

Revolutions

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

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September 2024



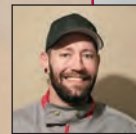
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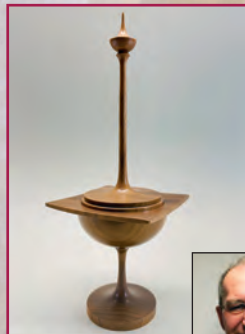
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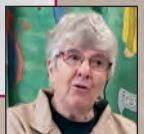
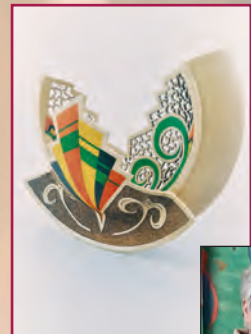
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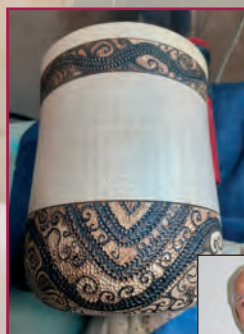
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Revolutions

Copy deadline for the next edition of Revolutions

1st November 2024

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Executive President

Joey Richardson

Chairman

Roger Cutler
14 St. John Street, Creetown
Dumfries Galloway DG8 7JF
01671 820832
chairman@awgb.co.uk

Vice Chairman

Vacant
vicechair@awgb.co.uk

Treasurer

George Rogers
36 Fraserburgh Way
Orton Southgate
Peterborough PE2 6SS
01733 234483
treasurer@awgb.co.uk

Secretary

Bryan Milham
13 Manor Gardens
Locking, Weston-Super-Mare
BS24 8DQ
07876 321 293
secretary@awgb.co.uk

Assistant Treasurer

Mike Mansfield
27 Grenville Meadows, Lostwithiel,
Cornwall PL22 0JS
01208 872012
07799 065397
asst-treasurer@awgb.co.uk

Membership Secretary & Data Manager

John Peachey
37a Oxstalls Lane, Longlevens
Gloucester GL2 9HP
01452 525976
membership@awgb.co.uk or
datamanager@awgb.co.uk

Trade & Business Officer

Terry Bray
07879 493346
trade@awgb.co.uk

2024 Seminar Bookings

Co-ordinator

Jeff Belcher
Oak House, Hanley Castle,
Worcestershire WR8 0BJ
07798 746296
seminar@awgb.co.uk

Training Officer

Masuma Rahim
training@awgb.co.uk

Newsletter Editor

Sheila Hughes
Alicia, Tytherleigh
Axminster EX13 7BQ
01460 221448
07768 373086
editor@awgb.co.uk

REGIONAL REPS

Scotland

Darren Crisp
40 Andrew Baxter Avenue
Ashgill, Larkhall, ML9 3RG
07507 178986
scotrep@awgb.co.uk

North

Paul Otter
15 Redruth Close, Brookvale
Runcorn WA7 6AX
07913 946839
northrep@awgb.co.uk

Midlands

Vacant
midlandrep@awgb.co.uk

South West

Vacant

South East

Richard Peers
7 Grove Wood Hill, Coulsdon
Surrey CR5 2EN
07941 018 336
serep@awgb.co.uk

VOLUNTEERS

Youth Training

Ron Caddy
The Studio, 23 Wisley Road
Andover SP10 3UQ
07903 313065
youthtraining@awgb.co.uk

Webmaster

Colin Spencer
webmaster@awgb.co.uk

Public Relations & Social media

Kate Kitchin
07503 226795
pr@awgb.co.uk

Workshops Co-ordinator

Chris Parker
07723 097271
workshops@awgb.co.uk

Health & Safety Officer

Martin Dickinson
3 Ryslaw Farm Cottages, Duns
TD11 3HX
01890 840635
hs@awgb.co.uk

Youth and Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Officer

Kevin Purse
safeguarding@awgb.co.uk

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Your personal details are held on computer for the use of the AWGB. We only use this information to run the organisation. If you would like to know what information we hold and how we use it, please contact the Secretary.

