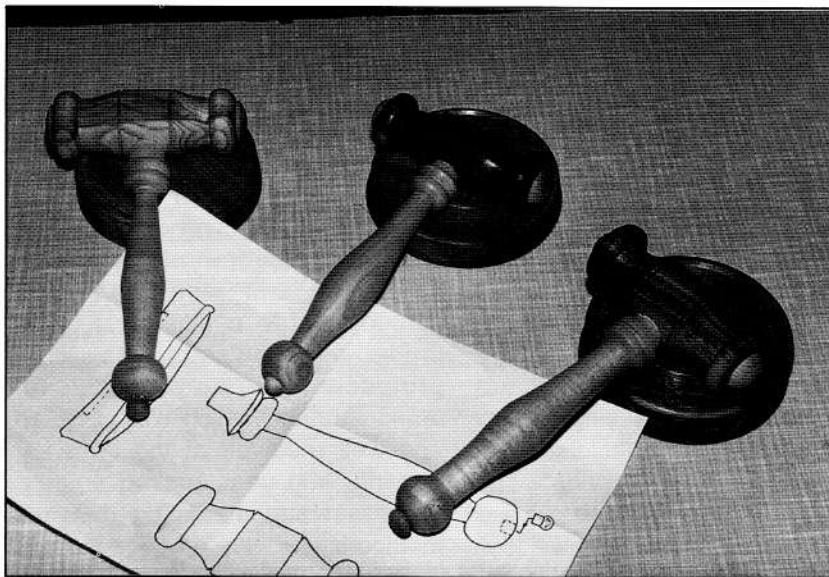
On six consecutive Wednesday evenings during January and February our Branch Chairman, Colin Hazell, ran a course in his workshop for six members who are beginners to woodturning. The course covered items such as sharpening tools, copy spindle turning, bowls and boxes and any problems the course members were experiencing. This was a repeat of a

similar course that Colin held before Christmas that was over-subscribed.

At our March meeting Chris Lindup repeated his demonstration of hardening and tempering high carbon steel to enable tools to be made or repaired. The very professionally produced demonstration, which was popular and well received at the Warwick Seminar last year, proved equally successful and interesting to the 45 members who were privileged to see it. Our monthly competition saw an entry of a large number of high quality turned boxes.

In April an exhibition of members' work proved to be very popular. Almost 100 high quality items were displayed and members were invited to talk about their work which included an enormous range of items, many very unusual. Techniques such as wet turning, colouring, carving on turning, offset turning and unusual finishes such as flaked graphite were discussed. It was a pleasure to see the wealth of turning talent of the members. An egg and egg-cup was the subject of this month's competition and, as usual, the quality of entries was again high.

On the last Saturday morning of April a small group of members assembled at Don White's workshop to learn about chainsaws and their safe use. Vice-Chairman Simon Keen repeated his workshop session given at the Warwick Seminar last year. Simon split the morning into two sessions. Firstly a theory section, where he showed members examples of essential safety clothing and how to maintain a chainsaw in perfect working order. After coffee in the second section, Simon showed how to cut small logs safely on the ground. This was followed by preparing bowl blanks from green logs using a chainsaw. Safety was the basis for all the instruction which Simon gave. The efficient, thorough and totally professional way that Simon delivered the workshop was greatly appreciated by all who participated.



“HANDS ON - WHAT BENEFITS?”

*From Graham Lovett, West
Midlands Branch.*

In common with most other branches, we at the West Midlands, throughout the year, have two or three “hands on” sessions.

Usually three lathes are set up around the room, each with a “minder”, (usually the person who has provided the lathe!!) to see that things go as smoothly and safely as possible. In addition one of our professional members, Roger Warren-Finding, brings along his mobile set up and conducts a “Problems and Solutions Clinic”. This aspect of the meeting always attracts a large gathering, and the many and varied questions keep Roger going for most of the three hour session, interrupted only by the obligatory tea break.

Since the inception of the Branch Insurance package provided by the A.W.G.B. to affiliated branches (what peace of mind!!), and our hands on sessions, we have always considered that a “theme” for this type of meeting is preferred rather than an anything goes approach. Plans are drawn - well a rough sketch prepared - and each lathe group is supplied with partially prepared timber and THE plan, and at the end

of the meeting it is hoped that three similar items have been produced. Items produced during these hands on sessions have been, a ONE PIECE MALLET, an idea picked up from a Dave Regester Mini Seminar; a THREE LEGGED STOOL, and a GAVEL AND BLOCK.

