

The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

Chairman, Ray Key, The Firs, 53, Weston Rd., Bretforton, Nr. EVESHAM,
Worcs., WR11 5HW.

Hon. Sec. Hugh O'Neill, 5, Kent Gardens, Eastcote, RUISLIP, Middx. HA4 8RX.
Newsletter Editor, Reg. Sherwin, The Woodturners Workshop, Avoncroft Museum
of Buildings, Stoke Heath, BROMSGROVE, Worcs. B60 4JR. Tel. (0527) 76800.

Newsletter No. 3. (May '88.)

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES.

Since the last News Letter a great deal has happened within the Association. Two Mini Seminars and two open workshop events have been held, all well attended and successful, as the reports later in this and subsequent issues indicate. (See note on page 3, ref. administration. ed.)

Congratulations are in order to members Tobias Kaye (Sounding bowl) and Maurice Mullins, (Miniatures), who have become juried selections into The International Turned Objects Show. This event promises to be the most prestigious exhibition of Woodturning ever staged, with the work of some 100 woodturners worldwide being represented. Also juried from the U.K. are Peter Chatwin and Pamela Martin (Jewellery), Tom Kealy (Chair). Invited are David Pye, Jim Partridge, Mick and Liz O'Donnell, and myself for 'contributions that had significant impact and helped the advancement of woodturning as a whole'.

Make a note in your diary for August 18th. to 20th., 1989, when the Association will be holding its first International Seminar. Already two of the U.S.A.s best known and versatile turners, Dale Nish and Del. Stubbs have agreed to participate and your committee is laying plans to make this a wonderful turning bonanza. Don't miss it!

Congratulations go to Mick O'Donnell and Reg. Sherwin for having their first woodturning books published. Books demand a tremendous commitment of both time and effort. We wish them well, but don't plan to retire yet lads if my experience is anything to go on. (Damn! We'll have to cancel the Rolls Mick. ed.)

Thanks to all of you who submitted Logo ideas. We didn't quite find what we were looking for but there were several good ones. We had asked those who came up with the best to re-submit after being given more guidance and we have now decided on Gary Gautier's submission. Congratulations Gary! Consideration is now being given to the different versions of it which can be incorporated into various forms of advertising.

Those of you interested in my Ed. Moulthrop style Lathe will be pleased to know that plans and full explanatory notes are now available from myself. A cheque for £10, payable to the A.W.G.B. should be sent to me. All profits will be for the benefit of the Association.

A warm welcome to our first Business Sponsor Members who have joined our cause. Note their names listed in this News Letter.

Finally, now the light nights are here and the lawns need cutting, don't neglect your woodturning, buy a sheep! (And make a spinning wheel? ed.)

Ray Key.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS.Ashford, Kent

A.W.G.B. member John Hunnex, still has a few days left in Ashford Public Library, where he is making an exhibition of himself until 7th. May. The grapevine tells me that he was also in evidence at Biddenden, during March. I hope things went well for you John.

Dorset.

Graham Colyer, one of our Dorset members, has the 'Well Turned Wood Show' taking place from 30th. July to 4th. September. Details appeared in the last newsletter.

West Country.

Dave Regester and Tobias Kaye, (that's a name I've heard being chuckled about just recently), are getting themselves ready for the fray on June 12th. There are still a few places left but these will be snatched up by visiting 'Grocks' unless you are quick. The official closing date has been extended to May 1st., so be even quicker! Cost for the day remains at £10, as detailed in the last newsletter.

Worcestershire.

I shall be doing my own thing at local venues during the next few weeks. The dates are 28th.- 30th. May, Avoncroft; 5th. June, Nunnery Wood, a Worcester Nature Conservancy Trust event; 11th-12th. June, Avoncroft, (Living History Group-1588 Spanish Armada era, also Austin Vintage Car Rally on the Sunday); 25th. June, ½ day fair at Broome, Nr. Kidderminster; 2nd. July, Ten Acres First School, Redditch; and 16th-17th. July, Bewdley Museum.

Most of these events have an admittance fee.