Chairman's Notes

Roger Cutler

Computers, love them or hate them, they have become central to our way of living. The other week we had the Microsoft glitch caused by a faulty upgrade. I now cringe whenever my computer tells me there's an update on the way. But a few weeks ago, I fired-up my computer to find that it had reset itself back to the factory settings!! Luckily most of my work was "in the cloud" so I could retrieve it fairly easily, but I lost my diary, and this was a major problem. It took me about two weeks to fill in some of the dates and there was always that feeling of "have I forgotten something?" Yes, computers are very useful, but I now have a real diary as well as a calendar on the fridge door.

Looking at the Executive, unfortunately we now have a couple more vacancies, these are for Regional Reps in the Midlands and South West. Sadly, Dave Brookes has had to stand down due to ill health and Stephen Brewer has stood down as his employment situation has changed. So, we are now looking for Two Regional Reps as well as a Vice Chair, so if there is anyone who can fill one of these vacancies, or anybody in your club? Please let us know.

Our training workshops continue apace- these are advertised elsewhere in the newsletter. We are always looking at training, particularly at venues and also at content. If you know of a likely venue, one that has enough lathes and space for 4/5 people please let us know. We try to have an even coverage around the country so that everyone has access to a training workshop. Also, we do try and cover most topics but if there is a particular subject you would like covering, let us know, there's bound to be someone else looking for that same workshop.

Youth training is something we try to highlight, - it is free for any member under 21. However, we have experienced some workshops where candidates have not tuned up despite booking. This is frustrating for both the tutor and those who organise the events. Please if you are booked on a course and can't make it, for whatever reason - Let us know.

Lastly - but by no means least the Seminar - This is now only a few weeks away so if you haven't booked then contact our Seminar Booking Coordinator ASAP - his contact details are on page 11. The programme has now been put together and it looks like another information and fun-packed weekend with 45 demonstrations, 10 masterclasses, together with the pop-up Gallery and traders, making it a not-to-miss event.



Financial Viability

Roger Cutler

As mentioned in the last edition of Revolutions both in my column and in the article by Mike Mansfield, our finances are a major area of concern.

The association has been making deficits of some £12,000 per annum. Free reserves currently stand at some £52,000. After deducting the legally required winding up reserve of £20,000 and covering the deficit in the trading company of £8,000 there is only £24,000 left.

This amount will be exhausted in a couple of years at the current rate.

Yes, there are some justifications for the position we find ourselves in; Covid being the main culprit, - trying to find ways of coping in an unparalleled situation. Our Covid Grants to clubs and the Digital Seminar all cost us money, money that was not initially budgeted for.

So, it is quite obvious that something has to be done and done quickly.

The executive has looked at ways of both increasing our income and cutting our expenditure, and to these ends we have agreed to the following:

First of all, looking at our income the only way we can significantly increase this is to increase the membership fees. Not an easy option in the present climate. However, one of the main problems has been the fact that we did not increase the fees for quite a few years, so in a way we are now playing catch-up. We increased fees last year by £3. But this was obviously not enough so we aim to increase fees this coming year to £24. This will give an added income of around £8,700 per year. Still way short of £12,000 needed.

Because of this shortfall we need to look at our expenditure and ways we can save money.

It has been agreed that we must maintain the current benefits to Clubs/Members as we do not wish to reduce membership.

Looking at the areas that absorb most of our revenue Revolutions figures highly. We did look at changing from the physical magazine to a wholly digital version and this had the agreement of some Members/Clubs, but it also had many who were against. So, a compromise had to be found.

If we maintain the current four editions per year but reduce the size from A4 to A5 this will produce a saving of around £4000 per year. This is obviously dependant on postage costs but will make significant savings.

Club Demonstration Grants. This is the biggest item in our budget running currently at £23,000 and it is an area that has seen regular increases over the last few years. We now intend to freeze the Grant for a yet to be determined number of years. These changes to be reviewed annually.

Youth Training, which is currently free to all members under 21, is provided jointly with the Worshipful Company of Turners and is presently costing £1,800. We feel that this grant should be reduced marginally to £1500, and this will be discussed with the Worshipful Company.

Mileage Allowance, this is currently paid at 45p per mile on all Association business. This is to be reduced to 35p per mile, making a saving of around £400 per year. In addition, any journey costing over £100 will need prior approval.

