

The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

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AWGorBlimey!

It's Newsletter No. 4! (July '88)

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES.

Your Association continues to grow in membership and recognition, positive initiatives are being made by your committee to improve the turners lot.

The committee has decided to contact the City and Guilds Examination Board with the aim of setting up a fully recognised course where students can obtain qualifications in Woodturning. This we know will take time to negotiate and have recognised 2-3 years is the expected consultation time.

Initiatives like this take time to bear fruit, but we are taking the first steps that ultimately can only benefit the craft and art of Woodturning.

Re. Logo. The art work is nearing completion, and new Letter Heads, Membership Cards and 3 fold A4 Leaflet will follow. The leaflet will have detailed information about our Association aims and objectives and a Membership Application Form attached to make enrolment easy. In time, T/Shirts, Ties, Smocks etc., with our logo incorporated will be available. Member Garry Gautier was responsible for the initial design. Thanks Garry.

The Association's first public exposure will take place at the Leeds Practical Woodworking Show, Sept. 1st-4th at Leeds University. A selection of Members work will be on show. Your Treasurer Len Grantham and Local Chapter Organiser Mike Cripps will be in attendance, along with other Committee Members, and stewards from the membership. (See later note under 'Static Exhibitions. ed.) So come along and make yourself known, have a chat, and bring a friend to enrol as a member.

Re. Local Chapters. By now you should all have had a list of members in your locality. Do get in touch with each other and meet up. Mike Cripps has done a manful job on this and has prepared a super advice document, (available on request), to help you form Local Chapters. It also lists the services your National Association can offer in support. So contact Mike at 41, The Greenway, ICKENHAM, Middlesex, for more help and advice.

Two plea's. First, we have had two lathes donated, which are to be loaned to needy individuals for periods of 12 months. One is the Myford from Don. White, the other a Cub generously donated by Tyme. Despite the appeal in the last Newsletter we have yet to find homes for them, so if you know of any worthy recipients, please put their names forward by July 23rd. Your Committee will consider the nominations and hopefully hand over the lathes at the Leeds Practical Woodworking show.

You may remember that Ed. Moulthrop donated £150 to the Association for use at your Chairmans discretion? Well, I have decided that the purchase of tools and chucks to go with the above lathes would be an ideal way to use this donation. Perhaps one of our business sponsors will let us

have a generous discount on their purchase?

Second plea. This is a little unconstitutional I know, but I feel that it is in the interests of the Association and I urge you to consider it. Our A.G.M. will be held on 25th. Sept. (details on page 11 of this Newsletter). Under our Constitution your Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and three Committee members must stand down from office, but can seek re-election. All are keen and willing to continue the work they have started and I would like to urge you the members to endorse these people so that they can see through to completion the many initiatives they have instigated. Those concerned are Hugh O'Neill, Secretary; Len Grantham, Treasurer; committee members Steven Marchant, Don White and Mike Cripps, plus your Chairman, yours truly. This plea in no way precludes other nominations of course and these should be made to the Secretary. As we undertake more activities it is obvious that sub-committees will be set up, thus members will be co-opted to administer these initiatives. (Please note that Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are elected annually and committee members serve two year terms).

By the time you read this I shall be in New Zealand or on my way back. It is my privilege to be an invited lecturer/demonstrator at Seminars arranged by our New Zealand counterparts. I should have a few stories to tell on my return.

In the meantime, happy turning.

Ray Key.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS.

Your Editor will be doing his usual demonstration stints over the next two months, the Annual Bewdley Museum Craft Fair being the first of these. It is on 16th. and 17th., July. A one day demo. at Biddenden on 19th. July will just about see me into August, where 20th. and 21st will find Anne and I at Fairford, Glos., for the annual Steam Rally. (We're in the craft marquee.)

27th. August to 4th. September gives us the longest run of open days yet, back on home ground at Avoncroft, and looking forward to the 'Open Nights' detailed in the Local Chapter news. It is possible that I might be teaching on one of those open week days, so ring first if you are coming specially otherwise you might find the workshop door temporarily closed.

I also hope to fix up a one day seminar with Mike Scott in October. He is setting up an exhibition in the area and the chance to have a look at his ideas on design and techniques is too good to miss. Details to follow.

STATIC EXHIBITIONS.