A.W.G.B. Future Events.

There are plans in the pipe line to hold further one day A.W.G.B. workshops later in the year, but we need to get our breath back first. Watch out for details in future editions of this newsletter.

Craft Supplies Seminars.

Details of two 1988 U.K. seminars have reached me from Nick Davidson, who is M.D. of both Craft Supplies, Ltd. and Robert Sorby Ltd.,

Nick is organising the events to take place over two consecutive weekends, 30/31 July & 6/7 August, with some mid-week workshops thrown in.

As this is not an Association event, further details can be had direct from Craft Supplies, The Mill, Millers Dale, BUXTON, Derbyshire, SK17 8SN. Tel. (0298) 871636.

A.W.G.B. 1989 Seminar.

As Ray has already mentioned, plans for the 1989 seminar are going ahead. A sub-committee will take on the responsibility of organising the event this time, so as to share more evenly, the massive work load which in '87 was undertaken almost solely by Ray Key and Margaret Lester.

ADMINISTRATION OF A.W.G.B. SEMINARS.

In order to avoid any possible confusion, I feel that I ought to set out the terms under which Association Seminars are arranged.

Up to now, cheques have been made payable to the seminar organiser, who has had to pay the demonstrator, the hire -or in some cases the rent- of the workshop, the cost of entertainment, i.e., coffee, lunch etc., for the delegates, the postage and telephone costs and also cover his lost production time, both before, during and after the event.

Whilst we had at first decided that it was easier if the organiser accepted the responsibility of doing all this work, sending on the residue to the Association Treasurer, with a simple break down of the income and expenditure, we have now decided to reverse this procedure.

And so, unless you hear to the contrary, all cheques for seminars, workshops etc., should now be made out to the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain. (A.W.G.B.)

STATIC EXHIBITIONS.

MIKE SCOTT's travelling roadshow is at Hugo Barclay, Brighton, from 8th. to 29th. July, and thence to St. James Gallery, Bath, -shared!-, from 8th. July to 6th. August.

TEACH-INS.

PARNHAM HOUSE. Details of Summer School turning courses have reached me from Mr. John Makepeace, O.B.E., of Parnham House. They offer three separate courses, each one run by Association member Cecil Jordan. The courses cost £320 residential or £260 non residential, -plus V.A.T.-, and run from Sunday evening dinner to Saturday lunchtime. Places are limited to five students, each with an individual lathe, (no waiting for your turn), and the starting dates are Sunday 17th. July; Sunday 31st. July and Sunday 7th. August. Places are going fast on these and other allied craft courses, so if you are interested, make contact a.s.a.p. Address is 'Summer Courses', Parnham House, BEAMINSTER, Dorset, DT8 3NA. Tel. BEAMINSTER, (0308) 862204.

Even if you are too late for these courses, you could get your name on the circulation list for next year.

TOBIAS KAYE has sent me details of a 'Woodturners Surgery' which he will be running on the first Saturday of every month, from 9.am to 1.pm, at his workshop at 10 Whites Cross, Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh, DEVON TQ11 0LS. The surgery will comprise of demo's. problem solving, demonstrations of specific techniques in answer to questions, advice on all matters from timber purchasing to polishing, machining, tool sharpening, tool control, chucking -old and new- power sanding techniques etc., etc. AND ALL THAT FOR JUST £5.00!! Tobias is running these special days in conjunction with Nigel Watson, a local carver, who is offering a similar service to those followers of the stationary timber techniques, so to speak. Nigel also turns boxes up to 20" deep and will advise on lid fitting, etc.

They can both be found by leaving the A38 at the Lower Dean exit and looking for the workshop sign 100 yards down the road.

I wonder if I could persuade Tobias to let me have a report on his first couple of sessions?

LOCAL CHAPTERS.

Mike Cripps has been appointed as the co-ordinator for the local chapters. Our Secretary, Hugh O'Neill, will shortly be contacting all members in a given area, indicating those who have offered themselves as organisers, and giving the addresses of other members within their vicinity. At first, some chapters may have to merge to cover a wider area and thereby get sufficient numbers. However, as the group grows it may split again, into more localised chapters.