All of the above measures, which together will cover the £12,000 shortfall, will significantly help to ensure the viability of the AWGB, in the coming years. However, I feel we need to address these issues regularly and not wait until such times as we need to make wholesale changes.



Revolutions Newsletter

We can deliver Revolutions in both paper and electronic pdf format.

All members we have email addresses for will initially receive both formats.

If you would prefer just the paper version or just the electronic version or neither, or if you want to change your existing preference email **John Peachey - datamanager@awgb.co.uk** with your choice.

Tutor assessment day at Amberley Museum



Hi Masuma

On behalf of the five of us I would like to thank you for arranging the assessments we had on Monday and to pass on our thanks to John Boyne-Aitken and his wife for putting up with us.

As grown men were all very nervous but John put us at our ease as soon as we met which led to a successful day for all and we can now proudly display our certificates and wear the badges.

I have attached a photo of John and the group which may be of interest and possible inclusion in a future issue of *Revolutions*.

Regards, Ian

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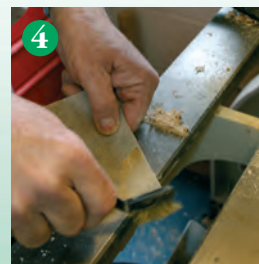
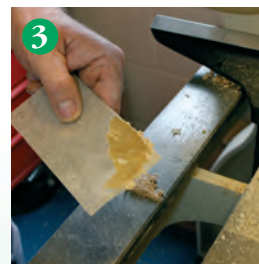
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Zebrano Bowl

Harry Rodwell

Hello, my name is Harry Rodwell, and I am a 17-year-old sixth form student. I completed this project independently at my school, where I had the opportunity to utilize their Union Graduate lathe, a valuable resource for my woodworking projects. When I initially came up with this project, I knew that I wanted the top edge of the bowl to overhang the inside of the bowl, I wanted to display the grain of the Zebrano wood as it is a nice looking exotic wood. I purchased this small blank from a local woodturning shop.



1.

1. I marked out the center of the circle using a compass on the Zebrano wood blank and then positioned the chuck face plate ring on and marked out all of the mounting holes. I drilled pilot holes so I could screw the face plate ring to the wood. Pilot holes are not always necessary but I did not want to risk cracking or splitting the wood as it was somewhat expensive.



2.

2. The blank with the face plate ring screwed on and then mounted on the lathe. Using this method of marking the face plate ring proved successful as when I turned the lathe on there was very little wobble and the wood was fairly central before I took any tools to it. The blank was fairly small and I wanted to utilise as much as possible without having to take off large amounts of timber just to get the piece round.



3.

3. I then rounded the blank to remove the wax coating, I used a bowl gouge to do this and as I turned it revealed how

nice the raw grain looks. The hardness of the wood surprised me as it did not feel particularly dense, due to this I took my time with small cuts, I wanted to make sure that I did not have any catches/dig ins because I wanted to preserve as much of the functional diameter of the wood as possible as it was already a fairly small blank.



4.

4. Once the blank was round, I moved to the bottom of the bowl and started on the curvature. I added a gentle curve, I was worried if the curve was too aggressive it would look strange with the grain pattern and thought this shape better suited the bowl. I then worked the base of the bowl so it was flat and ready to cut the recess for the expanding chuck jaws.



5.

5. Once I was happy with the outer shape of the bowl, I cut a recess to hold the bowl in the chuck jaws. Using a ruler and pencil to mark a diameter of 50mm, I then cut to a depth of around 10mm, added a taper to the outer edge of this cut to match the taper on the chuck jaws, so the chuck has a good hold and so the piece has no chance of moving from the chuck.



6.

6. I then completed the recess for the expanding chuck jaws. Once I was happy with the depth and shape I sanded the bottom of the bowl whilst it was on the lathe as once I have completed the inside it would be difficult for me to sand the

bottom using the lathe and doing it now will save time as opposed to doing it by hand later.



7.