As Ray has already mentioned, we are to put on a display of members work at the Practical Woodworking Show, Leeds University, Sept. 1st. to 4th. Could any members in the Leeds area who would be willing to act as stewards on the stand for part or all of that time, please make themselves known as soon as possible?

The well turned wood show, on at Walford Mill Craft Centre, off Stone Lane, Wimborne Minster, Dorset, will be running from 30th. July to 4th. September. Organised by member, Graham Colyer, it contains work from members of the Dorset Craft Guild and comprises of just about all aspects of turning. Various demonstrations of turning on Pole, Holzapfel and Tyme lathes will be taking place on specific days. Ring the Mill on (0202) 841400 for more details. Sounds great Graham. Well done you!

John Hunnex, from Ashford, Kent, tells me that more than 800 people visited his exhibition of turning in Ashford Library, which was mentioned

in the last newsletter. 'It was great to meet so many other woodturners, and other people who simply enjoyed wood.'

Thanks for your note John. Is anyone else making an exhibition of themselves?

Apart that is, from Mike Scott, who has yet another exhibition, this time permanent, at Turton Tower, Bromley Cross, BOLTON, tel (0204) 852203. Mike and fellow member Jack Hill, are two of a number of Craftsmen who have woodwork on show at the tower from May 27th. to October 2nd.

Mike's other show is still on the road. He is sharing a bath, sorry, sharing AT Bath, -the St. James Gallery,- from 8th. July to 6th. August.

News of another show has been prized from Bert Marsh, who is one of 19 Designer-Craftsmen putting on a show of their work at The Knapp Gallery, Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1. The show runs from 6th. to 30th. July, with some demonstrations during that time, although none of woodturning. The admission fee is £1.00, and further details are available from the Society of Designer-Craftsmen, Tel. 01 739 3663.

TEACH-INS.

Tobias Kaye's 'Tool Surgeries' are still scheduled for the first Saturday in every month, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Held in his workshop near Buckfastleigh, they were detailed in the last newsletter. To find him, leave the A38 at the Lower Dean exit and look for the workshop sign 100 yards down the road.

Let me know how they go Toby.

Mick O'Donnell is doing his thing for the Irish in October, with his demonstration for the 7th. Annual 2 day Seminar, 1/2 Oct., and a 5 day teaching workshop from 3rd. to 7th. Spaces may be available for English turners. Contact Joe O'Neill, 27, Ballinteer Drive, Dundrum, Co. Dublin, for more details.

LOCAL CHAPTERS.

At the last Committee meeting, Mike Cripps identified a total of 38 potential local chapters, some of whom are more active than others.

The Devon chapter is to be launched on July 2nd., at Keith Sinclair's house, 'Willowfield', Week, Dartington, TOTNES, Devon, TQ9 6JW. Phone (0803) 867252. This inaugural meeting to start at 7 p.m. Well done Keith, and good luck! Keep me informed of developments please.

Kent turner Bill Cardon is keen to get a local group going. I should think that Biddenden would be a good starting place for a few recruits. I shall do my best for you next month. (See Forthcoming Attractions). Bill can be contacted at 10, Cavour Rd., FAVERSHAM, Kent, ME13 8QX.

Leicestershire's John Doyle is keen to get a group going. He can be contacted at 18, King Edward Rd., LEICESTER, LE5 4DB. Dennis Baker, of 15, Fielding Rd., Birstall, Leicester, LE4 3AF has, with Stewart Smith, made the same offer. I hope they have got together by now and look forward to hearing from one or the other of them. Reading a note from Dennis to Mike Cripps, the thought occurs to me that they have already got a long way along the road to having a very strong group.

Lincolnshire members have had an offer they must find hard to refuse. Chris Stott has offered the use of his workshop for local chapter meetings and demonstrations. All you want now is a volunteer to organise the chapter. Chris is too busy to do it himself at the moment. I know just how he feels! Come on, Lincs, get yourselves together.

Norfolk is well served by member, Tony Waddilove, Unit A, Hill Farm Workshops, Castle Acre Rd., Great Dunham, KINGS LYNE, Norfolk, PE23 2LP. Tony has had a group going there for some time. Hopefully we can recruit more members for A.W.G.B.