This type of meeting we have found is well received by the membership and because there is only a small number of people around the lathes at any one time, the feeling of “making a fool of myself” is somewhat limited, and the person having a go at the time is able to feel more relaxed. Of course, not everyone wishes to take an active part, and are not pressured in to doing so, nevertheless, I’m sure that even by just watching and listening, they gain something from these sessions.

So what are the benefits of “Hands On”? I suppose if you ask a dozen people this question you will get a similar number of answers, but one thing for sure, those who can’t are brought closer to those who can, and it is very enlightening to see and hear several solutions to a problem, banded about during these sessions. I think that no matter what level of competence we all feel we are at, something can always be learned from others. This can not only be good for the individual, but also good for the craft of woodturning in general, and for the aims of the A.W.G.B.



The “Heart of England” Branch is now entering its 5th year and going from strength to strength with a total of 64 members with enquiries still coming in.

1995 was again a very successful year for the Branch, with visits from Stephen Cooper, Keith Rowley and Allen Hewitt and 1996 promises to be equally successful with visits arranged from John Hunnox, Melvin Firmanger, Jim Clewes and again, Stephen Cooper, along with demonstrations from our own members,

One of the highlights of 1995 was a two day gallery exhibition last September at Harvard House, a grand old Elizabethan building in Stratford Upon Avon that once belonged to the mother of the founder of Harvard University. The exhibition was officially opened by Roger Pringle, the head of the Shakespeare Trust who administer the building and what a success it turned out to be with nearly £2000 worth of items sold. It our intention to try and repeat this worthwhile event again this year.

Last December we had a change in the structure of our committee, our new Secretary is Marilyn Cox of: 12 Fields Close, Badsey, EVESHAM, Worcs WR11 5JN. Tel. 01386 830196.

Our Branch meets every six weeks at the Scout Hall in the village of Tiddington, Just two miles from the centre of Stratford Upon Avon. We are a happy and progressive Branch with our own lathe and other equipment, along with an extensive Woodturning Video library. We always encourage our members to bring along their work and this year will be looking to have three categories, novice, intermediate and experienced, hopefully, this will motivate everybody to produce work for each meeting.

We welcome members from others branches and look forward to 1996.



**WORCESTERSHIRE
WOODTURNERS -
1995 EXHIBITION
"The World of Wood"**

Following on from two previous popular exhibitions, the Worcestershire Woodturners at the end of last year, staged another very successful show at our usual superb venue, the Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre. Entitled "The World of Wood" it ran for nearly two months ending on 22nd December. Over 500 exhibits from 28 members were displayed and, as is our custom, we invited the local woodcarvers to join us and three of their members displayed some of their work. During the show there was always at least one steward on duty to chat to some of the 1800 visitors that came to the Centre.

This time we did not install a demonstration lathe, making more room available for exhibits giving us the full 480 square feet of floor space, and the glass cabinets and display shelves provided by the Heritage Centre enabled us to present a very professional looking layout. Many of the items were for sale and being so

near to Christmas the sales were very brisk in spite of the attendance figures being down on the last show and during December many of us were kept busy turning replacements for the work sold. - Prior to the exhibition the club had agreed that a percentage of sales would go to the Cancer Relief MacMillan Nurses charity and we were able to present to the Appeals Organiser a cheque for £456.

The success of the show was well worth all the planning and organising; everyone was pleased with the results and our thanks go to the Heritage Centre staff for all their help. This will unfortunately be our last show at this venue as the exhibition room is going to be used for another purpose.

Mid Staffs Branch

Mid-Staffs woodturners are holding an open day at the home of the chairman, Ken Allen. There will be five lathes operating with demonstrations of turning with tool suppliers attending. Refreshments will be available. Anyone interested in attending please ring: (01889) 570373



As Middlesex members prepared items for sale at the The Middlesex Show which is their prestigious annual event they will have the opportunity of a critique of their work at the June meeting.

On July 11th Bill Jones will be demonstrating his versatility and talent.

August 8th - Mac Kemp and Dave Reeks will be giving hints and tips on converting timber from newly felled trees.

Bank Holiday Monday August 10th is once again the annual Bar B Que.