7. I then turned the bowl around to start working on the inside, when mounting using the expanding chuck jaws, I like to put a small piece of polyurethane plastic, similar to what small ziplock bags are made from, between the recess and the chuck. I do this because previously the chuck has left marks in the wood when expanded and this helps prevent this, although not totally necessary as the Zebrano wood was a fairly hard wood. If you are doing this you should cut the plastic down as much as possible so it does not interfere with the turning when you are working on the outside of the bowl. Using this technique does not decrease the safety as the taper still holds on to the bowl and the expanding chuck jaws are still able to get a good grip of the wood.



8.

8. The bowl blank was mounted and I could start working on the hollowing. Firstly marking the center of the blank and drilling, using a 10mm drill bit to the required depth. This gave me a depth to hollow to in the bowl. I established this depth by taking the thickness of the blank and subtracting the depth of my recess for the chuck jaws and then adding a few mm as a safety margin. This is much easier to do now than try and gauge once the bowl is hollowed, it also means I do not have to take the bowl off the lathe mid hollowing to see how deep I need to go.

9. Once I had my depth set, I cut towards the edge of the bowl, this was so I knew how thick a wall I wanted to have, as sometimes I make the wall too thin and feel the bowl is made much weaker. I did not keep the wall this thick however I waited until I had got a decent amount of the bowl hollowed before going back to the wall thickness, leaving the bowl wall thick also allows me to add the overhang/undercut I mentioned, I need to take off more material around the inner middle section of the bowl to create this overhang effect.



9.



10.

10. I started the hollowing, using a bowl gouge and worked inside out, using the depth hole as a guide to start and the wall thickness cut as a guide of where to stop. As I got further down I started to go deeper in the center of the bowl and take less material off around the edge, as I wanted the bowl to have a concave bottom.



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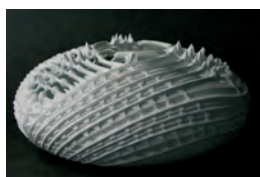
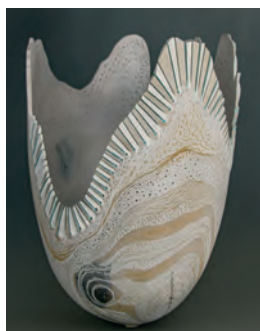
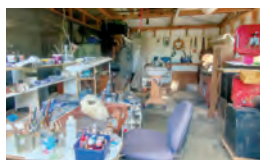
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11.

11. Once I reached the bottom of the depth hole, I started to focus on the inner shape of the bowl. Working around the edge and focusing on making a consistent concave bottom. Once happy with this section I could revisit the bowl wall and making the overhang/undercut effect.



12.

12. Happy with the inner bowl shape I moved to the outer wall, taking more material off the middle section and adding a curved lip around the inner and the outer edge of the bowl, this will help exaggerate the "overhang/undercut" effect.



13.

13. Once I was happy with the shape of the bowl, I moved on to sanding, starting with 80 grit and slowly making my way up to 400 grit, using 100, 120, 240 and 320 and finally 400.



14.

14. Happy with the sanding of the bowl, to the point where it gained a shine. I applied Danish Oil, using a clean safety cloth and applied 2-3 coats with the lathe running slowly, making sure not to touch the wet finish with my hands.



15.

15. The oiled bowl on the lathe, the grain looks very vibrant, the oil had not yet had time to dry and soak into the wood, once it had I applied another coat of Danish Oil.



16.

16. The finished bowl, I think the grain looks really good and the natural colours contrast well.

If I were to do this again I may use a different finish as I think the colours could have been more vibrant with something else.

Tutor Assessment Training



This is a pic of Liz Pearson, Mike Wrottesley, and Bob Marshall, all of whom passed their tutor assessments recently.



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Another Old Friend Passes Away, Arnold Davis

Colin Smith, former Chairman of Cambridge Woodturners

A good friend, fellow woodturner and good man Arnold Davis passed away in late May. I had known him from the early 2000's. We struck up a friendship after one evening chatting about how we got into woodturning. Both of us had learnt at school, and we regaled each other with stories from those days, the equipment that we used, the teachers, and



what we made from the limited wood that schools had in those days. Arnold had a lot of old teak bench tops from a college he went to.