North East member Melvin Davidson, 1b Orchard Rd., Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear, NE39 1ED, is keen to get a group going in Geordie Land. My wife came from Tow Law, Melvin, so I shall watch progress with interest, and possibly ask permission to call in and see you all when we next make the trek North, probably in '89.

North Scotland finds Dave Hinchley, of Tresillian, Dunneydeer Park, INSCH, Aberdeenshire, all on his own! Try some of the shortly available information sheets around the local Timber Merchants, Library, Ironmongers Shops etc., Dave. And what about doing a John Hunnex, and mounting your own display of work in the local 'whatever it sells' shop as well? That could get a few more locals inching their way out of the woodwork!

Staffs and South Cheshire members Alan Hewitt (tel. Newcastle, Staffs 566004 and Derek Major tel. Stoke on Trent 543652, have formed a group of turners in their area. They meet monthly. Ring either Derek or Alan for more details

West Midlands are potentially a very big group indeed, taking in just about all of Birmingham and the surrounding countryside. We have a volunteer there, but he was not quite ready to get things going the last time we spoke, due to a house move. Hope you are all now fixed up, but if not, you might like to temporarily attach yourselves to:-

Worcestershire, which held it's first meeting last week, during which a committee was formed, with Arthur Morris in the chair, Phil Leese as Secretary, (phone No. Astwood Bank 2507), and (in his absence,) John Phillips as the third member. A recruiting drive has been planned for September 12th. and 13th., with demonstrations by myself, and back-up displays of part and completely finished work by other members. We might even be able to hire a turning video and sort out the means of showing it. Press coverage will be sought nearer the date.

General. What I really need from local chapters is the name, address and (if you want it published), telephone No. of the contact, to which all local enquiries should be sent. I also need contact with just one member, (Press Officer?), of that chapter, who will hopefully feed me information on group activities. More than one person giving me information can be very confusing.

BUSINESS SPONSORS.

To refresh your memories, we have a number of business sponsors, all of whom offer items of interest to our members. Details are:-

Timberline, Unit 7, Munday Works, 58-66 Morley Rd., TONBRIDGE, Kent. TN9 1RP. (Tel. 0732 355626) Contact either Peter Lang or Bob. Smith for details of exotic and tropical hardwoods in log, board and turning disc and square forms. Also available are veneers, bandings, and finishing materials. They will soon be offering Craft Requisites. Why not send for the free catalogue and also take advantage of the 10 to 25 % discount, depending upon value of purchase?

North Heigham Saw Mill of Paddock Street, NORWICH, Norfolk, NR2 4TW are specialists in all home grown and exotic woods and also offer a free catalogue. Contact R.B. Brett for more details. Tel. 0603 622978.

Fine Wood and Tool Store Ltd. of Riverside Sawmills, BOROUGHBRIDGE, North Yorks, YO5 9LJ, are part of John Boddy Timber Ltd., and offer both a retail and mail order service, supplying over 60 species of timber, a full

range of woodturning, woodcarving, veneering and general tools; polishes, waxes and stains; veneers, inlays and bandings; upholstery, caning and woodturning requisites; books and plans. Courses on all aspects of woodworking and free demonstrations are held throughout the year. A catalogue costing £2 is available and discounts are detailed within it. Contact is Mrs. Liz. Boddy.

Riverlock Machinery Sales Ltd. of Riverlock House, Spring Gardens Rd., High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 7AG, Tel. (0494) 452993, offer a range of machinery for the copying, turning and sanding of wooden parts in varying sizes and shapes. A catalogue is available free. Riverlock also offers 5% discount to members. Contact Mr. Peter S. Hill for more details.

Charltons Timber Centre, Frome Rd., Radstock, BATH, Avon, BA3 3PT, tel. Radstock (0761) 36229, deal in home grown, imported and exotic hardwoods. They also offer veneers and turning & carving blanks. A wide range of books, plans and finishes is also available, as are machines from Tyme, Elu and De-Walt and tools from Sorby and Ashley Iles, as well as a vast range of Craft Supplies. 'In fact, everything for the woodworker'. A catalogue, which is free, can be had from Mr. Ken Wall, Manager. A discount of 10% is available on selected items on production of the A.W.G.B. membership card.

Al-Ko Britain Ltd., Number One Industrial Estate, Medomsley Rd., CONSETT, Co. Durham, DH8 6SZ, Tel (0207) 590295, are supplier of powered gardening and D.I.Y. Equipment. a free catalogue is available. Contact at Al-Ko is Mr. John Watson.