Mike will give all possible assistance to anyone who needs help or advice in getting things moving in their own locality. He is a past master at this, as he has got together no fewer than 35 interested turners in his own area, prior to the Association being formed.

Mike's address is 41, The Greenway, Ickenham, Middlesex.

DONATION.

Don White has made a very generous offer to the Association. He was given the Myford ML8 lathe that once belonged to Harry Baker, '...the friend responsible for introducing me to Woodturning'.

Don has now made the lathe available to be awarded annually, or possibly for a longer period, to someone who is just getting into woodturning and can't yet afford such a robust lathe of their own, or to a group of woodworkers to whom a lathe would be an asset.

Do you know of any worthy causes? Please let a committee member know by the end of May.

This is a very generous offer from Don and access to the lathe should make a lot of people happy over the next few decades.

Tyme Lathes have made a similar offer with one of their cub lathes. I know from personal experience what a generous company they are.

Are there any similar offers from other manufacturers or suppliers. The lathes won't be a lot of use without good tools!

BUSINESS SPONSORS.

A number of organisations have joined the list of sponsor members. They include John Boddy Timber, Carltons Timber, Alko Machinery, North Heigham Sawmills, Riverlock Machinery and L.R.E. Machinery.

John Boddy have offered to host the Association for a tour of the Saw Mill, Kilns and Store. Also offered are a turning demonstration by Phil. Reardon, -that should make his moustache bristle-, and goodies to buy in the store on the usual discount structure. Date to be fixed but will not be for some time yet. How about chapters making up a coach party? More details will be published in a future newsletter.

Riverlock Machinery specialise in large production units. Vast, pneumatically controlled copy lathes etc. However, they do also supply more down to earth equipment and can offer members a 5% discount on small machine purchases, with a special rate for professionals wanting bigger units.

L.R.E. Machinery tell me that they now have some suitable second hand machines in stock for members who wish to progress to Myford or Coronet type lathes. A discount is available to members but the value depends upon what is being bought. They are also willing to pay first year membership subscription to the A.W.G.B. for anyone who buys a lathe costing £600 or more, excluding VAT. Contact Roy or Lee Cooper on Warrington, (0942) 728208

Also, Lee is going to a Symposium to be held at the Holiday Inn, Philadelphia, on 15th.-17th. September. If any members are interested in making a block booking, contact either Roy or Lee direct

SEMINAR REPORTS.

Mike Scott Open Day. (Feb. 22nd.)

I was pleased to receive the following report from Bill Kinsman, a member from Staffordshire. It is slightly abridged, as Bill says that he 'aint no journalist'.

'The day was a great success for those who braved the winter weather and Mike put on a very interesting show. He is certainly a studio turner with a difference and we were treated to big bowl turning. Whopping big chunks of burr wood 24" dia. plus, all out of balance jumpy upsy downy until tamed, (eat your heart out Stanley Unwin! ed.), on a modified Gordon Stokes pedestal lathe offering the necessary low r.p.m.

'Making great play with textured surfaces, it was fascinating to watch Mike's tool post mounted chain saw being used in conjunction with the indexed workpiece. Wire brush, burning and fuming finishing were discussed and lunch time soon came up.

'It was hands on for the second half, with stimulative guidance from Mike, on the various techniques which had been shown during the morning. The day was rounded off with a slide show and we greatly appreciated a day well spent. My turning will never be quite the same after it for one appreciates better the enormous possibilities for innovation, if only one has the courage and tenacity to make the effort.

'Thanks to Mike Scott for his hospitality, the enjoyment of his company and his willingness to let us share his feelings for his very individual art forms. Super day!!!!!!

And thank you Bill, for such a glowing report.

Bill also sent me details of two very worthy and stimulating organisations to which he belongs, but space precludes all but a very brief description of their work.

Called RADAR and REMAP, they help in the design and manufacture of specialist devices for disabled people, which can not be supplied by the N.H.S., mainly because they do not exist.