Readers, most of you, will not know him, but in the Hertfordshire area, especially East Herts Woodturners and Cambridge Woodturners. He will be remembered as a cheerful, knowledgeable and outgoing woodturner. His skills were of the best, as was his readiness to impart those skills, they were second to none. His bowl turning and spindle turning were of the highest quality.

Arnold's workshop was a treasure trove of equipment and tools. Three lathes and chucks for every job. Gouges, scrapers, and drills etc. All neatly placed in their own place in drawers. The biggest lathe, a Vicmarc 175 was his pride and joy. I used it only once to turn a big 1 metre diameter disc of Jarra. Arnold laughing most of the time at the absurd stance I had and the fact that from his end of the lathe all he could see was my hard hat. I think we chatted over many cups of tea for hours after, I'm going to miss those times.

Arnold gained a second place with one of his rocking chairs at the International Woodturning Show at Alexander Palace in 2005. It was one of the finest pieces of work I have ever seen. The upholstery was superb, Arnold having gone to a professional upholsterer to learn how to do 'A proper job' as he put it. When he gained the second place his smile reached from ear to ear. He made everything from Honey Dippers to stunning American Style Rocking Chairs. We went to many a show over the years, usually with his old work mate Dave, one of us driving, and usually starting out early in the morning. The Daventry and Kempton Park shows were an annual trip. Other shows were visited, but only those two were a must. The AWGB Seminars were visited only occasionally, the last time was in 2015, the last Loughborough Show. By this time he had trouble walking

and I remember having to drive him about the Campas as the demonstrations and food hall were too far apart for him to walk. Two hip replacement operations were to follow, but when the Seminar moved to the Yarnfield Centre the travelling was too much for him to sit in a car for that length of time.

We spent hours, and quite a bit of money, visiting Nigel Fleckney at English Hardwoods near Kettering, talking sorting wood and drinking tea. The times we had with Nigel were priceless. Needless to say we spent quite a lot of time with him. Arnold would get the best timber for whatever project he was doing at the time. The rocking chairs were made from the finest wood Nigel had, and there was always a story behind each piece of timber. I always came back with my estate car laden to capacity.

I became AWGB Southeast Rep in 2016, Arnold said to me 'If you need any help I will always be available, just give me the nod' I remember one show we did at Hatfield House in early May 2017, a big 4 day event 40,000 people expected. I started setting up the AWGB stand when I realised I had left the Workmate at home, Arnold drove back to my house to get it. That's the sort of chap he was, nothing was too much trouble. We were able to set up the lathe for demonstrations. We did many demos and shows, he was always there to help.

In 2018 Arnold said he was not going to join the Woodturning clubs again as he did not want to travel at night. I said 'I will take you, after all you have helped me in the past, now its my turn to help you'. So for the next 18 months I drove him to every meeting of the East Herts Woodturner he wanted to go to. Covid put paid to all that, but we kept in touch, by phone, telling each other what we were doing. When I moved to Shropshire in 2021 he looked after my tools and other boxes of exotic woods until our move was completed and my new workshop ready. I would phone him from time to time, and whenever I was in Stevenage I would see him, and we would talk about woodturning and grandchildren.

REST IN PEACE ARNOLD. I am going to miss you, a lot.



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The 18th International Woodturning Seminar will take place at
Yarnfield Park Training & Conference Centre

Stone Staffordshire ST15 0NL

from 4-6 October 2024

The event will run from Friday lunchtime to Sunday afternoon.



We have 10 of the best International Turners from around the world showing their skills and passing on their experiences and knowledge, freely and with passion.



Rolly Munro
New Zealand



Jason Breach
UK



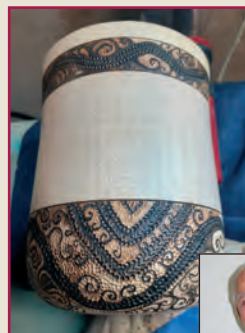
Jan Hoven
Holland



Kade Bolger
Canada



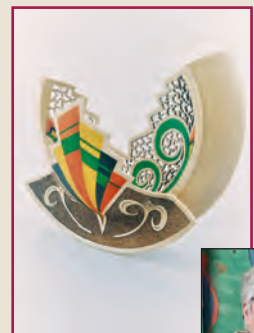
David O'Neill
Ireland



Neil Joynt
New Zealand



Yann Marot
France



Margaret Garrard
UK



Mick Hanbury
UK



The Seminar aims to offer something for turners at all levels from beginner to expert. The programme is guaranteed to inspire, educate and entertain!

