

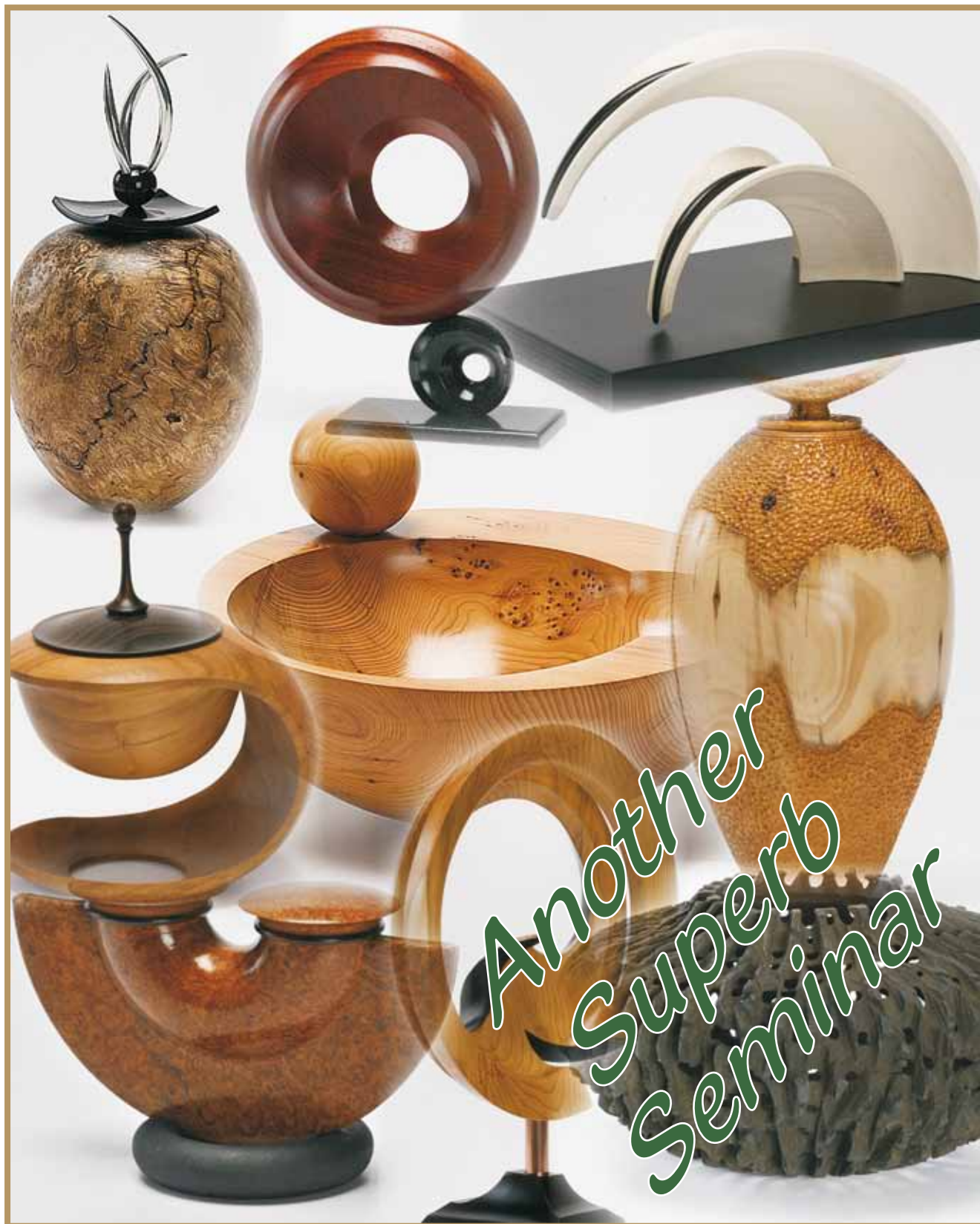


# *Revolutions*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

Issue No 91

December 2009



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## Chairman's Notes

My first Seminar as Organiser is now over and I find that suddenly I have some free time to look inside my workshop. All the comments we have received have been complimentary which is very gratifying after the time and effort expended by the committee, some of whom had never been to a Seminar before. However we will keep reviewing everything and will take into account the constructive comments we have received. The only disappointment was the lack of junior entries - more chasing needed next time. In a month or so I will start looking at top demonstrators for 2011.

The first Internet auction of woodturning was a success, more work than I expected, but a great boost to our training budget with our share of the £13,000 result, and a further £3000 added by our normal delegate auction on the Saturday evening. Thanks to all who contributed.

The seminar top 50 selection will now be seen at shows but can be available to clubs who are prepared to hire an urban hall and along with their own club bring the turnings to the general public. Availability is limited by shows and the number of applications.

We are thinking about the possibility of some form of competition involving clubs and members which could fill in between Seminars and possibly provide the travelling exhibition in the intervening year. I'm having a meeting with the Worshipful Company of Turners, who proposed the idea, shortly to investigate the proposal and will keep you informed via the Regional Reps.

You are all aware of the youth training scheme which is still expanding, however I would like to achieve a structured link between the AWGB and the Boy Scout movement. I'm thinking of Explorer Scouts (which have members of both sexes). I have a meeting with Boy Scout headquarters at the end of October to discuss possibilities. What I'm thinking of is something not as detailed as our youth scheme but provision of basic training and the production of a simple spindle and a simple plate. Successful completion would count towards a suitable badge. This could probably be achieved during one dedicated day in the programme. This could be a very satisfying exercise for all parties, linking the clubs and members with the local community and hopefully bring some young members on board. At 70 I'm fed up representing the average age of woodturners. I would be glad to hear from clubs or members either directly, or via Regional Reps, if you are already working with Scouts, or are prepared to do so. Peter Bradwick is launching his new development scheme aimed at providing courses to an increased number of the membership. See details elsewhere in this edition.

I would also urge you to study the WCT completion rules for 2010 and start to plan a masterpiece for one or more of the various competitions. There

continued on page 4

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

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## FRONT PAGE

A collage of some  
of the selected  
pieces  
from this year's  
Instant Gallery  
at the  
AWGB International  
Seminar

Photographed by  
Charles Sharpe

Copy deadline  
for the next  
edition of  
Revolutions

January 16th



are some good cash prizes to be won as well as WCT medals.

We have two vacancies on the committee, Trade Liaison and a Regional Representative. If you are interested but would like to discuss the posts feel free to contact me regarding the Trade post and Brian Partridge for the Reps position.

I wish all of you a great Christmas.

## **The Irish (IWG) Seminar**

Tony Walton

After many years serving on the AWGB committee and attending all the shows and seminars in the UK, I finally ventured out of the UK to Ireland to visit the Irish woodturning seminar as one of the AWGB representatives.

The seminar was held in the Armagh City Hotel using the conference rooms for the trade stands and demos. Amongst the trade stands were Vicmarc, Sorby, Meantime and local traders from Ireland. There were some very good deals on tools, timber and finishes.

The demos were held in the small conference rooms with seating for about 30 with a large flat screen monitor. There were six demos on at any one time, with a number of rotations throughout the day and an excellent selection of demonstrators from the UK, Ireland, France and the USA, which included Margaret Garrard, Stuart Mortimer and Benoit Averley, fresh from his triumph at our own seminar.

All the meals except breakfast were served in one large room and the food was excellent throughout the seminar. I don't normally drink but I had to test the Guinness and I must say it's the best I had ever tasted, I felt I had to test it every night just to make sure it was consistent!



**Margaret Garrard entertaining the Irish**

All in all it was an excellent weekend and very enjoyable, with hospitality and friendliness all around, I for one will be going back again next year.

## **Training and Development**

Peter Bradwick

Since joining the AWGB executive committee my role has changed considerably, not only am I involved with youth training, but my remit now covers all aspects of training within the AWGB. We are looking at ways to further enhance the Youth Training Programme which is very important, however it is also very important that we develop the training for the general membership.

We are working on some new initiatives, for example the Demonstrator Training Programme which is well into its first year of development and looks to progress with further development in the future. Member Training Workshops are the latest initiatives that we shall be offering to the membership in 2010.

To bring these initiatives together the 'Membership Development' and 'Youth Training' have been incorporated under the heading of 'Training and Development'. Hopefully this will make the benefits of Training and Development more accessible to the membership as a whole.

Activities within Training and Development are paid for by funds raised at the auctions at the seminar at Loughborough. This year we saw the very first on-line live auction at the seminar and what a success, combined with the auction on the night of the banquet, over £10,000 was raised for the Development Fund. The money raised will be put to good use and the funds will be spread over the various training activities.

### **Youth Training Programme**

The Youth Training Programme continued in 2009 at the existing venues, Stuart Mortimer's workshop in Hampshire and Simon Hope's workshop in Essex. We added a new venue to the programme at the Avon and Bristol workshop in Portishead, where a weekend event in April introduced ten new youngsters to the craft of woodturning. The planned event at the Crow Valley Woodturners club in Cwmbran had to be postponed until the New Year.

Avon and Bristol have already fixed the date of the weekend of 25th - 26th April 2010. Dates for Crow Valley Woodturners, Stuart Mortimer and Simon Hope are still to be confirmed for 2010. We are also hoping to hold a Youth Training Event at the workshop of Andrew Hall in County Durham sometime in 2010.

We are always on the lookout for new venues; so if you know of any possible venue that has the facilities to hold a Youth Training Event, please let us know. Also if your club holds events and initiatives for the youth we would also like to know, so that we can give support with advice etc. through the Youth Training Programme.

We are currently in talks to look at the possibility of getting the Scout organisation involved in some way with the Youth Training Programme, the plan is that this will be achieved in conjunction with the Branches. If anyone has contact with a Scout group, we would

appreciate it if you would contact us to discuss the possibility of getting Scouts involved with the local Branch.