L.R.E. Machinery and Equipment Co., of 15, Upwood Rd., Lowton, WARRINGTON, WA3 2RL, have become Supporting Members of the American Association of Woodturners. A reminder that Lee Cooper, of L.R.E., is attending the Symposium, which is to be held in Philadelphia on 15th. to 17th. Sept. Anyone interested in accompanying him on a block booking should ring Warrington (0942) 728208 for more details. (The grapevine tells me that our Chairman will also be in attendance. The same grapevine gives details of 'a spouse programme'. That sounds like a good idea to me, giving turners a better chance of attending!)

If any of our Business Sponsors have special events, offers, news items or other matters which would be of interest to our members, would they please let me have details. But remember the deadline.

SEMINAR REPORTS.

Due to pressure on space, I had to delay the following reports until this newsletter. Like a good meal, I think they were worth waiting for.

From Graham Lovett, we have a report on :-

'The first Mini-Seminar in the Midlands area, which was held on 28th. Feb. '88 at the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings, Bromsgrove, in the purpose built workshop of Reg. Sherwin, woodturner in residence.

'The delegates were warmly welcomed by Reg. and Ray Key, the Association Chairman, who together were to provide the instruction/demonstrations throughout the day.

'The delegates were visiting from many areas, including Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Somerset and Avon. Examples of visitors work were displayed in the workshop, and this must have been a very encouraging start to the day for the organisers. (It certainly was! ed.)

'Following a welcome 'cuppa' and some quick introductions from Reg., Ray started the ball rolling, or should it have been timber turning, on a short bed Harrison Graduate, and we were treated to a 'box of delights' as he gave us an insight into the development of method and design in ring box

production over the years. Ray's easy manner and ability to explain each step thoroughly were, I am sure, eagerly and easily absorbed by all present. Thus the two hours of Ray's first session soon passed.

'The assembled company were then entertained by Reg. Sherwin, who, alternating between a Coronet No.1 and a Minor, turned out rounders bats, spinning tops, plant dibbers, and pencil tops at quite an impressive rate, all timber mounted without stopping the lathe!!! This session of about one hour was over all too quickly, bringing the morning session to a close. A very appetising lunch followed, specially laid on in the museum's cafeteria.

'Suitably refreshed, it was back to the workshop for a two hour session by Ray, this time showing his expertise at turning salad bowls and platters in ash. Most interesting was his power sanding of the bowl or platter, and I am sure that many of us present saw this as a new and time saving method of sanding. I have since tried the method and am very pleased with it. However, as Ray pointed out, it will not improve a poorly turned article, but provided the tool work is good, the sanding time is greatly reduced. The speed with which Ray converted his blank to the finished article was very impressive, but with one of his bowls, he was none too pleased because he felt that 'the base was too heavy'. What it is to have that as the only fault. If I had turned that bowl I would have been quite proud, nay, very proud, but then, that is the difference between a master of his craft and a lesser mortal.

'This period was again over far too quickly, and the meeting was thrown open to a question and answer period. This proved to be rather brief as most of our questions had been answered by Ray and Reg during their demonstrations. The final period was a 'hands on' session, and to discuss with fellow delegates, the pro's and con's of what had gone on during the day.

'For those brave enough to try their hand at bowl turning, Ray was on hand to guide us through. Reg meanwhile was soon cornered and answering many and varied questions. Questions I am sure he is asked time and time again at the many demonstrations he attends. (Not really Graham, as very few of those watchers are turners themselves. ed.)

'John Sanders, our professional from Somerset was also demonstrating a very novel way to turn cord pulls between what seemed to be two tailstock centres. It seemed impossible. But the impossible happened. (They were tail centres, fixed in the headstock and live in the tailstock! He does interesting things with ring centres as well! ed.)

'The finishing time of the seminar, 5 p.m., came and went, and still the workshop was buzzing, no-one seeming to want to call it a day, which must be a measure of its success. If the success can be repeated, or even bettered, then the future of the A.W.G.B., is assured.

'Thank you Reg and Ray, for an excellent day, and for putting together a well organized and balanced programme.'