Throughout we have trade stands, a raffle and of course the instant gallery where we encourage everyone to bring up to 3 pieces of their best work to display.

Make this a date in your diary, you won't regret it!



Simon Hope
UK

The seminar is open to AWGB members and non-members alike.

You can book on the website at **awgbwoodturningseminar.co.uk**

Keep an eye on the website & Facebook for more information.

Booking enquiries: Jeff Belcher 07798 746296 seminar@awgb.co.uk

You may pay a 50% deposit and the balance 4 weeks before the Seminar or you can pay in full.

All bookings are guaranteed and will be refunded in full if the event doesn't go ahead

We hope you can come along to see us!



www.awgbwoodturningseminar.co.uk

AWGB International Seminar 4th to 6th October 2024

Booking Form

The accommodation comprises en-suite double and twin rooms, and there are a number of accessible rooms. We are pleased to offer a range of attendance options. Please select the quantity required. If you have any particular needs or requests please note them below. (All costs include VAT)

Package	Description	Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
A	Full Weekend incl Accommodation and Meals	£490.00		
AT	Full Weekend incl Accommodation and Meals with Twin room for Two People	£900.00		
AD	Full Weekend incl Accommodation and Meals with Double room for Two People	£900.00		
B	Full Weekend incl Lunches, No Accommodation or Evening Meals	£355.00		
C	Friday incl Lunch, No Evening Meal	£105.00		
D	Saturday incl Lunch, No Evening Meal	£155.00		
E	Sunday incl Lunch	£115.00		
F	Saturday incl Lunch & Evening Meal	£170.00		
G	Full weekend for second person - shared room accommodation & meals only - no access to demonstrations.	£235.00		
Total Cost				

Name (as you would like it on your badge)	
Address (inc Postcode)	
Email address	
Tel Number	
Membership Number (if applicable)	
Please advise any particular requirements (diet, access etc)	

Data Protection: The information you provide on this form will be used solely for dealing with you as a member of the AWGB; to inform you of AWGB news and to administer your attendance at AWGB events. By signing this form you are giving consent for the AWGB to use your data as described in our privacy policy which can be found at www.awgb.co.uk/privacy-policy. Your data will be used and stored in accordance with this policy.

Payment:

50% deposit on booking after 31 March 2024, remainder due 4 weeks prior to the seminar.

NB If you are unable to attend your deposit may be refunded at the discretion of the AWGB.

I have paid by cheque/bank transfer/international bank transfer (delete as appropriate). We are unable to take card payments by telephone. Card payments can be made on the website or by sending a payment through PayPal to awgbtrading@awgb.co.uk

Signed:

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Bank transfer to sort code 09-01-28, Account number 41132390 (use family name/2024 as reference) or

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Please send this form (with cheque if appropriate) to: Jeff Belcher Oak House, Hanley Castle, Worcester WR8 0BJ

Tel: 07798 746296 • Email: seminar@awgb.co.uk

Band saw blades

Robert Postlethwaite

We all have a band saw to cut our wood to size, they come in all sizes and blades vary in length and the number of teeth per inch, most blades these days are made of carbon steel with hardened teeth and do the job very well. Band saws need to be adjusted for them to cut at their best and over time blades become blunt, some woods make this happen as they contain silica and we sometimes hit a nail or metal hidden in a piece of wood. So what do you do with a blunt blade; use it until it snaps or just bin it? Another option is to sharpen it, I am sure that if anybody who is a saw doctor will know of a better method or have a grinder to do this but my method works. Most blades have hardened teeth so a file as used on a say a tenon saw will not work , you could use a diamond file but that is very slow, I have tried, I now use a small grinding disc in a dremal type tool. [see picture]



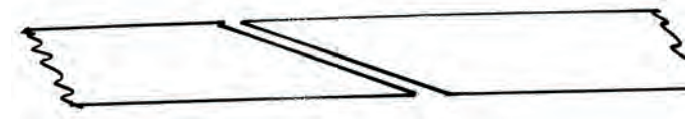
I do this free hand by just taking a touch off each tooth at the root, the grinding disc just skims the tooth and it only takes about half an hour to do a 90 inch blade depending on the number of teeth. Take care with eye protection and clothing as the sparks are hot and can burn a jumper. You can only do this once or twice as the blades set is being ground away a bit each time and it not possible to reset the blade teeth.