### **Demonstrators Training Programme**

Since the first pilot day in November 2008 nearly 50 members have attended courses at twelve venues around the country. Each candidate received training that was focused on their communication and presentation skills, leading to them having the confidence to go on to deliver demonstrations to their local clubs. Some have gone on to become a Registered Professional Turner (RPT) and have given demonstrations on the club circuit as professionals.

The one-day courses will continue for any new candidates, with a follow up second day course being planned for candidates that have already attended a training day. The aim of the second day will be to further develop presentation skills, with a focus on specific demonstration techniques. Participating candidates will have the opportunity to be considered for a one-slot demonstration place at the AWGB International Seminar in 2011.

The branch hosting the course has been responsible for the hire of the room etc. and the AWGB, through the development fund, have provided the travel costs of the volunteer trainers. To date there has been no charge to the participants; however, to ease the pressure on the development fund there are plans to make a small charge from January 2010.

### **Member Training Programme**

Training Workshops that specialise in a particular subject area are to be arranged at venues throughout the country at either the professional's premises or at a venue hosted by a branch. The events will be advertised on the AWGB website and in *Revolutions*, members will be invited to apply for four to eight places at each event.

Some workshops already scheduled for 2010 are:

Foundation Course for beginners with Chris Childs  
Peter Childs, Little Yeldon, Essex. Early 2010 - to be confirmed.

Hollow form techniques and design with Mark Hancock and Mark Sanger  
The Mill, Portishead, Nr Bristol. Saturday March 27th

Box Making techniques with Chris Eagles  
Crow Valley Woodturners Cwmbran. Saturday April 17th

There are plans to have more courses for 2010 covering a range of subjects with top professional turners throughout the country including venues in the North; details will be published in the next edition of *Revolutions*.

Most of the cost of running the workshops will be financed by the Development Fund however, it is proposed that there will be a charge of twenty pounds per day for the workshops, this will help spread the cost and will lead to an increase in the number of workshops on offer to the benefit of the members.

For special requirements, members can also apply for a Course Scholarship as before. All applications will be considered on their merit and will be dependent on funds being available at the time of application.

In conclusion, the question is sometimes asked, 'what are the benefits of being a member of the AWGB?'. The short answer would be, 'there are many' but after reading this report I hope you will agree that the Training and Development Programme is growing and reaching out to the membership giving great 'benefit' to those who participate. These initiatives are for you the members, so please get involved and receive the 'benefits' that they are designed to give.

We rely heavily on volunteers to deliver the programmes, a big thank you goes out to all who have already given their time, however more help is needed, so if you feel that you are able to give some of your time to help, please let us know.

For further information and application forms: see the contact details under 'Training and Development' on the inside front cover.

There are plans for even more training initiatives in the future, so watch this space!

## **This is your newsletter!**

Your point of view is every bit as important as any other member of the AWGB.

So why not become a contributor to *Revolutions* ?

Don't forget we pay **£50** per page for non-news items.

We are always happy to receive articles for publication on any subject that is vaguely related to woodturning. Your editor is willing to hold your hand if the prospect terrifies you.

## **GO ON, GIVE IT A TRY**

## A Suffolk Stalwart

Geoff Moss



Peter Taylor is a retired farmer, having worked the land on his own farm in Bredfield and Dallinghoo in Woodbridge, Suffolk. He has been a member of the Suffolk Mid-Coastal Woodturners since about 1992 and has been a committee member since 1994. At the AGM in January 2009 Peter became the branch president and he was delighted to accept the honour. He is also a founder member of the West Suffolk Woodturning Club. He joined the Society of Ornamental Woodturners during 2005.

Over the past 15 years or so he has been committed to fundraising for our local Hospice and the East Anglian Children's Hospice. He makes and sells his work – anything from a £1.50 mushroom to a bowl costing £150. To date he has raised £80,000. He attends Church fetes and craft events, probably the largest at Ickworth Wood Fair, where he once sold £1,050 of turnings over two days.

Since joining the Ornamental Woodturners he has had some success with his work – 2<sup>nd</sup> prize at the AGM in 2007, and winning the Haythornthwaite Cup, also in 2007. Unlike other ornamental turners, Peter uses his own home made lathes, indexers and routing machine cutters. He also attends neighbouring branches giving demonstrations of his version of segmented and ornamental work.

His most recent success was at the AWGB seminar in August 2009. One of his pieces of work was selected from amongst the wide range of work in the Instant Gallery to be professionally photographed and will be on display at future AWGB events.

Peter is in excellent health for an 83 year old – he does suffer from selective hearing, which he is able to use to his advantage! His only complaint is that he claims 'not to sleep very well'. What a surprise!

The following poem was written for Peter by his daughter-in-law Lynn:

### Peter for President

With 65 Club members  
It says a lot for you  
If choosing Peter Taylor  
Was the best that you could do

Now France has Nicolas Sarkozy  
The U.S. Barack Obama  
So you really scraped the barrel  
When electing that old farmer!

If he was on the telly  
Anne Robinson would cry  
"I'm sorry Peter Taylor  
You're the weakest link – goodbye!"

Or if appearing on *The Apprentice*  
Instead of being hired  
Alan Sugar would look and say  
"Peter Taylor – you're fired!"

But with Peter as your President  
You really can't go wrong  
'Cos at the ripe old age of 82  
You won't be stuck for long!

He says he was quite dumbstruck  
When told of your decision  
He really couldn't quite believe  
He was elected to this position

Peter Taylor stuck for words?!  
Oh that I'd like to see  
I never get a chance to speak  
When he comes to visit me

But I really must be gracious  
And give credit as I should  
For he truly is quite clever  
When turning bits of wood

And I suppose you really could do worse  
Though I cannot fathom how  
So until you find someone more fitting  
He'll have to do for now.



**Peter's piece from the 2009 Seminar Gallery  
Photograph by Charles Sharpe**

# *The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain*

Notice is hereby given that the

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

of the

ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

will be held at

ODDINGTON VILLAGE HALL, Lower Oddington, Nr. Stow-on -the-Wold, Gloucestershire,  
GL56 0XD

**On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2010, commencing at 2.00pm.**

In accordance with the constitution the meeting will receive Officers' Reports, deal with any proposals and elect Officers and Committee members.

The posts of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, together with the Committee member required to resign by rotation, and the Regional Representatives for the East and West regions, also required to resign by rotation, will need to be filled. It is understood that the Officers, Committee member and Regional Representative East are willing to accept re-nomination. The post of Regional Representative West is currently vacant.

Nominations for the Officers and Committee member can be made by members whereas Regional Representative nominations must be made by a Branch within the relevant region. The Constitution requires that any nomination for the Officer and Committee posts must be proposed and seconded by members of the Association and accompanied by a hundred word statement from the nominee supporting their nomination.

All nominations for the Committee posts and any Proposals, again proposed and seconded as per the constitution, for discussion at the AGM must be received by the Honorary Secretary **no later than the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2010.**

Should it be necessary a postal ballot will be arranged in each of the relevant regions for the selection of the Regional Representative.

In the first instance the Honorary Secretary should be contacted to obtain further details of any of the posts due for election at the AGM or to obtain nomination forms.

The Constitution is published in the members handbook and can be seen on the website: [www.woodturners.co.uk](http://www.woodturners.co.uk)

The AGM Agenda and directions to the venue location will be circulated in the edition of Revolutions published in March 2010.

The AGM will be preceded by the Branch Representative's Annual Meeting which will commence at 11.00am.

It is important for the continued well being of the Association that both the meetings are well attended. All members are entitled to attend the AGM in their own right and will be welcome at the Annual Branch Meeting either as Branch representatives or observers. The Executive Committee extend a cordial invitation to every member to attend and look forward to meeting you on the day.

