

The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

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Chairmans Notes.

Things are moving in the right direction. We are beginning to see members willing to be involved in Association activities. Several of you have come forward to act as regional contacts, or offer premises for meetings, etc., but we still need more.

The membership is growing, - we are now 200 plus strong, - but this is just the tip of the ice-berg, so tell your fellow woodturners about us and urge them to join. The stronger we are the more we can achieve locally and nationally. There has been a good response to the Membership Survey. If you have yet to respond please do so, it helps us to help you.

As you are aware, we are actively encouraging Business Sponsor members. Many forms have been sent out already. If you know of a business actively involved with woodturning who you feel may be interested, let our secretary know.

Mini seminars are being arranged in various parts of the country. These are being actively encouraged and more will follow.

1989 will see the Association arrange and promote its first Major Seminar since its formation. It will be an exciting event, much on the lines of Loughborough 1987. The theme, dates, turners involved etc., will be announced in due course. One thing for sure, it will be an event not to miss.

My 'Moulthrop' type lathe plans will shortly be available, announcement in the next newsletter.

All the above news is positive, but a couple of items a little on the down beat side need a mention.

The Logo competition has had a disappointing response, with only six submissions from 200 members. Come on, lets have some more. Closing date for submissions has been extended to Wednesday Feb. 17th.

Could members please make appointments if they wish to talk to members of the committee. Also if you see any of us selling our work at shows etc., please move over when a potential customer appears. These points are being made because a couple of our committee have had unfortunate experiences recently. Please remember that we are all trying to earn our living. Come to the Mini Seminars etc., and meet us where we will be delighted to talk with you and hear what you have to say.

Finally, keep your news rolling in to Reg. for without it there will be no Newsletter.

Thanks Ray. I particularly endorse the last two paragraphs!

A letter has flooded in. Well a few in fact.

One from member JOHN HUNNEX, of Woodchurch, Kent, tells me of the Exhibition which he is holding at Ashford Public Library.

The dates are Tuesday 19th. April - Saturday 7th. May. and the library address is Church Rd., Ashford, Kent. Tel. Ashford (0233) 20649.

Library opening hours are 9.30 a.m. to 6.p.m. except Wednesday and Saturday 9.30 to 5 p.m.

Association member GRAHAM COLYER, who is also a member of the Dorset Craft Guild, is planning a "Well Turned Wood Show" at the Guild H.Q., Walford Mill Craft Centre, Stone Lane, WIMBOURNE, Dorset. Tel. (0202) 841400. The event will comprise of work by the Guild members and is scheduled for 30th. July to 4th. September. It is hoped that events during this period will comprise demonstrations, videos of turners working and different types of turnery on show and for sale, all by members of the Dorset Guild. More details in the next Newsletter.

REG. SHERWIN, (thats me folks), can be found doing the usual demonstrations of basic turning for the visitors to Avoncroft during the Easter Holiday period, which is 2nd. to 5th. April, and then again 30th. April to 2nd. May; 28th. to 30th. May; and more dates throughout the year. These demonstrations and 'chat' sessions are useful as they are a means of showing the Great British Public what woodturning is about. Normal museum admission fees applicable of course. Send a s.a.e. for brochure.

There are still some places left on the Midlands Seminar, (Feb. 28th.), at Avoncroft Museum of Buildings, Stoke Heath, BROMSGROVE B60 4JR.

You will know that RAY KEY is the main attraction, giving demonstrations on turning domestic ware, bowls and boxes. I am providing an hours light comic relief on spindle work.

We will finish off what looks like being a very full six hour day with a questions and answers session, and if time allows, a 'Hands on' session as well. There is also a hot lunch provided.

All of this for £13!

Whilst the event is open to members by preference, if there are any spaces left, then non members will be admitted but will have to pay an extra £2. for the day. Closing date for members applications therefore has been fixed for first post, Monday 8th. February. Cheques should be made payable to Reg. Sherwin and sent to me at the Avoncroft address.

DON WHITE tells me that the second of his sale days went quite well, but mainly because of attendances by local turners, the events having been advertised in the local press.

He has planned a special day for Saturday, March 19th., with DENNIS FRENCH as the attraction. In Don's own words, Dennis is probably one of the most versatile turners in the country. It is hoped that Dennis will demonstrate his skills on most if not all of his wide range of products.

The cost for the day is £15., which includes a Pub. lunch of quiche salad and a glass of squash.

The day will start at 9.30, for a 10.am kick off, and the first 15 members who ring Don on Bristol (0272) 564931 will get a place.

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MIKE SCOTT's first Open Day was cancelled as he had only one delegate and such an event is not really worth while unless there are at least five people present. However, the other two days will go ahead. They are 20th. Feb. and 19th. March.

Programme for the day is basically:-

9.am. Arrive, drink warming cups of beverage and discuss how the day will proceed.