Thank you Graham, for such a stunning report! But you forgot to mention your own contribution, the 'con-rod' tools. Don White wanted to pocket one of them, and I was after the other one!

I had a busy evening after the seminar as well, what with my eldest daughter's 21st. birthday celebration meal at a nearby Chinese Restaurant, and also having to proof read the first half of my book before first post, Monday.

Dave Tooby, a member from Bristol, sent the following:-

'On Saturday 19th. March, Don White held a one day seminar at his Titherington Glos. workshop, Demonstrations throughout the day were given

by craftsman and woodturner Dennis French. Dennis has been turning for many years and makes a wide variety of domestic woodware. The fifteen of us who had the good fortune to attend were treated to almost 8 hours of non-stop instruction and tips. Having told us that this was his first demonstration, all I can say is that he must be a natural, passing on so much information and skill.

'One of the highlights for me was to see just how versatile a self centering four jaw chuck is. Dennis showed us that with the aid of a set of soft jaws, several simple modifications can be made which make production work far quicker and more accurate. Perhaps he, or someone else with his guidance, can be persuaded to write an article on the subject?

'Many thanks to Don for devoting his time to organising such a stunning day, and also for the endless cups of tea and coffee.

'I am sure that many of those non members were suitably impressed with the work of the Association, some joining on the spot, (including Dennis himself. ed.), with others to follow. It is only by meeting other turners, sharing ideas and talking about turning that we can improve, however good or bad we think we are.'

'Lets hope that Don can be encouraged to organise more one day seminars in the near future'.

Thanks, Dave. Your report brings up two points which are close to my heart. First, the use of four jaw chucks. Many people know that I don't like them. More specifically, I don't like the all too often offered advice to 'hold the square in a four jaw'. Their use can be made much safer by instigating suitable modifications and also using accurately sawn timber. Dennis explained this to perfection.

The second point is, why wait for Don to arrange the next session. He has shown the way. What about the local chapter fixing something?

I have also received two reports on the recent West Country extravaganza. I hope to print them both in the next newsletter.

MEMBERS PROFILE (Mrs. Valerie Cresswell has been waiting, one way or another, for some time.)

'My interest in woodworking started when aged 12, I was given a fretsaw. Much later, after daughter No. 1 was born, I joined an evening class in woodwork which I continued for three years and two more daughters - and had my first introduction to the lathe when I made a large mahogany fruit bowl. I was too embarrassed to continue the classes with daughter No. 4 on the way - besides which the bump created difficulties.

'After various other hobbies including woodcarving I saw someone spinning and was off again - but the second hand spinning wheel I bought had no aesthetic qualities and off I went to woodwork classes to make a spinning wheel. Two years later I was the proud owner of a cherry-wood spinning wheel - but the interest in spinning had waned and my interest in woodturning had been re-awakened.

'February 1987 saw me watching the woodturners at the Wembley Exhibition and once home I asked my patient and indulgent husband if he fancied a holiday in Derbyshire. The catch was that I wanted to do a course at The Mill before buying a lathe. Daughters 3 and 5 came with us in May, and I had a splendid two days under the kind and watchful eye of Jamie Wallwin - I still don't like the skew chisel Jamie! - and came back poorer but happy.

'I have since turned everything from large platters to light pulls but my first stall at a craft fair was disappointing. Still, ever optimistic, I have just sent off a deposit for a stall for next December.

'P.S., Anyone want to buy any candle holders?'

Thank you Valerie, but 'No, thank you' to the candle holders. My long suffering wife has been known to liken our side board to a shrine!

DIG-IN'S. (An occasional feature, the title coming from an alternative newsletter title offered by member, Bernard Rose. I think it fits in better here Bernard. I hope you approve?).

I was working in front of a group of visitors at Avoncroft the other week, making long shavings from semi-wet cherry. Wishing to share the experience with the audience, I held up a handful of shavings and said 'Crispy Noodles anyone?' Too late I noticed a Chinese family, who took a dim view of it and walked out. Me and my mouth!

Has any other member ever had a similar 'dig-in' or 'foot in mouth' experience? Let me know please.

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

Don White tells me that he is still besieged by large ash off-cuts, which he is willing to sell for a reasonable price. If anyone wants to call, ring Don first please, on Bristol (0272) 564931, evenings.

WORKSHOP VISITS.