**Mike Collas**  
Honorary Secretary.



# Wood for Woodturners

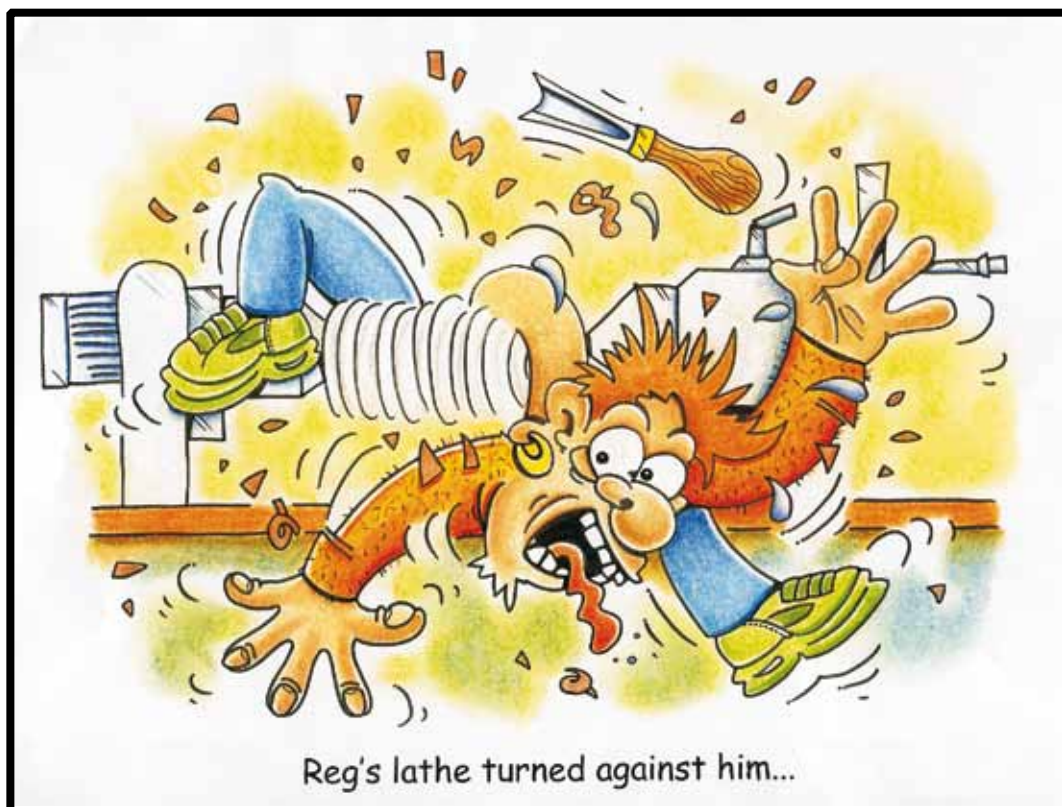
## Questions

### Across

- 4 Traditionally used to make piano keys.  
 6 Nutkin's favourite hurdle tree?  
 8 He start, to see this Asian fruit tree.  
 11 Many a hog is used to make traditional furniture.  
 13 Prized for its summer fruits and wonderful wood, this tree comes with stones!  
 14 A tropical African wood often used as an alternative to Mahogany.  
 16 This tree from the pea family is also prized by gardeners for its yellow chains of flowers.  
 18 A novice internal organ?  
 19 More nuts for gunstocks.  
 22 A small evergreen tree prized for topiary and turnery.  
 23 A woodturner's favourite, this wood also burns well.  
 27 Ivy's good friend.  
 28 The old Roman name for 22 across. (5,12)  
 29 This softwood, as seen on the flag of Lebanon, is also excellent for turning.  
 32 Another gardener's delight prized for its perfumed flowers in spring?  
 33 This sweet sounding hardwood from Central America must be treated with respect. Not only is it endangered, but the wood's oils can induce allergic reactions. Hardy's partner.  
 37 A woodturner's delight and cooking oil.  
 39 This African wood starts at the beginning of Rick Stein's port and ends in a small sea bird.  
 41 Taxus by another name.  
 42 Not to be confused with the small, green and sour fruit!  
 45 An ordinary flying tree perhaps?  
 46 A Scottish Deal for example.

### Down

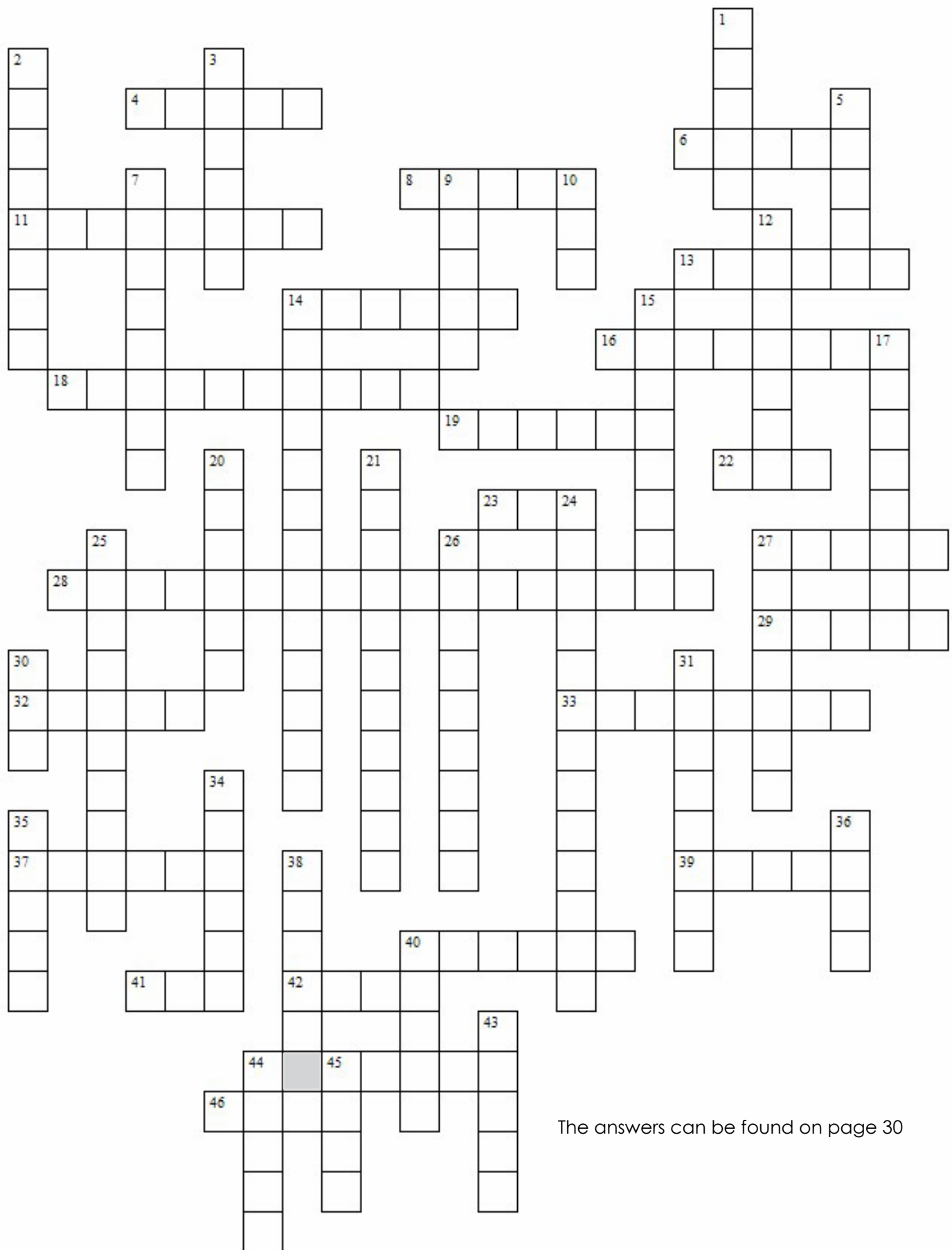
- 1 Prized by birds for its red berries in autumn.  
 2 The European Maple or Acer Pseudoplatanus.  
 3 Sometimes called Aspen, these trees can be black, white or even yellow.  
 5 Not younger but makes delicious wine?  
 7 Also called iron-wood, this pale ivory coloured wood is difficult to work. Formerly used to make ships keels and pulleys.  
 9 Perhaps Adam's fruit tree?  
 10 Hardwood traditionally used for fence posts.  
 12 Named after African Equids known for their distinctive striations.  
 14 You would be nuts not to toast this tree! (5,8)  
 15 Tough, hard and heavy. Traditionally used to make walking sticks.  
 17 A common hue used by decorators?  
 20 Crazy mad son makes good jam and wine.  
 21 Also an American medal of honour.  
 24 You can play games with this cousin of 14 down. (5,8)  
 25 The kookaburra tree.  
 26 Perhaps a fruit tree that walks sideways? (4,5)  
 27 The shavings make good smoking chips.  
 30 This was traditionally used to make wheels, chair seats and coffins.  
 31 Not to be confused with the Rosa family, this wood can be African, Brazilian, Indian, Mexican or Nicaraguan.  
 34 Anyone for cricket?  
 35 A typical streamside tree, suitable for turning, but traditionally used to make clogs.  
 36 Often used for outdoor furniture and boat decks because of its natural protective oils.  
 38 Syrup for your pancakes? (5)  
 40 You can go nuts for this American Pie.  
 43 Sounds like it may be found between high and low water marks?  
 44 Betula Pendula. Formerly used to make cotton reels and bobbins.  
 45 Two of these would give you its name.





# Wood for Woodturners

Compiled by Dawn Hopley



The answers can be found on page 30

## WCT Competitions

Next year sees the bi-annual competitions organised by the Worshipful Company of Turners. Members of the AWGB are eligible to enter into all of the categories shown below and we would encourage as many of you as possible to do so, there are some highly significant cash prizes on offer as well as ego enhancing WCT medals.

In 2008 entries were very disappointing with only 14 entrants in the senior categories and none at all in the youth category. It is self evident from the quality of the work seen at the Seminar in August that our members are more than able to compete in a competition at this level, and there is more than enough time to come up with something spectacular. Let us see a presentation and quantity of work that will blow the mind. Can we also see a much more concerted effort to encourage our junior members to bite the bullet and submit something, they have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

What follows is a synopsis of the entry details and rules, copies of the full documentation can be downloaded from the AWGB website or can be had by post via a request to the editor of this newsletter. Come on, take the bull by the horns and give it a go.

**The Masters Competition:** The plain turning section is for a pair of Presentation Boxes - £1250 first prize, £500 second prize and £250 third prize. All prizewinners will also receive a certificate. The Worshipful Company keep the first prizewinner's entry, to enhance their collection, this is an accolade in itself.

**The Felix Levy Open Competition:** This is a freestyle competition, anything goes - £1250 first prize plus a trophy, a certificate and a £50 Hegner voucher - £500 second prize plus a Robert Sorby voucher for a £100 - £250 third prize plus a £50 voucher from Craft Supplies.

**WCT Open Competition:** Is for a pair of matching Egg Cups - £250 first prize plus a certificate and a £50 voucher from Hegner - £150 second prize plus a certificate and a voucher for £50 from Craft Supplies - £100 third prize plus a certificate and a voucher from Rustins for £50. If the standard is exceptional, a further prize of £50 plus a year's subscription to 'Woodturning' will be awarded.

**AWGB/WCT Plain Turning Competition:** This is a freestyle competition and is open to AWGB members only - there are two sections:-

**Senior:** £200 first prize plus a gold medal and a Record Power voucher for £100 - £150 second prize plus a silver medal and a voucher from Ashley Iles for £50 - £100 third prize plus a bronze medal and a voucher for £50 from Rustins. There will also be £50 plus a year's subscription to 'Woodturning' to the runner up. Certificates of the WCT will be awarded to all winners.