9.30. am. till lunch:- demonstration of bowl making, including selection from the log pile, roughing out with the chainsaw, mounting procedures, choice of tools (many of which are home made), ranging from tungsten tipped roughing out scrapers to cone separation tools and including a lathe mounted and adjustable chainsaw!, methods such as fuming oak, burning with a blowtorch, sanding and contouring with angle grinder to obtain various texturing effect, and so on. Then comes finishing, drying, how to rescue a bowl that splits and most important of all, DESIGN!

All that before Lunch.

Afternoon session, 'Hands on' but fingers off, mind that chainsaw. Opportunity for participants to turn natural edge bowls, or cone separation, (Is that bowls between centres Mike? Ed.) The hands on session will be with very careful supervision.

Late session for those who want to stay on will be a slide show of U.S. turners work, plus some of Mike's, to illustrate some of the design ideas talked about during the day.

Mike has a static caravan on site which are temporary living quarters and which will provide a warm, dry place to eat, drink and talk.

Cost for the day, £5. Applications to Mike please, at:-

Studio 10, Warmington Craft Workshops, Nr. SANDBACH,
Cheshire. CW11 9QW. Tel. 027 077 337

AND DON'T FORGET, PLACES ARE LIMITED ON GROUNDS OF SAFETY, SO BOOK FIRST, TAKE WARM CLOTHING AND SOMETHING TO EAT!

Mike has also given me a list of his exhibition dates for 1988.

6th. to 27th. April, Scottish Gallery, EDINBURGH. "Carved Wood" Group Show.

8th. to 29th. May, Hugo Barclay, BRIGHTON. One man show, 30-35 pieces.

8th. July to 6th. August, St. James Gallery, Bath. Group "Summer Show".

5th. to 30th. October, Jinney Ring Craft Centre, (On the B 4091, Bromsgrove to Hanbury Rd.) BROMSGROVE, Worcs. Solo Show.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the "West Country Extravaganza" has been arranged by Committee member DAVE REGESTER, details as follows:-

Venue, Devon Guild Headquarters, Riverside Mill, Bovey Tracey, Devon..

Date, June 12th, which is during the Guild's Woodworking Exhibition.

Times, 10.am to 1.pm, Association member TOBIAS KAYE demonstrates wet bowl turning. (Sou' Westers advisable).

Lunches available at a variety of prices at the Mill.

2.pm to 5.pm, Dave Regester will demonstrate the turning of rattles and scoops.

Places. Limited to 20.

Cost. £10 to Association members, who will be given preference until May 31st. Any spaces left after that date will be available to non members, at a cost of £12.

Applications to Dave at Millstream Cottage, Higher Town, Sampford Peverell, TIVERTON, Devon, EX16 7BR

A little more information on RAY KEY's Exhibitions as mentioned in the last newsletter is that he will be demonstrating to the general public at Stafford Art Gallery on 18th. and 19th. March. This is to be specifically for people who don't know much about turning or possibly haven't even seen it before, so if any members do visit Ray, please don't ask 'In depth' questions, which would be over the heads of most onlookers. Better to keep those questions for the special workshops, where they will be of greater interest to all present.

And now a moan! Sorry about this folks, but it is important! And I make no apologies for echoing Ray's comments.

I said in the last Newsletter, that if any members wanted to call on a committee member for any reason, that they should make contact first, either by letter or phone, to fix a suitably convenient time and date.

We are professional manufacturers and whilst lost production time is a fact of life, it has to be planned.

With production deadlines to meet, courses to run, rent to pay, we simply haven't got the time to stand and chat. Were we retailers, things would be different, but we ain't.

If you have any particular reason for calling, please don't just drop in. Ring first.

Better still, attend one of the special event days. That's what they are there for!

And now to more pleasant things.

A small parcel from HUGH O'NEILL has given me enough information for a complete newsletter on its own. Well done Hugh. Would that there were more like you! The edited highlights are as follows.:-

One of our members, MAC KEMP, has offered to have the winning logo made into reproducible artwork and also to have a letterhead drawn up professionally. (Thank you Mac. That is the kind of generous offer which is the stuff of organisations such as ours. Also, see later entry regarding logo Competition. Ed.)

There has been a request from Zimbabwe for details of pole lathes for use in setting up a cottage industry. Details of drawings, dimensions or any other relevant data should be sent to Hugh, for forwarding.

An enquiry has been received from a Company in Berkshire which makes high class kitchen units. They want suppliers of turned lids in a selection of kiln dried timbers, which they will provide. The first batch size will be for 50, but a requirement of 500 p.a. is expected. A quality finish is required and anyone interested should contact Hugh.

MICK O'DONNELL's book on Woodturning is now out. At first sight it looks interesting, well done Mick. The book does have a different flavour to it, but is that surprising, knowing the author? (I wonder what Hugh will say about my book, which is out in the Spring. Plug, plug. Ed.)

Member, GORDON CLARKE, late of Hay-on-Wye, now of The Spinning Gallery, Market Place, Marazion, PENZANCE, TR17 0AR, can supply those difficult to find bits of metal work, should anyone fancy their hand at making a spinning wheel. Hugh goes on to say that his difficulty is in

getting "three damned legs to look vaguely the same". (Maybe he should go on a course? Plug, plug.)