Following my suggestion in the last newsletter regarding workshop visits, member Gordon Clarke, The Spinning Gallery, Market Place, Marazion, Penzance, TR17 0AR, tel. (0736) 711400, has suggested that anyone visiting Cornwall would be welcome to call in at the Gallery. 'Original knitware and crafts'. If lessons were required, 'the wives could go fishing'. Gordon also sent me photo's of two of the spinning wheels which he makes. Both in mouth watering yew, they are a joy to behold.

PORTFOLIO.

Hugh O'Neill reported at the last committee meeting that there had been no response to his request for pictures of members work for the portfolio which he is producing. I've just bought myself a second hand 35mm camera and I hope to be able to drive it soon, so as to comply with his request which was printed in the last newsletter. What's your excuse? Come on folks, lets have some shots!

HELPLINE. (Yet another new feature!)

Peter Baylis, a member from Essex, wrote as follows:-

'...Most of us, over the years, must have ferreted out and filed away in our heads, odd bits of information which others might find useful; addresses, sources, ideas etc. Would an "Information Exchange" be a possibility? I would like to start it off with a request. Page 120 of Ray's book shows a lovely big drum sander, attached to his lathe, in operation. I've tried to locate a source for this, and failed! HELP!!'

Thanks Peter, for suggesting and starting what will, I am sure, be a very useful service to fellow members. Ray tells me that the pneumatic sander in question is made by Meddings, Ivybridge, South Devon.

Next problem please?

LETTERS.

John Holyoak, a member from 'Sleepy' Norfolk, has written to me, enclosing photo's of a lathe which he has made up and which is based upon the machine detailed in March/April '86 Fine Woodworking, but with John's

own modifications to strengthen it. It looks like a sturdy job John. It should wake up at least half of Norfolk, if not all of it. Just how big are Norfolk lace bobbins?

Not specifically for or from the A.W.G.B., but of interest to members, is a letter which Stobart and Son Ltd., have sent out to some people on their mailing list. They have commissioned Betty Norbury to compile a new book, 'British Craftsmanship in Wood.'

Any members who wish to be considered for inclusion should contact Betty at The White Knight Gallery, 28, Painswick Rd., CHELTENHAM, Glos.

PROBLEM SPOT. (Yet another new service from your (fantastic)? newsletter!)

Dave Hinchley, "Tresillian", Dunnydeer Park, Insch, Aberdeenshire, AB5 6GD, Tel. 0464 20516, has written to me regarding a problem which must have caused untold frustration to many turners. Part of his letter follows:-

'....Anyway, back to my problem. I have just purchased a quantity of ash, elm and brazilian mahogany and I'm glad to say that it looks good as the shavings are really dry and it finishes well.

'I also purchased some 2" thick bubinga and turned a 10" fruit bowl. This has unfortunately badly warped, as much as 1/8"+, when looking across the top rim. The shavings felt reasonably dry and there were no cracks or shakes visible, so I polished it with melamine finish. Any ideas, please help! One odd piece of purpleheart which I was turning, is now under my bench awaiting its fate.

'One item which would probable help is a meter for detecting moisture content in wood - do you know where I could purchase one?

'My own thoughts regarding some of the wood is that if you pay for first class timber -kiln dried- then it should be just that. One piece of 2" x 2" bubinga I was turning into a peppermill, which I was boring out with a 1" saw tooth centre bit at 690 revs, started to steam. I reduced the speed to around 300 revs but this made no difference, as droplets of moisture formed on the cutter and stem. Now does that sound like kiln dried timber to you?

'The suppliers couldn't say it was part seasoned because they charged me top price for kiln dried timber.'

Bert Marsh, another member, who is very experienced in most aspects of turning, kindly agreed to reply.

'...As you know, questions on moisture content, drying, splits and shrinkage can be very difficult to answer, due to the many variable factors. The Moisture Meter was, and could still be available from Protimeter, Meter House, Field House Lane, MARLOW, Bucks. SL7 1LX. Tel. (06284) 72722.

'...A moisture meter works on the resistance of the wood to an electric current passing between two points pushed into the wood. It is often very difficult to drive the points into the wettest part, the centre, especially with thick sectioned timber.

'Normally people just put the points in 1/4" deep, and this is the driest part anyway. Also, calculations using temperature and species of wood must be done, so quite a fair amount of experience is needed to get an approximate moisture content. Also, a meter is quite an expensive piece of equipment.