**Junior:** £125 first prize plus a silver medal and a £50 voucher from Rustins - £75 second prize plus a



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bronze medal and a one year subscription to 'Good Woodworking' - The runner up will receive £50. WCT medals will also be awarded plus vouchers and magazine subscription. Certificates of the WCT will be awarded to all winners.

**Ray Key Special Youth Competition:** This is for those who have been on the AWGB/WCT Youth Training Courses. Entrants will be provided with two pieces of wood, which they have to use to produce a turned item of their own devising, they can be used to make one item or a number of different items. The winner will receive the Geoff Cox trophy, £100 from the WCT and a year's subscription to 'Woodturning'. The runner up will receive £25 from the WCT and a year's subscription to 'Living Wood'.

## Turning Tools My Way

Bob Weston

As with all stories, it is best to start at the beginning. I turned my first bowl when I was at school, nearly 50 years ago, and I didn't turn anything else in wood until I took early retirement in 2002. I had mentioned to my wife Anne that I would like to take up turning as a hobby when I retired. This had been prompted by watching bobbin makers demonstrating at craft fairs. My wife is a keen bobbin lace maker, and as everyone knows, they never have enough bobbins! The only condition placed on trying my hand at bobbin making was that before I could buy a lathe and tools

I must take a beginners course to see if I really had any aptitude for tuning. I signed up for a three day course with Craft Supplies at Miller's Dale where Ken Allen was the course tutor. Under his expert tuition and within ten minutes of working at the lathe I knew I really did want to turn. I soon discovered that my interest was in small scale turning, no large platters for me. This naturally pointed me in the direction of a small lathe and tools.

I soon found that while there were many lathes in the size I wanted, tools were more problematical. I bought an Axminster M330 lathe, with the luxury of the optional speed controller, alas no longer available, and a set of suitable tools. In the next few months I soon found that I wanted more specialised tools for the projects I had in mind. Looking through the suppliers catalogues I could only find these in sizes that were too large or with handles that were too long. I had spent a good deal of my working life solving engineering problems so I set to work to solve my lack of choice.

I first tackled gouges. Fortunately these are available in just about every size you can wish for; it is only the handles that need some work. Once I had settled on a design of handle that did not foul the lathe bed and suited the way I worked. See photo 1.



I then thought about the length of the gouge blade. For me the ideal length seemed to be just at the point where the tool was considered worn out. My solution was to adapt the idea I had seen on a very small set of turning tools, a solid ferrule with a grub screw that rigidly held the blade. I have the facilities to turn metal so I set to work making a suitable carrier. My carrier design ended up with a collar about the length of a standard ferrule, the remainder of the carrier was turned down to fit into a largish hole drilled in the wooden handle. The shaft length of my carrier varies depending on the length of the tool it was to be used with. The longer the gouge, the longer the carrier shaft. The next task is to drill down the centre a suitably sized hole, the length of the carrier, to fit the gouge snugly.

Finally the blade has to be securely held in the carrier. I use hex key grub screws to hold the blade as they are positive in use, and will not protrude above the surface of the collar and interfere with the use of the tool. Depending on the blade size I use one or two screws. The size is a personal choice, usually what's

to hand. I mark the position of the holes on the collar and drill and tap them to match the thread of the grub screws. See photo 2.



To fix the carrier in the wooden handle I usually cut a coarse thread on the barrel of the carrier, cover this in adhesive, two part epoxy, and screw it into the wooden handle. I do not put a thread on the inside of the wood, I just allow the carrier to cut its own. The fit will depend on how accurately you work. Too tight a fit and you won't be able to screw the carrier into the handle. Always make a dummy run without adhesive. See photo 3



I can now adjust the projection of the blade as needed and remove the tool completely if I want to use a jig to regrind it at any time. By having a long shaft inside the wooden handle the strength of the whole handle is maintained. I have made carriers from brass and aluminium alloy. I choose the material for each handle to achieve the balance and feel I want with the blade I intend to fit.

This idea can be extended to most tools although it may be necessary to remove tangs from some blades. It does not work so well with forged gouges – cylinder roughing gouges for example, as these often do not have any length of parallel sided tang. Tools with a large width to thickness ratio are also unsuitable unless you can grind a reduced section to insert in the carrier. 9mm square or 6mm by 4mm is about the largest I have tried. Round section tools, milled gouges, point tools etc, can be up to approximately 13mm before the carrier becomes too large. I have found no problem with blades that do not have a square cross section. If the blade is a snug fit in the hole in the carrier the pressure from the grub screws cause the sharp corners to grip the inside of the carrier firmly. One advantage of the blade mounting arrangement I have described is you can have different profiles on each end of the tool. For example you can have a conventional skew at one end and a radiused one at the other. I'm sure there



are other solutions to mounting blades in handles to make for quick changing of the blade. It all depends how far you want to go with interchange ability.

So much for 'off the shelf' blades. I next turned my attention to blade designs I could not buy. I have found that tool steel sold for use with metal working lathes is a very good source for my small tools. 4, 5 and 6mm inch tool steel either round or square is easily available. Ashley Iles (Edge Tools) Ltd also sell high speed steel pieces which are an ideal starting material for home made tools. If you have the necessary knowledge you can also use high carbon steel. This will need hardening and tempering to make a successful tool. Only go down this road if you know how to safely carry out the processes needed. Cheap wood chisels are also often suggested as a starting point for home made tools. The only disadvantage is that they are carbon steel, so if overheated when grinding they will need hardening and tempering before use. Grinding the shape you need just requires patience, a gentle touch so as not to overheat the metal and a little trial and error. Don't be afraid to experiment as these pieces of steel are much cheaper than finished blades. I have one favourite square skew made from 3mm square tool steel and another made from 6mm stock, with the edge ground across the diagonal. This makes for a longer cutting edge and I have adjusted the angle to give a long point. This I use to "part off" small items in restricted spaces, long point down.

Not everyone is in favour of having a multitude of tools. After talking with a bobbin maker at a lace fair I was very firmly told I shouldn't need to make special tools. I find that making tools to solve a turning problem, or to suit the way I want to work, provides me with as much enjoyment as turning a box or making a bobbin!

I have also produced for myself a multipurpose tool from 9mm square HSS (High Speed Steel). It is hard to describe so look at photo number 4 below.



The edge is ground across the diagonal with one face ground concave and the other, shorter bevel, flat. I use this in the same manner as a skew for planing cuts, as a beading tool, and also as a shear scraper. I like the 9mm version as it is really rigid.

During a one day thread chasing course with John Berkley I was introduced to the "point tool" I found this a useful tool for all sorts of things, however I did find that I could get a "dig in" when doing a planing cut. I solved this to a large extent by grinding the tool with a slight convex profile to the facets to give a slightly curved cutting edge. See photo 5.



My solution to a problem most experts say you do not get with this tool.

One manufacturer has recently introduced a modular micro tool with interchangeable blades. This has a knurled aluminium alloy handle which has a positive feel but I'm not sure I would want to hold this tool all day. It is, in my opinion, a big step forward and I have added one of these to my tool kit. I still prefer a wooden handle and my home made handles cost a fraction of the commercial one.



When I finished re-handling my tools I had a number of handles from which I had extracted the blades. Occasionally I need to use standard size tools so I decided to modify these handles in the same way as my custom handles. To enable me to drill the holes necessary in the second-hand handles I built a jig to hold them vertically on the pillar drill. I made this jig adjustable to accommodate the varying size handles. see photo 6.. It can also be used to drill new handles to conventionally mount blades.

The first thing I do is to remove the old ferrule from the handle as in photo 7. The ferrule is cleaned up to be reused. This generally leaves the handle with a hole where the old blade fitted.



It is difficult to redrill, even with the jig, in the centre of the handle so I plug the hole before marking the centre. This plug is completely removed by the new hole. The clearance hole for the blade will be smaller than the hole to take the carrier so I drill a shallow hole, the size for the carrier, first and then replace the bit to drill the clearance hole. The final stage is to drill the hole for the carrier to the correct depth. I usually use a Forstner type bit for this last stage as it does not need the lead point of an auger and produces a flat rebate at the bottom of the hole to support the carrier.

I then make the carrier to fit the handle and finally fix the carrier in the handle with two part epoxy adhesive. I can now move my favourite blades from one size handle to another depending on what I am doing.

I have made a jig to help regrind small gouges. The commercial one was very flexible in use but too heavy. It was very easy to remove too much metal; also it did not cater for small diameter gouges. I made one in aluminium alloy to reduce the weight and allow me to control the amount of metal removed more easily. The leg was made adjustable in length to allow for experiment. see photo 8 The knob on the top serves two purposes, to clamp the tool in the carrier and to act as a handle to guide the jig when grinding.

I like to experiment with different shapes and angles on my tools; I don't think it is a one style fits all scenario. For example I like my skews to have flat rather than concave surfaces and I use them with the long point

down when doing planing cuts. It suits me.



Don't be afraid to experiment, it's the only way innovation take place. There is no wrong way of doing something just so long as it is safe.

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A British company is developing computer chips that store music in women's breast implants. This is a major breakthrough. Women are always complaining about men staring at their breasts and not listening to them.

# AWGB 12<sup>th</sup> International Woodturning Seminar

Andy Coates

The 12<sup>th</sup> AWGB IWS began at 14.00 hours on the 7<sup>th</sup> August in a lecture theatre filled to capacity with a record number of delegates. The welcome session began with a short address from Chairman, Reg Hawthorne, and an audio visual presentation on each of the contributing presenters. With a flavour of what the weekend had on offer the seminar proper began with the first session of demonstrations.