There are over 90 panels up and down the country and Bill will advise any members who are interested, of their nearest panel. Contact him at 9, Vanity Close, Oulton, Stone, Staffs. ST15 8TZ:

If space allows, I shall put out more details of the organisations in future newsletters, but whilst reading Bills letter I couldn't help remembering the days which I spent as a development fitter in the aircraft components industry. Both types of work share the same stimulation and excitement.

Also due to pressure on space, I have to delay publishing reports on the Midlands Seminar at Avoncroft and the Bristol Seminar which Don. White organised, until the next newsletter. Thanks though, to the two members who took the trouble to write and submit them to me.

The members profile has also been delayed, for the same reason. I hope that V.C. can wait just a little longer!

FOR SALE, SWAP, BARTER, BEG, BORROW OR STEAL.

New member A.J. Lilley of 71 Grendon Close, Matchborough West, REDDITCH, Worcs. B98 0EQ, has a need for elm to finish four bow fronted smokers chairs. He has seasoned ash to trade. Any takers?

Another new member, Peter Mead, has for sale a Coronet Elf, 30" centres, as part of a package deal. As well as the unused lathe, he offers the end turning rest, 2½" woodscrew chuck, collet chuck body, 2 7/8" expanding jaw, 500 mltrs. Speed'n'Eze, a set of six tools and one of Gordon Stokes's books. The asking price is £420. Ring Peter on Bromsgrove (0527) 72382 or Birmingham (021) 453 2606

Don White tells me that he still has an ever increasing pile of large Ash offcuts which he is selling at a reasonable price. Ring him on Bristol (0272) 564931, evenings, to arrange an appointment.

Ron Gill of 9, Stanley Place, Cadoxton, NEATH, S. Wales SA10 8BE, Tel. (0639) 3921, has a Coronet Imp bandsaw for sale. Powered by a 1 h.p. Brooks motor (Single phase, I should think, ed.), it has 7 blades and is mounted on a timber bench with a door. Asking price is £120. Also, Ron wants a Kity or Startright with a 6" or 8" cut.

Hugh O'Neill has two old, long work steadies for sale. Can be adapted to your own lathe. Cost is £25 the pair. He also offers a heavy duty motor, rewound to give 1 to 1½ h.p. It has continuous rating and a centrifugal starter. Cost is £65. Ring Hugh on 01-866 2721.

I have on offer a second hand Myford M.L.8, about fifteen years old. Mounted on its own wooden bench, it has 30" centres and comes complete with inboard and outboard face plates and woodscrew chucks. It also has a ring chuck and some fifteen or so long handled turning tools, all from an ex-student of Peter Child. The asking price is £350. Buyer collects. Ring or write to me at the Avoncroft address.

SPECIAL OFFERS TO MEMBERS.

Mick O'Donnell has asked me to announce that he is offering his book 'Woodworker Guide to Woodturning' to members for £10, inc. p&p. (Mainland only?) Ask him nicely and he might even autograph the copy.

Save 95p by writing to Mick at 'The Croft, Brough, THURSO, Caithness, SCOTLAND, KW14 8YE.

And I have now completed my own marketing arrangements for 'Pleasure and Profit from Woodturning.'

The normal selling price is £10.50, but I can supply to Association Members for £9.50, inc. p&p. (Mainland only!) Autograph offer also stands, if you don't mind the book being de-valued.

Tell you what Mick, I'll swop a single copy with you!

Do any other members have services which they can offer to other members for mutual benefit? Let me know.

PORTFOLIO.

Our Secretary gets requests from buyers who are looking for someone to do some turning for them, or supply a particular sort of item or service. He also gets some Press enquiries. And now, with the formation of local chapters, there are likely to be calls for "slide shows".

Any members are therefore invited to send pictures for possible inclusion in either a portfolio or a slide show of members work. The committee will make the selection and all material selected will be retained, the rest returned. In order to control this activity, please limit yourselves to any or all of the following:-

1. Up to six 35mm slides,
2. Up to six prints, colour and/or black and white,
3. A potted profile. (Maximum 250 words),
4. Any existing brochures or sales literature,
5. A business card and a letterhead,
6. A black and white picture of you turning.