Most members have by now completed the survey, but we would still like more returns. The process of feeding data into the micro has started and as soon as members have been sorted into areas, then each member will be notified of others in the area, and the local co-ordinator, where there is one. Where there is no co-ordinator, it will simply be a case of ringing round. (Dunstable area members see later item, Ed.)

We are in the process of seeking "Sponsor Members" amongst businesses associated with woodturning supplies. The annual fee, January to January, will be £50. They will be invited to offer purchasing discounts to members and in return, will have their support acknowledged regularly in the newsletter and elsewhere. We will also publish occasional notes on their new and special products or services. If anyone has a favourite supplier who should be included, then ask Hugh to send them details.

Hugh goes on to describe the terrible carnage which the recent gales created in the South. I recently made a trip down to Sussex, using minor roads in the early hours. I found myself following the horizontal trees which lined the roads rather than the central white lines. Therefore I can only echo Hugh's sentiments when he talks about the waste of trees being burned where they fell. Hugh goes on to say that anyone who knows of any trees which are going begging, who is willing to share the chain sawing and site clearance or who has more timber than they know what to do with, could they contact him, and he will try to link up interested parties.

In fact, -he goes on-, we could publish lists of people who are interested in whole trees, clearing sites, taking substantial quantities, have planing facilities or spare kiln capacity. Again, let Hugh know.

Finally, Hugh reports that it is very interesting to meet and chat to fellow members when he is selling at Craft Fairs, but that he would like to apologise to one such member who eventually got short shrift when he blocked out the third potential customer. Priorities overtake manners under such circumstances, however interesting the conversation is! (Personally I always stand to one side when I am on the buying side of a table. And I also allow the turner to break off our conversation so that he can follow up an enquiry from someone. It seems that I should have included retailers in my previous plea after all. Ed.)

To date, I have had only three members writing to me regarding mistakes in their addresses. I can't believe that we were that good!

Preparing a mailing list from information which comes from two different sources is like the old party game of 'Chinese whispers'.

For instance, I unwittingly sent two newsletters to the same address, one to the registered member and the second one to his house name!

Are there any more corrections to make!

We have had some entrants for the Logo competition, but could do with a few more. The closing date has been set for Feb. 17th. Entries to Hugh O'Neill, Reg. Sherwin, or any other committee member.

We have had some positive results from our request for local chapters of the Association from one area at least. TONY WADDILOVE, of Hill Farm Workshops, Great Dunham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2LP has offered to organise such a group. Indeed, Tony would seem to have had something like

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this going for some time, on a local basis. He should by now have had a list of local Association members.

An offer has also been made to assist any similar group which is formed in the Dunstable area. More details to follow.

There are other offers, details of which did not find their way through to me in time to catch this edition of the Newsletter, but we still need more. Any more takers?

Members profile for this issue goes to our Treasurer, Len. Grantham. Living as he does in Scotland, Len seems to have acquired the Scots tendency not to be wasteful with anything, including words. I quote his complete submission:-

"Len Grantham is a qualified engineer currently in full time employment with the Civil Service.

He took up woodturning as a hobby in 1973 using a home made lathe. Having progressed through all the usual stages of egg cups, serviette rings, pepper mills, table lamps, bowls etc., he began making lace bobbins for his wife and friends and now tends to concentrate on these and boxes. He has had a couple of week-end courses but admits to being mainly self taught.

Len says that for him woodturning is a pure hobby from which he derives many hours of pleasure rather than wealth and is content to earn enough to enable him to buy sufficient tools and materials to carry on."

Now for the first example of what could be a very useful feature of the Newsletter,

Readers sales and wants.

HUGH O'NEILL is in desperate need of a basic tool rest block for a Wadkin RS. Although it is the 8 1/4" centre height machine, any block will do. He would also like the end turning rest. Tel. Hugh on 01-866 2721.

Hugh, have you tried...

.....One of our business sponsors, L.R.E. EQUIPMENT CO. LTD., 15, Upwood Rd., Lowton, WARRINGTON, WA3 2RL, who tell me they have just gained yet another contract, this time to supply Graduate lathes and other woodworking machinery to schools and colleges throughout Staffordshire. And there are plans for them to be at the next woodturning show in the States.

They are also busy on the home front, currently re-building a 30" Graduate lathe which, together with their stocks of Jubilee and Myford lathes, etc., makes up a fairly comprehensive stock of suitable 'upgrade' machinery.

They ended their letter to me by wishing all the Association members a Happy and Prosperous New Year. A sentiment echoed by myself.

Judging by the response which I have had following the plea for information which I made in the first newsletter, I should certainly be able to produce one each quarter. The problem of course is, will it keep coming?

If I don't get anything in, I can't get it out again, so to speak.

Please let me have any information which you wish to have included in the next edition, copy deadline for which is Monday, 11th. April.