**The delegates gather for the first time**

Mike Mahoney, Ray Key, Al Stirt, Glen Lucas, Eli Avisera and Benoit Averley all demonstrated during this first session, and if the comments heard afterwards were anything to go by, it was going to be an exciting three days for delegates. Over the next two days delegates could also choose to see demonstrations from Nick Agar, Joey Richardson, Bob Chapman and Mick Hanbury, as well as any of the four *one-slot* demonstrations by Anne Hayes, Dennis Keeling, John Jacques and Nick Arnall.



**Ray Key in widescreen format**

The Instant Gallery was opened later in the day by our honoured guest, Bert Marsh, to an enthusiastic audience. The Instant Gallery was widely acknowledged as being the "best yet", and the difficulty the judges would later have in choosing the best fifty pieces was clear to all.

At 20.30 all the delegates, presenters, traders, and

committee members, gathered in the main auditorium for the Live Online Internet Auction; the first of its kind anywhere. Nicholas Somers FRICS generously gave both his time and experience to auction the lots on behalf of the AWGB, and ATG Media had kindly arranged for the auction to go live online to a world-wide audience.



**The internet auction under way**

The auction was of thirty-eight lots, each supplied by past presenters at AWGB Seminars, and each had agreed to donate 45% of the auction price to the AWGB/WCT Youth Training Programme. A not inconsiderable contribution when some of the reserves were noted.

The winning bids were pretty-well spread between Internet bidders and members of the Seminar audience, and everyone seemed to have been captivated by the excitement of this new event.

When Nicholas Somers "topped up" the final sale figure from his own pocket, "to keep things tidy", the sale achieved the staggering total of £13,000. The exact sum by which the Youth Training Programme will benefit is not yet finalised, as a number of vendors donated the entire sale price, and ATG Media also made a generous contribution; but the figure is likely to be in excess of £7,000!

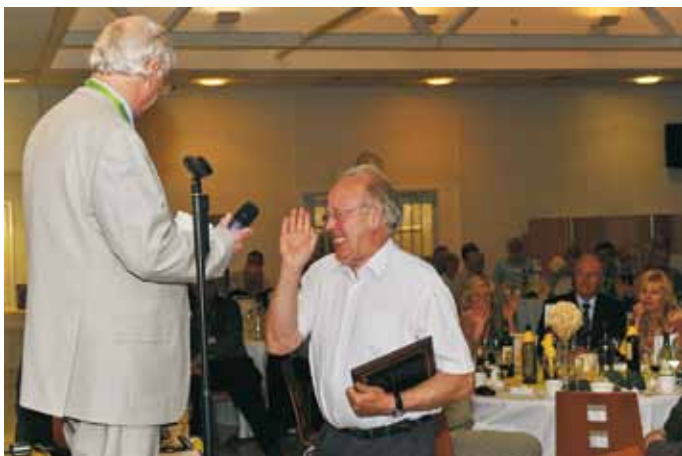


**Bert Marsh at the critique**



The online auction was always going to be “a bit of a punt”, in more ways than one: it had never been done before, the timescale was tight, the lots were coming from all over the world, and we couldn't be entirely certain that the considerable advertising had reached precisely the right people, but on the night the atmosphere was electric, the auditorium almost hummed with anticipation, and I doubt there was a single disappointed person in the room by the end of the auction. Nicholas Somers did an unsurpassable job, with the technical support of the ATG Media team, and without doubt the event was an astounding success and an experience I wouldn't have missed for the world...but please, NEVER AGAIN!

After a full day of demonstrations, Saturday was rounded-off with the banquet. After a fantastic dinner - and the odd glass of wine - presentations were made to Bert Marsh, who received a special award of AWGB Life Membership for his contributions to woodturning over many years, and to Jason Breach, who received the Tony Boase Award for the best piece in the Instant Gallery.



**“Ohh, you are awful”**

The, by now familiar, post-banquet auction followed, and an amazing further £3125 was raised for the Member Development Fund by auctioning off work which delegates had kindly donated for the cause. It should be remembered that all AWGB members can benefit from the fund, and heartfelt thanks go all those who kindly donated towards the auction.



**Delegates checking out the traders wares**

Sunday's schedule of demonstrations got off to a good start, and was only interrupted by what seems likely to become a regular, and popular, event; The Traders Bazaar. Sixteen traders had stalls bristling with all the tools and equipment, sundries and consumables that a wood turner could possibly require...and some you had to convince yourself you couldn't live without! Trade seemed brisk, and many a heaving carrier bag was spotted in the theatres during the afternoon demonstrations.

The raffle closed the seminar at 16.30, and a packed auditorium gathered to hear the draw. Despite a slight technical hitch the draw got underway, and an amazing array of prizes was collected by the lucky winners. I even managed to win some lovely beech bowl blanks myself!



**Mike Mahoney gets close up and personal**

AWGB seminars are only about three things - turnery, turners, and turning. For what does seem, it has to be said, a long weekend, you are immersed in woodturning day and night. Throughout the day you watch top-level demonstrations, discuss what you've seen with other turners – some old friends, some new acquaintances – spend the evenings discussing things even further over a drink, and in any spare minutes in-between you can wander around the extensive Instant Gallery and be overwhelmed with inspiration (and envy) at the skills and imagination on display.

Woodturning in the UK may not be everything that some people think it ought to be, but the 12th AWGB seminar showed what it is - it is alive and well, vibrant and progressive, active and exuberant. What is the evidence for this? The number of delegates beat all records, the number of day visitors broke all records, the money raised for member development broke all records, and the range of work on show was more diverse than ever. All things considered I'd say that the 12th AWGB international Seminar gave a good account of woodturning in the UK today, and together we can take things even further.

The Executive Committee would like to take the opportunity to thank all the companies and individuals, far too numerous to list here, without whose help and support we could not have managed. You know who you are, and thank you all.

If you missed this seminar - do yourself a favour - **don't miss the next one!**

## A Selection of Gallery Pieces

Photographed by Charles Sharpe

(Most, but not all, of the seminar photos in this issue are courtesy of Charles and we thank him for his hard work).



Andrew Hall



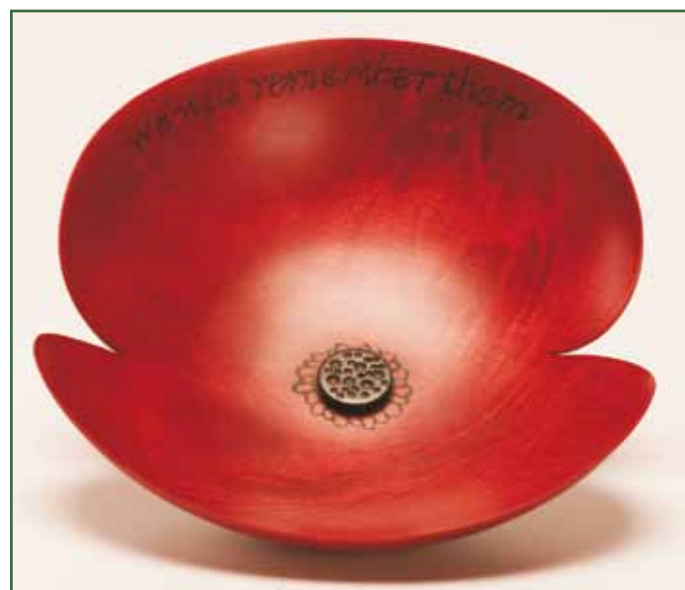
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## Spalting

Vaughan Hammond

Spalting is the name given to the wonderful patterns of erratic swirling lines and colour patching found in some of our native timbers which have been partially decomposed. The breakdown and decomposition of timber is a difficult process and we have many examples of buildings centuries old where the timbers and panels are in near perfect condition. There are virtually no animals or insects which would wish to tackle solid timber rather than small twigs and leaves and greenery. Even beavers are just felling the trees in order to get to the small branches! Termites chew up bits of wood to make a pulp which is digested in some species by gut bacteria, but principally by fungal colonies inside the termite mounds. A relatively few insects can make galleries under the bark or into the better food source of young sap wood giving a sheltered location for larvae to hatch. Bacteria also have an interest in green material.

None of this is significant in relation to the main way that timber is decomposed which is by the action of fungi. Even here there are only a select group of specialists which will use timber as their food resource out of what are thought to be about 100,000 species of fungi. Timber is of very low nutritional value and differs from other plant material by having lignin laid down as secondary thickening within the cell structure of the inner xylem. Lignin is very abundant in nature and has been estimated to account for 30% of all non-fossil organic carbon. It has a heterogeneous, complex, multi-branched, bi-polymer structure and is the main way that trees and forests can act as a carbon store. Lignin is a tough material to break down.

For timber to be colonised by fungi, moisture must be present for initial hydration of the fungal spores to take place. Plant seeds and fungal spores are both subject to dehydration during their "ripening" and prior to release. Fungi will succeed in colonising and growing into a piece of timber only when the minimum moisture level is 20% and normally over 30%, and with a temperature above 10°C. A good air supply is not critical and if there is water-logging that will prevent development. Fungal spores are everywhere in the atmosphere and there is normally no need to seed in spores to have colonisation by wood-rotting fungi, which are usually put into three groups. Soft Rots are able to break down cellulose only, Brown Rots (eg. Dry Rot) are able to break down cellulose and hemicellulose. Only the White Rots have a broad enough enzyme armoury and are able to tackle lignin as well, leaving behind a totally degraded weak white material that will fall to pieces when used for turning.

Spalting is the name given to the patchy development of decomposition due to the different timings of colonisation and rates of breakdown between adjacent fungal colonies. These may be of the same

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or of different species. Whilst it used to be thought that adjacent colonies of the same species would merge and grow together it is now realised that each acts as its own individual colony. The differing growth rates result in different stages of breakdown and the changes in softness along and across the timber. Growth takes place more rapidly along the linear cell structures than it does across the diameter. As the movement of colonisation continues along the log the first invaded parts will be the most degraded and so there is variation between colonies and within colonies. The variation is seen as discoloured paler patching and the colonies can be separated by the zone lines which mark the three dimensional extent of one colony against its neighbour. These lines are made from hard dense fungal mycelia and are where each colony is setting out its boundary demarcation and giving itself protection against the loss of its food resource to its neighbour.