WOODTURNING EXHIBITION

Mid Staffs Association hosted an exhibition of members' work in cooperation with the Staffs and South Cheshire, and West Midlands groups, on Friday, 29th March at Brownhills Community School in the Design and Technology block.

More than 200 members, their families and friends, along with members of the public attended this very successful event.

Great interest was shown at the expertise of the two demonstrators, Gordon Fradley - Mid Staffs and Roger Warren Finding of West Midlands groups. They were literally swamped with spectators plying them with numerous queries about their craft.

A charity stall consisting of turned items made and donated by members proved popular and realised approximately £85 for the Air Ambulance Appeal Fund.

The exhibition of work revealed an astonishing range of woodturners talent and ingenuity generating a great many compliments and

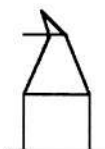


from the left Joy King - Heritage Centre Assistant, Alan Griffin - Club Chairman, Walt Jarvis - Club Secretary, John King - MacMillan Appeals Organiser, and John Phillips - Exhibition Organiser.

The bowl and hat in the foreground were turned by Alan Griffin.

Photo by kind permission of the Droitwich Advertiser

expressions of appreciation, particularly by the non-woodturners who attended.



Kent Branch

Trade stands included Crown Tools, The Littlecraft Company and Pyatt Woodworking, all of whom had a busy time during the evening. A licensed bar dispensed liquid refreshments at favourable prices and to use the wording of our advertising material, "Everyone enjoyed the unique company of the woodturning fraternity".

The branch officers were fully occupied with answering numerous queries relating to our craft, and there is no doubt that recruitment will greatly benefit from their efforts.

Perhaps the most pleasing aspect of the whole event was the friendly and helpful interaction of everyone concerned, which seems to be the norm in woodturning circles.

Altogether a very worthwhile exercise in PR for both local and national associations.

A summary of events is included with this issue. I thought you would appreciate the following extra information: all events at the Apple Craft Centre unless stated otherwise.

16 May - Roger Taylor, VSM Abrasives Ltd. - Talk and short video on Vitex abrasives.

Members' competition to turn a goblet with or without off-centre turning.

15 June - Stan Brittain and Ian Sandford - Stan will convert a tree trunk into a lamp and it is hoped that also he will talk on his superb wood colouring technique.

This will be followed by Ian Sanford's clinic.

18 July - Ian Sanford

Ian will talk on design and other points which judges look for in competition entries. Members are asked to take along items for critique.

17 August - Rose-Marie Yeh

Renowned for her artistic and decorative hardwood bowls. More

details of Rose-Marie can be found in the March 1994 issue of Woodturning.



Cumbria Branch

**Are you ready for
Revolutions 5?**

Rayrigg Rooms (Bowness on Windermere) will again be the scene for our Annual Exhibition and Sale of Work from Friday 24th to 31st May inclusive. The Spring Bank Holiday is Monday 27th May.

Our show last year was an outstanding success.

We are again depending on you to make this event a show to be remembered.

Get your thinking caps on and come up with something worthy of entering in the exhibition. We wish to display high quality work representative of the broad spectrum of work by CWA members.

AWGB Regional Seminar Turn East 96

The 3rd East of England Woodturning Seminar

Fakenham High School, Fakenham Norfolk

10th August 1996

9.30am til 5.00pm

Demonstrators include

Ray Key • Stuart Mortimer • Chris Stott

Garry Rance • Rose-Marie Yeh

plus Trade Stands & Exhibition

Admission will be by ticket only

£25.00 (includes a buffet lunch and Refreshments)

Early application is recommended for the limited number of tickets available

Bernard Rose, 63 Belmore Road, Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich. NR7 0PR

Where do we turn next?

by Hugh O'Neill

Reflections on retiring as Honorary Secretary of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

It was with considerable regret that I retired as Secretary to the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain at the recent AGM - nine years in the post (from the inauguration) is enough for any one person - and for the Association. I have found enormous satisfaction in what the Association has achieved in those nine years of existence - but there is more than a tinge of regret for my own short comings in the post, and particularly for what the Association has not yet achieved; and in some areas it is questionable if it ever will.

We have seen a burgeoning growth in the craft and might be tempted to believe that "Woodturning is flourishing". But I wonder if it really is?