Hugh goes on to say that whilst we are looking for dramatic pictures for the Press and for our demonstration portfolios, we are also looking for a comprehensive view of members work for the slide show which will be available for local chapters.

Hugh ends with the obvious request to pack all submissions with a stiff card backing, marking the cover "Photographs, Please do not bend." He also says that return postage would be appreciated.

BUSINESS SEMINAR. (Even more from our secretary.)

Many members have expressed an interest in advice on selling their work, some in setting up in business, some in pricing and some in marketing. You will probably have seen Hugh's article series in the Woodworker on starting up in business. He has now suggested running a seminar on the subject and we would like to know how many might be interested.

The programme would cover:-

- Knowing what to make. (Marketing).
- The basics of starting a business. (A CoSira Rep.).
- Finding money. (A small business agency spokesman).
- Pricing, including a 'Price this piece' workshop.
- 'How I did it'. (By leading professionals).

We can't be too specific regarding dates, costs, venue or duration at this stage, but if you are interested in principal, -and I would have jumped at the chance to get on such a seminar in my formative years-, then drop a card to Hugh, confirming your interest and stating your preference for a one or two day event (with overnight accomodation) and also what subjects you would like to see included and we will see what can be done.

WOODTURNING CENTER. (The spelling is deliberate!)

If any members happen to be holidaying in The States, or more specifically in St. Louis, they might care to look in at the Craft Alliance Gallery where an Exhibition titled 'Works Off the Lathe: Old and New Faces' will be on show from July 9th. to August 16th.

55 invited artists were asked to meet the challenge of producing one new object, the outcome of which was a collection of furniture, bowls and vessels, sculpture, jewelry and containers. This event was organised by that dynamo of a man, Al. LeCoff, whom many of you will remember from Loughborough, '87.

(Mick O'Donnell made a similar request to a number of U.K. turners recently, but we had to give our objects away! It was in a good cause though Mick. Well done, you)!

Al. is also involved, along with many others, in an Educational Symposium, 'The use of the lathe: Ideas for the classroom'. It is an event aimed primarily at teachers and students of Junior and Senior High Schools, Technical Schools and University Woodworking Courses. Makes you think, doesn't it!

A.G.M.

The date for the A.G.M. has been set provisionally for Sept. 25th., the venue is also to be confirmed. The meeting will probably start at 2 p.m.

FEET FIRST!

Member John Holyoak, from Norfolk, has sent me a couple of snippets, one of which refers to a recent trip to Morocco. I quote:-

".....whilst there I was interested to see a youth using a bow lathe. He was quick and efficient. He was using it for repetition spindle turning. It consisted of a fixed block with a nail protruding for the headstock and a similar sliding block for the tailstock and a fixed block of wood for the rest.

"With the right hand he operated the bow, cutting only on the stroke towards himself whilst his left foot held the sliding tailstock against the spindle and he operated the chisel with his left hand and holding the blade between the big toe and first toe of his right foot.

"The chisel was obviously locally wrought but looked to all intents like one of our 1" skewers.

"I guess the sunshine makes it all much more bearable."

Thanks for that very graphic description John. I wonder what the youth did for an encore? (Don't answer that). At least we all know now what needs to be done during the next power cut!

John also sent me an interesting example of local (Norfolk) tradition, which I will fit into a forthcoming newsletter.

If any other member has any similar items of interest, I should be very pleased to consider them for inclusion.

"REAL TURNERS".

Bob. Patrick, a member from North of the Border, wrote to me a few weeks ago and as his letter reminded me so much of my own feelings some 20 or more years since, I reproduce it here:-

Dear Reg.

Please consider this a "Letter to the Editor", for publication. I must get into print my thanks to you and all the others for the newsletter. It's fun to read, looks like being very informative and is very encouraging to me, an inexperienced turner (I make wonderful mistakes). Thanks to the "real" turners who so humourously remember they stood in my shoes and in doing so give me the heart to persevere.