**A spalted plank, split to give matching halves**

There is no guaranteed recipe for creating spalted timber and there will always be an element of wastage. Colonisation for spalting could be helped along by trying the following during warm weather, and normally using Beech, Maples, Sycamore, Birch or Cherry :-

**SUGGESTION 1** Cut logs to a length of about one and a half times their diameter. Stand the sections onto woodland or garden topsoil. Seal the top surface or put a polythene bag over it to keep it from drying the log.

**SUGGESTION 2** Put a cut section into a bucket with moist woodland topsoil below and all around the wood.

**SUGGESTION 3** Using a rough turned bowl or similar, smear that rough turning with a mushy paste made in a kitchen blender from mixing together 1 can of cheapest beer, 1/2 cup garden nitrogen fertiliser, a handful of loamy woodland soil and a handful of leaves. Put the whole lot in a sealed polythene bag and check its condition after about four to six weeks. Turning spalted timber is difficult due to the density

and strength variation in the timber. Working with spalted wood can be assisted by trying PEG solution or by using a detergent mix sprayed onto the wood during turning and by keeping tools very sharp. Try using cellulose sanding sealer or Danish Oil with final cuts and, if all else fails, there is expensive liberal use of superglue!

Health concerns regarding spalted timber might relate to more dust being generated during turning than with normal timbers and thus being breathed in before later sanding stages which is when many tuners turn on their dust extraction systems. Keeping dust extraction turned on from the start of the job will help to minimise problems. On the spalted timber being turned there are no fungal fruiting bodies producing spores and on dry timber growth has halted. We probably breathe fungal spores in and out every minute of our lives, and we all react differently to potential allergens and dusts. Those who find that they are susceptible have many other timbers to try instead that would normally be a bit more consistent in structure!



**A beautiful example of turned spalted beech by Darrell Rushworth.  
A piece from the seminar, photo - Charles Sharpe**

## Subscription Rates

An error crept into the notice of the subscription rate increases printed in the September issue of *Revolutions*. Please note that the new rate for Family and Overseas members is £26 per year and not £24 as printed. The correct rates, as announced at the AGM, appear in this issue and on the renewal form.

### NATURAL

Men wake up as good-looking as they went to bed.  
Women somehow deteriorate during the night.



# Norwich Demonstrator Training Day

Roger Groom

On May 23rd, four members of Norwich Woodturners, Barry Mobbs, Ivan Tatnell, John Gilbert and myself took up the offer from the AWGB to participate in one of their Demonstrator Training Days. Also present were three other members of the club, Vic Cracknell, Brian Elmar, Roger Lowry and an old friend from Norfolk Woodturning Society, Joe Delgano.

Our Tutors for the day were Brian Partridge, (our Eastern Regional Rep.) and Peter Nicholls, both from the Suffolk, Essex and Cambridge Borders Club. As with all the other sessions so far, we had been fully briefed on what to prepare; a five minute talk on whatever subject we elected, and a twenty minute demonstration of turning. It was pointed out that these time limits should be adhered to.



**From left to right - Peter Nicholls; Ivan Tatnell; Barry Mobbs; Roger Groom; John Gilbert and Brian Partridge**

Barry gave a talk on finishing, Ivan talked about how he makes his pierced candleholders, John talked about native trees and I chose the conversion of trees into usable timber and the seasoning process. Each of these talks was followed by a one to one with Brian, whilst the remaining members gave their opinions of each talk. The idea here was to pick out points where improvement could be made and turned out (pardon the pun) to be very enlightening. We then all got together to discuss each talk, good points and bad.

After dinner we proceeded to go through the twenty minute demonstration. When I say twenty minutes, it was actually a bit more, and all of us had difficulty finishing on time, but once again this is all part of the learning process. I demonstrated part, or rough turning a bowl; Ivan demonstrated making a finial; Barry the making of a bangle and John made a small box. We all learnt that body language is of major importance, as well as eye contact, engaging the whole audience and having a clear voice, to name but a few.

Once again each demonstration was followed by

one to ones and group discussion. One thing we all learnt is that we still have a lot to learn, but there is no doubt in my mind that the day was a very worthwhile experience and I would like to, on behalf of the Norwich Woodturners, thank Brian and Peter for giving up their time and also to the AWGB for making the day possible. If any of you out there are thinking about this training, don't think about it, DO IT, you will not be disappointed.

## A Positive Youth Story

### Keith Greenfield

Three years ago a young lad stood and watched me demonstrate at the Amberley Working Museum, just outside Arundel in West Sussex. This was my first meeting with Tom Streeter.

This was a fairly hectic Sunday in October, but eventually when he was alone in the workshop I asked if he would like to come round and have a go, especially as he had stood watching most of the day. He nearly snatched my arm off at the offer, telling me he had never touched turning tools or even stood behind a lathe before, nonetheless with a little trepidation we made a start.

All I had with me were blanks drilled for cord pulls so this is what we did. I explained that I would guide the tools by holding the tool shaft, so all he needed to do was gently push the gouge along the work. After a nervous start, Tom was making the cuts by himself with me in close supervision. He finished shaping the pull, then sanded it to a finish, applied a sanding sealer, and I waxed it for him. He could hardly believe he had just turned this, and hadn't noticed a crowd of about 20 visitors quietly watching him, he received a round of applause, thanked me for letting him make his own cord pull, then disappeared.

I suppose that about an hour later he came back with his mother who was just filled with admiration and pleasure that I had let Tom make something.

The following year I was demonstrating at the museum again and in came Tom, this time I could see that he was really interested in woodturning so invited him to have another go. I was amazed by the manner in which he listened to what I asked him to do with the tools and the way that he coped with the task, I suggested he might like to join us at West Sussex Woodturners.

He did apply to join us and became our youngest member at 10 years old. He regularly enters the club competitions and has now advanced into the intermediate section. He has been taught by several of our members. He takes part in some of our major outside demonstrating events, with anything up to 6000 visitors, with not a worry in the world.



In August of this year he attended the Youth Training Weekend, organised by the Worshipful Company of Turners and the AWGB, at Stuart Mortimer's workshop in Hampshire. What follows is the text of a presentation put on by Tom at our September club meeting, in front of a crowd of 85, he concluded his presentation by going on to demonstrate offset finial box tops!

## My Woodturning weekend

By Tom Streeter

I recently went to a youth training woodturning weekend organised by the Worshipful Company of Turners and the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain. There were nine of us from the South of England and one person from Cardiff. The course was held at Stuart Mortimer's house near Andover. The weekend was also supported by various tool companies as well as people who had donated wood and other materials.



**This is the entire group, that's me in the middle at the front row**

The course was supposed to be for 14 to 18 year olds but I was lucky enough to be accepted by Stuart and the gang. I took my camp bed and we all slept, (or tried to sleep), in a big tent in Stuart's garden. Linda, (Stuart's wife), cooked for all of us and the fried breakfasts were fab.

There were five professional woodturners who came along to teach us, they were; Stuart Mortimer, Stuart King, Gary Rance, Les Thorne and Ron Caddy.



**With Stuart Mortimer we did some twist work on a spindle and made a hollow form which also had twist work on it**

So what did we do? On the first night we had demonstrations from all of the turners that were there. Over the weekend with Stuart Mortimer we did some twist work on a spindle and made a hollow form which also had twist work in it. Les Thorne taught us how to add some texture to a beech bowl. Ron Caddy was teaching us how to make acrylic and wooden pens. When we were with Gary Rance we were taught how to do some spindle work with the skew. Stuart King taught us how to make an off centre finial for a box lid and a chess piece.

On Saturday night there was a barbecue which was attended by Reg Hawthorne, the chairman of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain and Rob Lucas the Master of the Worshipful Company of Turners. We were all presented with certificates of attendance by the Master of the WCT.

I had a really good time and made some new friends



**Receiving my certificate from Rob Lucas the Master of the WCT**



**I made a few friends with people at the weekend and especially with Les**

### DRESSING UP

A woman will dress up to go shopping, water the plants, empty the rubbish, answer the phone, read a book, and get the post.  
A man will dress up for weddings and funerals.

## My Seminar Scholarship

Roger Groom

When Brian Partridge, our regional Representative, last demonstrated at my club, Norwich Woodturners, he also talked to the membership about all the benefits that the AWGB provide. These included grants for training, tuition, development grants and also the chance of gaining a scholarship to attend the 2009 Seminar. These grants were available regardless of age, gender or skill level. So what did I have to lose? I immediately got out the handbook, found the relevant form and spent a couple of days putting together my application.

For me, turning and all things involved with wood have been my passion since I was a teenager, many, many moons ago. I am a hobby turner and do not attend craft fairs or put work in galleries. I just love wood and working it. This hobby led to the formation of Norwich Woodturners nearly three years ago, and I am the Secretary of the club. Some of the reasons I applied were directly linked to this position in the club, as I wanted to improve my organisational skills regarding demonstrations, critique skills and general running of events, (but not on the scale of Loughborough.)

Many months passed, and I finally got the letter to tell me that I had been unsuccessful in my application. So without further ado, I started to apply for a ticket and I actually had the cheque written out when Brian Partridge phoned me and advised me that as one of the successful applicants had had to withdraw, for family reasons, that I was next on the list and could take his/her place. I do not know who that person was, but I can only say thank you, and hope that they will be allowed to go next time instead.