'I personally think the best thing to do would be to spend the money on increased timber stocks.

This would allow the cutting and rough turning of blanks, so that they can dry quicker, prior to final turning and finishing. After rough turning, the timber will eventually reach a certain moisture content, but this will

depend upon where it is stored. By weighing the timber periodically and recording the weight and the date, you will know when the timber has reached its lowest moisture content, as it will hold the same weight over two or three weighings.

Drying can be accelerated by the use of the airing cupboard or a micro-wave oven. In both cases, care must be taken not to rush the drying. For micro-wave drying I suggest a maximum of five minutes at de-frost setting, or up to 15 minutes on sap-wet wood in large pieces, but go carefully, then allow at least 30 minutes standing before repeating.

As the wood dries, reduce the oven time accordingly. Excessive heating will cause splitting and can cause the timber to ignite. (Padauk ash will not go too well as a substitute for nutmeg on rice pudding! ed.)

Most exotic woods are very wet when imported into this country. Purpleheart is a difficult wood to finish and excessive sanding can cause splitting.

'The wood for the peppermills certainly sounds quite wet. Think of changing the timber merchant.

'No way can one determine how dry or wet a wood is by feeling the shavings. (But surely you can tell that it is wet by holding the shaving? ed.)

'Bad finishing very often causes problems for the unwary. To eliminate as many problems as possible, aim for as good a finish from the tool as you can get, (I often sharpen the tool before the final cut, ed.), use a coarser abrasive paper to start with. Slow lathe speed down.'

Thanks Bert, for a very good answer to what was a very difficult question. So many times it is easy to see straight away what the problem is whilst watching the turner, whereas to try to sort it out via correspondence, is very difficult.

I hope that helps you Dave. It has certainly given me an idea or two, if I can persuade my wife to surrender her micro-wave for a bit of pioneering work that is!

Dave finishes his letter by saying that if any members are ever in his area, they would be welcome to call in for a chat. But I suggest they ring first.

Second problem. (This is one which I am putting to the readership in general. Open season folks, so don't just sit there wondering at my dimness!)

I have from time to time made craft items such as bowls in spalted timber and when asked by the public if the spores which cause the markings are still active, I have said that as they are sealed in, they aren't getting up to anything nasty on the sideboard. Am I right? And what of items which are finished in oil rather than the less porous sealers?

And to finish this new feature, a question which was posed by member Bill Cardon, of Kent, who wishes to know if Len Grantham, our treasurer, is making a tape of his "Ritual Wardance of the Woodturner", viz a viz. Woodworker, April, '88.?

MEMBERSHIP. Don't forget, at the end of July. the annual subscriptions run out. Len Grantham, our Honorary Treasurer, will be sending renewal notices to you all. I suspect you will only get the one reminder, so don't put it somewhere safe, get it back up to Edinborough as soon as you can.

DEADLINE

The deadline for newsletter No 5 is 11th. August. Local Chapter Press Officers, Secretaries or whoever, please take note.

A.G.M.

This is the formal notice of our first A.G.M., which will be hosted by me at Avoncroft Museum of Buildings, Stoke Heath, BROMSGROVE, Worcs. B60 4JR. on 25th. September 1988.

I shall enclose an Avoncroft brochure with the next newsletter, but I take this opportunity to let you know that the museum is also hosting a V.W. Rally and a mini Craft Fair on the same day.

This means that there will be plenty to look at for the rest of the family.

Normal museum admission charges will be payable by anyone who wishes to enter the museum site, where the rally and the fair are taking place, but the A.G.M. is off site.

The A.G.M. is to start at 2 p.m.

All members may attend.

Motions for the agenda should be submitted to the Chairman by July 25th.

Each motion submitted should include the name of the proposer and seconder.

The agenda will be published in the next newsletter, which will be out by August 25th.

Could all members who will be attending the A.G.M. please fill in and return the attached slip to me, to help in planning the seating arrangements?

Do it today rather than as soon as possible, otherwise you will put it in a safe place and forget the thundering thing!

Cut Here-----

I shall be attending the A.W.G.B. A.G.M. to be held at Avoncroft Museum of Buildings on Sept. 25th.

Name. _____ Membership Number, _____

Address.