Above all, thanks to you authors. I never see what you mean on the first read but like a blind man's dog, you get me there.

If you read this, fellow members, it may mean the editor will allow you to write too.... and pass your great experience over to me, talk me out of wheedling a chuck for my birthday and assuring me that steel on grinding stone is not the hazzard it looks.

Thanks very much for that Bob, but don't allow yourself to be talked out of wheedling the chuck. Merely owning one of today's 'Super Dooper All-Can-Do' chucks won't make anyone a better turner, but it will take some of the drudgery out of turning, demand greater accuracy of the turner and allow a wider scope when designing. That is of course, my own opinion. Do any of you know better?

PROBLEM SPOT.

Still North of the Border, a member rang me the other day and happened to catch me during one of my rare moments away from the lathe. As I was not able to give him my full attention during the 20 minute call, -I do have some daytime administration tasks to complete-, I may not have understood his problem fully, but as I remember it, he had experienced trouble with exotic timber splitting after turning.

Having ascertained that the splits were not due to excessive sanding but were more likely to be drying splits, I think I suggested that on receipt, the timber be weighed and the weight recorded. This process is repeated every week or so and when the weight stabilises, then the timber can be considered to be as dry as that particular storage environment will allow it to be.

I should like to make a regular feature of this problem spot, and would ask any members to write in, giving as much information as they can, and I will try to find an 'authority' on that particular subject, to give a considered answer.

CONTENTIOUS SUBJECT NUMBER ONE.

Speaking of problems, the state of a recent student's tools emphasised to me what lots of other turners have said on more than one occasion. The observation has been that they can't get a cutting edge on their tools, let alone keep it there whilst working.

I accept that many different turners have their own ideas on 'the right shape'. However, I feel that there is still a lot of common ground and that I should like to see locally organised, -wait for it-, 'tool surgeries'. There, I've said it! So what if I do lose my job?

I shall be running just such a half day surgery for local turners, which will be mentioned in a local paper or two. The surgeries will also be another means of spreading the word about A.W.G.B. What about it friends. Do you feel that you would like someone in your own area to arrange such an event? It need not be a rectification session on the grindstone even, just a discussion round the lathe on the advantages/disadvantages of your preferred angles and means of obtaining them. After all, the root cause of many problems which newcomers to the craft have, is the fact that their tools are simply not sharp enough!

In fact, since I wrote the foregoing paragraph, Tobias Kaye has contacted me to say that he is doing something very similar in his own area. See 'TEACH-INS' for details.

CONTENTIOUS SUBJECT NUMBER TWO.

And having chanced getting the sack, and a bag to put it in, for bringing up that particular scheme, I have another one which might benefit members.

What about a scheme whereby members who are visiting another part of the country can make contact beforehand with the local chapter in that particular venue? The object of such an arrangement would be the exchange of ideas, timber or hardware even. Whilst I am not suggesting a busmans holiday, I do certainly enjoy meeting other people with a similar interest.

If anyone is interested in such visits, let me know your home telephone number or address, where you will be travelling to and when, and I will publish the details. It will then be up to turners in that area to make contact direct. Any willing hosts could also make similar offers through the newsletter of course. After all, it's better than sitting in and watching the festering telly isn't it!

Finally, I should like to announce that for the time being, this is the last edition of our quarterly newsletter!

The next edition will be out within TWO months!

This means a number of things.

Firstly, that I am getting a fairly good feed-back of information from members. Well done those of you who have obliged, and I am still waiting to hear from more of you.

Secondly, you will be getting slightly less information but more frequently.

Thirdly, I will have a larger work load. But I am willing to undertake it provided I get the information from your good selves.

Finally, the deadline for the next edition is now 16th. June. Please get your news to me before the course fishing season starts. Not that I indulge in maggot drowning now. I'm too B****y busy!

And a quick filler-in of a page. The title of this newsletter is 'The Newsletter of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain', or 'AWGB'.

I would suggest a shorter and snappier title.

What about

AWGorBlimey?