The time for the Seminar finally came, and from the moment I arrived, I was taken aback by the organisation, the friendliness and help that was freely given by all the Committee and helpers. They could not do enough for everyone. The first glimpse of the Instant Gallery was mind blowing and at first made me wish I had not taken my three pieces. I was so impressed by the way each exhibit had been presented, on a stand with each one having a description and makers name. It really did look very professional.

Every demonstration I attended started and finished on time, with excellent audio visual equipment accompanying them. Stuart King showed the best camera work I have ever seen, with real close up pictures from all angles. One to try for our club I think. The Instant Gallery critique was a real eye opener, with several disagreements from the presenters and the delegates, but advice given and taken, as a critique should be. The absolute highlight for me though was to have one of my pieces selected for the CD. I could not believe it, (Victor Meldrew came

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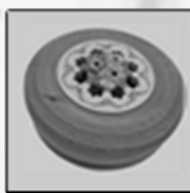
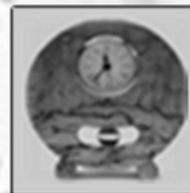
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to mind). This was a real honour and one I shall not forget.

The Seminar was a real success, and I for one, shall be attending next time. The commitment given by the whole Committee and helpers, ensured that the weekend was a great success. They worked their socks off, and to my observations were not able to see too much of the demonstrations. One thing I learnt, following my application, was that out of a total membership of over 3000, only about eight members applied for the scholarship, so considering there were four places available the chances of success were very good. Go for it next time, you will not be disappointed.

My thanks go the AWGB Committee for giving me this chance to attend, and for me, it was the highlight of my woodturning life. One I shall remember for a long time. Thank you.

**Roger's piece which  
was selected from  
the Instant Gallery.**

**Photo - Charles Sharpe**





## Back to School

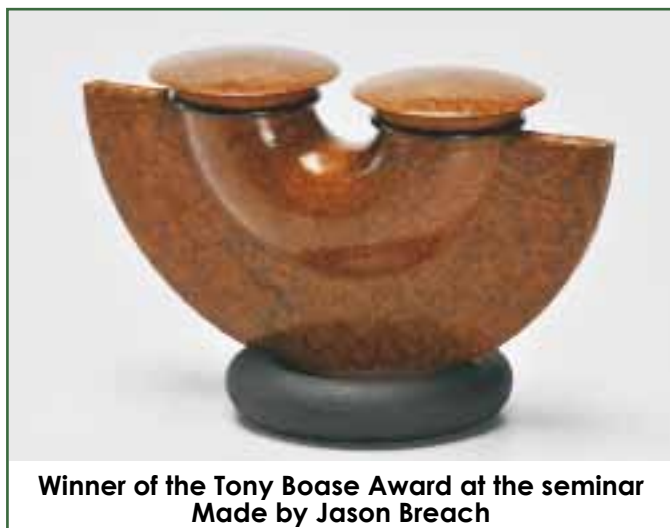
Jimmy Jackson

On Thursday 9th July I was invited to Broughton Primary School, which is only 10 minutes away from my home. The main event was the official opening of their "Eco Garden", due to take place at 2pm, but prior to that different seminars were to take place all involving natural products.

My job was to show the children different types of wood and to demonstrate woodturning. Two of us from West Cumbria Woodturners (myself and Jean Newbury) plus my wife, managed to set up my small lathe with safety screen and barrier. There were five sessions with groups of about 15 children and 2 staff in each group. The children ranged in age from 4 to 11 and I was amazed at how interested they were, and how many questions they asked. During the course of the day, I managed to turn some small bowls, spinning tops, a miniature goblet, a garden dibber for use in their Eco Garden and a Christmas tree (by special request). Quite a few of the older children plus one teacher showed real interest in coming along to our club to learn a bit more about woodturning. We found the whole experience gave us great satisfaction.



An attentive audience watch Jimmy at work



Winner of the Tony Boase Award at the seminar  
Made by Jason Breach

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# My Introduction to the Club

Doug Alderton

There were two reasons for joining the club.

Fifteen years ago my son bought me Peter Child's book 'The Craftsman Woodturner' (1992 edition) complete with black and white photos. I had always intended one day to have a go at woodturning, but never had the time or the loose change to get the necessary lathe and tools. My schooldays' bowl and plate turning left me a nervous wreck, but the smile on my Mum's face, when I presented her with the half inch thick ridged bowl and a three tier cake stand, made the traumatic experience worth it.

The second reason was that I was fed up with making round items with hand tools. For example, I wanted to utilise the space under my workbench for storage by having four wooden boxes, the full depth of the bench, to wheel in and out. Buying sixteen suitable three inch diameter plastic wheels on the internet or at B&Q was too expensive. So I ended up making the wheels out of 10mm ply, cutting them out with a coping saw. Being able to turn a knob out of some scrap of wood rather than paying good money for it also seemed like a good idea (see photos).



A search on the internet for information on lathes came up with dozens of different makes and sizes, I realised I had to get help in deciding which one to buy. I did another web search for woodturning clubs in Bristol and at the top of the list was the Avon & Bristol Woodturners website. After browsing through the site and reading all of the newsletters it was obvious that this club would be able to provide me with the advice I needed.

I noted that the next club meeting was the AGM and I decided to attend. I poked my nose in hoping that I could talk to someone about lathes etc. and one gentleman pointed me in the direction of Max Carey, their President. I couldn't have met a friendlier person, he took the time to explain the club in general but of more importance to me was the workshop facility (the 'Mill') they had in Portishead. I did not know at

the time that this workshop facility was owned by Max and that he allowed anyone who was a member of the club to spend a couple of days a week there. Without hesitation he asked me to have a day down at the 'Mill' to have a try out on one of the lathes and have a look around. "No need to join the club" he said "until you see if it will be of any benefit to you". He advised me not to buy a lathe until I had looked at the sixteen or so they had in the workshop. As I didn't have a lathe he said "don't worry we will lend you one until you decide on the lathe you want to buy". After this ten minute chat with Max I signed up as a member of the club as I could see that the club had a lot to offer. At the meeting I was also introduced to Ray Mellet who was very friendly and offered more useful advice.

The following Tuesday I arrived at the 'Mill' not knowing what to expect and a little apprehensive, but I need not have worried as Max was in the office waiting for me. He put me at ease and explained a few rules about the workshop and told me about the twenty week apprentice training that they provided. Before I knew it I was given the training manual and told that I had started the apprenticeship that day. As Max was explaining the mandatory introductory module, a busy looking chap entered the office ferreting through some drawers in a world of his own. Max whispered to me that he was called Malcolm Renee so being a well brought up laddie from Geordie land I said "Good morning Malcolm". There was a stony silence, I thought I had been sent to Coventry and this was only day one. After a few seconds this chap found his voice and shouted "I don't answer to Malcolm, my name is Tich".

With my tail between my legs I ventured into the workshop, I was gob smacked; it was like Aladdin's cave and Santa's workshop all rolled into one. Santa's little workers were busily transforming wood into piles of shavings, lathes were making music in unison, with their different pitches and tones; it was a sight to see and hear. Tich was in the middle of it all, running around like a demented terrier trying to satisfy the thirst for wood of his band of merry workers. They were using that much of his treasured wood store that he had to start charging a modest sum for the precious forest gold. I was properly introduced to Tich who was to be my tutor for the duration of my apprenticeship. I don't know what he was on, but before I could have a chat to him he had me at a lathe with a set of turning tools and a couple of bits of lime wood. After instruction on safety, regarding the lathe and the tools, he demonstrated how to correctly use the tools. He then showed me how to turn perfect beads and coves, which was the first exercise in the manual. "Demo over, your turn now", Tich said, "just let me know when you have finished the exercise, or if you want some more wood". I stood there thinking, "What on earth am I doing here". I had a quick look around, as you do, to see if anyone was watching, before I made firewood of Tich's sample bead and

cove. To my disappointment his happy workers were too busy to even notice me, so I got stuck in and tried to copy the samples Tich had done. By the end of the day I had completed what was required but instead of perfect beads and coves I ended up with profiles which resembled the Brecon Beacons and the valleys of Wales, all different shapes and sizes.

During the day Max came up to me a few times to see how I was getting on and offered advice, he made me feel at ease which was appreciated. I later made myself known to most of my fellow workers, but it took them a while to understand my Geordie accent, I don't know why, as I have been a native of Bristol since 1960, must be something in the water they drink!

Max had not forgotten that I did not have a lathe and in due course arranged with Tich for me to borrow one from the surplus store. It was a Clarke, 24" between centres, lathe, in bits with a set of turning tools as part of the package. Max told me that I could borrow the lathe for as long as I wanted to, until I purchased my own. They bundled the pile of bits in my car and sent me on my way.

Looking back on that first day at the 'Mill' made me appreciate, and I am sure the club feels the same, the value of having Max as a member of our club. I would even say that if it wasn't for Max the membership of the club would be greatly reduced. The reason being the use of his workshop and his gentle persuasion encouraging anyone he meets to join the club or take an interest in wood related activities. I also need to mention that without Tich, Max's right hand man at the 'Mill', the wheels at the 'Mill' would only grind slowly. There is a lot in a little package with Tich, he is always there when you need him and has a heart of gold, watches you like a hawk and if he sees you in difficulty he is there lending you the right tool for the job and if necessary the shirt off his back. He can be a bit intimidating at times but when you get to know him he is the person you want beside you when things go wrong. His vast knowledge of woodturning techniques and the variety of turned items he produces is an inspiration to any up and coming woodturner like myself. If only he would stop telling me to "stop talking so much and get on and do some turning" life would be a little more pleasant.

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Another example of work selected from the Seminar Instant Gallery, made by Philip Streeting  
 Photographed by Charles Sharpe



The Mill in use for a Youth Training event



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# Meeting Places – Kent

Peter Martin

Following recent visits from both the Editor of this auspicious magazine, and committee members of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain, I realised how blessed (if you will pardon the analogy) we are to have, as our landlords, members of the Carmelite Order at The Friars at Aylesford, Kent.