The signs ARE good! There are an estimated 40000 lathes in the UK. Possibly 5000 members belong to turning clubs and associations. 200 attend the AWGB's big biennial international seminars, paying a fair fee for three days of demonstrations and talks on design. There is no doubt that there is a huge supply industry with prices rising considerably faster than inflation. All appears to auger well; so why the doubts.

The down side is serious. In many cases it is not what we see, but what we do not see that gives rise for my growing concerns. First the obvious. All bar a few percent of those involved are ageing hobbyists. Year by year a few more try to turn their hobby into a means of making a living but fewer and fewer survive on solely turning generated income. Woodturning shows are showing a declining attendance roles and at each one there are noticeable absentees amongst the previously regular exhibitors. Some of the magazines devoted to wood are reporting declining subscriptions, and one is threatened with closure.

Much more serious is that turning is no longer on the curriculum at schools; in fact most schools have sold off their lathes. There is no academic base to turning. Ceramics, in various guises features on the syllabus of most art colleges — but where is wood? Not at many, and then only as furniture making; and woodturning at none!

Although "wood is nicer than plastic" most items made in wood are looked at and evaluated on their utilitarian potential by the general public.

Most turners have now given up craft fairs - certainly if they were looking for a fair return on their efforts. The craft fair world has been in decline for a number of years having now descended to little better than bric-a-brac

markets. Even at the best most visitors were not prepared to pay the turners justifiable prices and certainly not prices that reflected the artistry on offer.

But the apathy is not only within the buying public.

In mounting national turning competitions you have difficulty filling the lists, and are extremely lucky if you achieve half a dozen pieces in the junior sections.

There are some urgent needs.

First we must promote within the general public a real appreciation of the decorative potential of wood in general and turned wood in particular. This will not be achieved overnight, nor will it be achieved cheaply, (nor, incidentally, by those who undervalue and under price their work.) It certainly will not be achieved while we see some of the appalling rubbish - poor design and crude finishing - that some turners do offer on their stalls.

Then there is a very much broader issue of which turning is only one small part. As a nation we have to get youngsters re-involved in the concepts of making things; of manual as well as creative skills; and particularly with the notions that there are proper (better) ways of doing some things. A properly crafted and made traditional joint may not look as "creative" or "innovative" as something tied together with raffia - but at least it works - and lasts! The "anything" goes approach of much crafts and art teaching does not appear to have achieved its aim of realising creative potential - it has certainly reversed the development of mechanical and practical skills. We may have some 2 million unemployed but the story from right across the country is that you can not find a potential employee with manufacturing or craft skills. The practice of woodturning at schools could reverse this really serious threat to the manufacturing base of the UK.

Very many of our present ranks of turners learnt their basic skills at schools. Now, without this early stimulus, our ranks will start to decline within the next few years.

One of the main reasons for its disappearance from the school curriculum is that turning has no academic basis and that there are therefore no qualified teachers. Most education authorities will not risk employing anyone who does not have the appropriate paper qualifications (irrespective of their actual making competence or status). Public institutions are following this trend and some are reported as not allowing unqualified practitioners to work as operators on their sites. Look at the small print and you will find that the organisers of many municipal craft fairs have the right to prevent you demonstrating.

A national qualification - soon - is an absolute essential to our long term survival.

In fact I place formal training and appropriate qualification at the very TOP of the immediate needs list.

Unfortunately that in itself faces another problem. The world of academia need to see a promise of a return. They will/can not mount courses unless there is some guarantee of students. Where will that come from unless there is professional potential and a wish to learn to turn more than just mere bowls.

At one time it looked as though NVQs might be a way forward but this ship has sailed on to so many rocks particularly in relation to turning, that there is real cause for despair. Turning may now be subsumed into furniture making NVQs. There is a powerful lobby who believes that this is where it should be!

So what of the AWGB and its role? Perhaps the Association should completely switch its focus away from trying to provide for and meet the wishes of the existing band of hobbyist turners, and should concentrate its thinking entirely upon the future of woodturning - the academic, professional and public awareness futures. And only through this benefit the hobbyist.

Those who look to a woodturning (and any other) organisation in terms of "What's in it for me (now, today)? What benefits do I (personally and directly) get from the Association?" could well be the cause of our death. Not just of the Association, but of woodturning itself. It is this cult that has increasingly tended to drive the direction of the Association in the last few years. But we need to think hard about where it is driving it. Is it the right road? What ARE the alternatives?

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(answerphone daytime)

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