It occurred to me that there may be interest in a series of articles from other clubs who meet in unusual places.



**Aylesford and the River Medway**

A.W.G.B. (Kent Branch)\* moved to the Friars in 2003 having spent a number of years meeting in the more conventional clubroom at Poolewood Machinery in Stockbury. Whilst looking for new premises, it became apparent that a number of crafts were being attracted to the facilities available at The Friars which, at that time, included very large and well equipped workshops, on site catering facilities at both cafeteria and restaurant level and well organised conference facilities should they be required. There were also plenty of parking spaces, something which had always presented problems at previous venues.



**The friar's quarters**

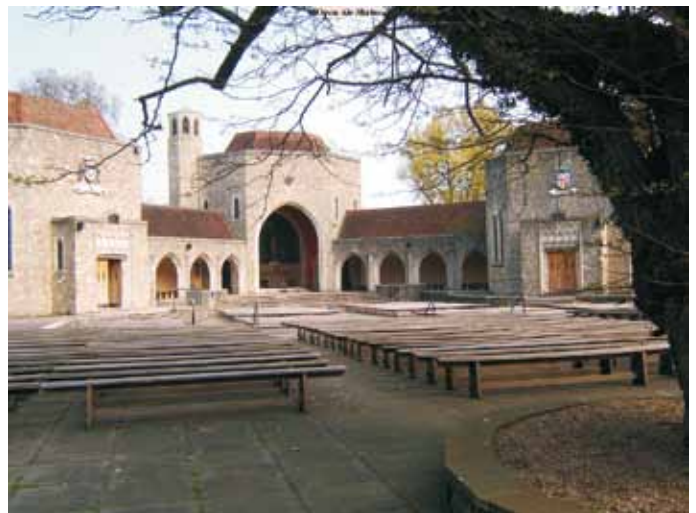
The friars who reside and teach at The Friary are Carmelites, a religious order that has its origins in a group of hermits that used to live on Mount Carmel

at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. When their traditional home was overrun by the Saracens, some of these hermits accepted an offer from the English Crusaders to come to England. They arrived at the place now known as The Friars in 1242. Richard de Grey gave them a small piece of marshy land at his manor house in Aylesford next to the River Medway and just north-west of this ancient village. The order was first recognised by the local church in 1247.

Friars belong to a religious order and travel around the various establishments owned by that Order, unlike monks who assign themselves to a monastery and remain there for the rest of their lives.

The first buildings to appear on the site were a small chapel and a number of cells, probably made of wood, which were situated where the present Choir Chapel is sited. The transition from hermits to friars was largely due to St. Simon Stock who became one of the first Priors General (or leaders) of the Order and was thought to have originated in either Stoke on The Isle of Grain, or Stockbury (strangely the home of Poolewood, our previous landlords). Financial assistance was given by Henry III and led to the spread of the Carmelite Order throughout the UK.

Being situated on The Pilgrims Way, on the route from London to Canterbury, the friars were able to offer hospitality to pilgrims and a large market garden was established which existed until very recent times. It is still a venue for thousands of pilgrims every year.



**The Shrine**

At the dissolution of the monasteries in 1538, The Friars, valued at that time at 42.6p for the 18 acres that it comprised, passed into the hands of Sir Thomas Wyatt who owned the nearby Allington Castle. Successive owners ensured that by 1670 The Friars had become a fine mansion house and it remained that way until it was severely damaged by fire in 1930. Following restoration it was put up for sale in 1949 and the Carmelites were able to buy back their ancient home. The first Prior after it was reopened was Fr. Malachy Lynch who was responsible for the open-air shrine which can be seen today and is the centre of

worship on special days.

The Friars is still used as a retreat for people who feel that the peace and solitude that is offered around the grounds will help them in their lives and the buildings lend themselves to activities of this nature.

Club activities make good use of many of the facilities that are on offer. The room in which we meet can house over 100 people and we were able to remove the cap that we placed on our membership numbers at our previous location. The floor is tiled which ensures that clearing up after use is relatively easy with just a broom and a mop. The room was previously built to house a community of Portuguese potters, who worked at The Friars, and is, therefore, lit and heated to a level that is perfect for our meetings.



**The Brocard Room, our meeting place**

Saturday meetings go on for the whole day and we are able to use the on-site cafeteria for our midday refreshments. More formal catering for our annual dinner and other social functions is available in The Pilgrims Hall. This building is the focal point of The Great Courtyard and, although this area has lost much of its medieval appearance following the renovations that took place when used as a home, it is still a very impressive building. On one side of the Pilgrims Hall is Watergate which leads to the old quay – a reminder of the times when the Medway was a major highway through Kent. The other side of the building houses the accommodation for the Prior and the Friars. The buildings date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The Club has two exhibitions and sales of work each year and initially we held these in our clubroom. In late 2005 we were offered the chance to become the first occupants of a newly restored barn, and we have since held our exhibitions in this fantastic building which was restored with lottery funding.

Lying to the north of the main priory complex is a group of buildings that comprise the farmhouse and two large barns. The West Barn was restored some years ago and now houses the Tea Rooms and Shop.

The farmhouse has been faithfully restored and forms part of the overall complex. The North Barn, which was believed to date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century required some radical repair if it were to be saved for the Community and put to some use.



**The West Barn Cafe - outside and inside**

This Grade II listed building comprises a main space or "nave" of five bays and originally had "aisles" to the north and south. It is assumed that the whole structure would have been clad with thatch above weather-boarded external wall finishes. The barn was not originally on its present site. It has been transported from elsewhere sometime in the distant past and, during the course of restoration, it became apparent that the original construction consisted of six bays. It is assumed that one was removed in order to fit the space available at The Friars.



**The North Barn during one of our exhibitions**



Internally the jowl post design would suggest that the building was even earlier than had previously been suggested but, unfortunately, dendrochronological tests proved to be inconclusive as there was insufficient wood data available with which to compare the sample.

It is indeed a privilege to be able to meet in such a beautiful, historic and yet still functional place and it adds greatly to the pleasure that we get from woodturning. Is there any other venue that can offer so much?



**The Farmhouse**



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\*Editor's note: The Kent branch have recently renamed themselves 'Kent Woodturners' Does your club meet in an interesting location as well? Let the rest of us know about it.

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# Wood for Woodturners

## Answers

### Across

- 4 Ebony
- 6 Hazel
- 8 Mango
- 11 Mahogany
- 13 Cherry
- 14 Sapele
- 16 Laburnam
- 18 Greenheart
- 19 Walnut
- 22 Box
- 23 Ash
- 27 Holly
- 28 Buxus Sempervirens
- 29 Cedar
- 32 Lilac
- 33 Cocobolo
- 37 Laurel
- 39 Olive
- 40 Padauk
- 41 Yew
- 42 Lime
- 45 Plane
- 46 Pine

### Down

- 1 Rowan
- 2 Sycamore
- 3 Poplar
- 5 Elder
- 7 Hornbeam
- 9 Apple
- 10 Oak
- 12 Zebrano
- 14 Sweet Chestnut
- 15 Hawthorn
- 17 Magnolia
- 20 Damson
- 21 Purpleheart
- 24 Horse Chestnut
- 25 Eucalyptus
- 26 Crab Apple
- 27 Hickory
- 30 Elm
- 31 Rosewood
- 34 Willow
- 35 Alder
- 36 Teak
- 38 Maple
- 40 Pecan
- 43 Beech
- 44 Birch
- 45 Pear

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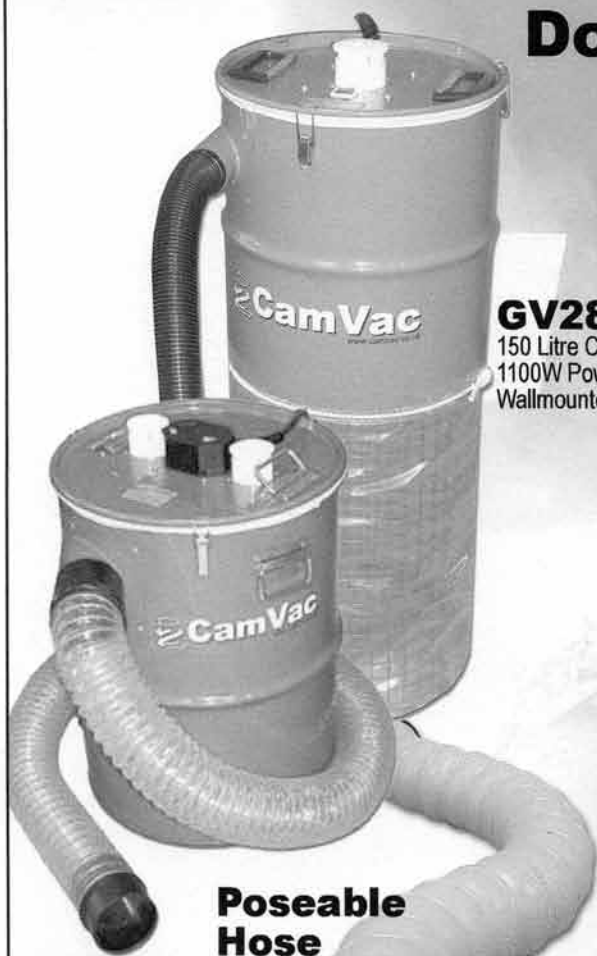
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- ▶ Large capacity machines from 36 to 200 litres.
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- ▶ Robust & dependable British engineering.
- ▶ Full range of ducting accessories, reducers & mobility options, to allow you to place all that suction just where it's needed!



### Dust Collection Kit



## dust extraction for woodworkers

Millers Close, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 8NW  
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