What about the blade that snaps only having been used a few times and is still sharp, or when you have been careless, you can rejoin them and you can also buy long lengths of blade and make up your own blades. I know that bought blades are welded and you can buy welders for this but we are woodworkers not machinists and the kit is expensive.

To join a blades you need a jig to hold the blade straight [see picture]. The jig I use is just a piece of steel tube, an old table



leg, a hole is drilled where the join is to be so the heat does not go into the jig but into the blade, to hold the blade down use a few bolts and washer and use a metre rule to check the blade is straight. Grind a taper on the 2 broken ends so they lie flat and put the blades in the jig and silver solder the join. [see picture]



Bevel blades for silver soldering

There are lots of videos on the internet on how to silver solder, it is not difficult just make sure the join is clean and well fluxed you will need a small gas torch, some flux and a small bit of silver solder. After soldering use a file to smooth off the join and you have a blade you can use again.

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Regional Representative for the Midlands Region

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Anyone interested in the positions or just
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further details.

Contact Bryan Milham (Secretary)
at secretary@awgb.co.uk
or telephone 07876 321 293

The new kid on the block. (Or is it)

Terry Bray

I had the pleasure of meeting Rob Wilson of Dalmann UK recently when I visited their premises in Upper Lambourn, Berkshire to collect the timber for the AWGB seminar. Dalmann UK have recently become a corporate member of the AWGB and are supporting us by donating the timber for the demonstrators at the Seminar this year at Yarnfield Park in October.



You may well know that Stiles and Bates closed down back in March of this year and a lot of people have asked is there anyone taking over their business. What you may not have known is that Dalmann UK supplied most if not all of the quality timber to Stiles and Bates for their retail trade.



Rob started Dalmann UK back in 2014 working on his own and supplying wood to the wholesale trade at that time. He sourced the timber from Mozambique where his friend for over 50 years managed timber in a sustainable way and Rob was so impressed he took a gamble and ordered a container load for starters. Rob's friend (Dave) of Stiles and Bates gave him a break and ordered his first big order, it soon enabled Dalmann UK to move into a barn and subsequently as the business grew into a bigger warehouse.



Rob has a team of three including himself, Flanagan Brown and Phoebe Eccles joined the team as it expanded (unfortunately I didn't get a picture of Flanagan as he was away in Mozambique sourcing timber) but you will see Rob and Phoebe posed for me on the day of my interview with them.



Rob has taken the bull by the horns as it were and has geared up his tooling and has decided to supply to the woodturning community with the same high quality timber that they supply to the trade. Rob has continued to upgrade his machinery and has a huge kiln for drying timber to ensure it goes out to the customer in tip top condition. I was very impressed with the setup when I visited.





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Dalmann UK not only have supplies for the woodturner, if you also dabble in flat work then there are some truly impressive boards for river tables and bespoke furniture among many other uses I am sure.

Dalmann UK supply by mail order from their website to include all native woods as well as exotics at very reasonable prices. Just go to dalmannuk.com and check it out for yourself or if you live in the South then why not take a visit, you would be very welcome.



Dalmann UK are also providing a venue for woodturning demonstrations from well know woodturners in fact by the time you read this, International acclaimed Stuart Mortimer will have done the first demonstration at Dalmann's and they intend to put on many more events in the future. One date for your diary is the 19th October, Rob is putting on a "Legends Day" where two turners, one of whom will be Dave from Stiles and Bates will be demonstrating their skills and knowledge.



You will be able to discuss all things wood from sustainability to forestry management as Flanagan will be on hand to answer any questions you may have and with the mass of information he has acquired over many years I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

I would like to thank Rob for his support of the AWGB and his enthusiasm to continue supplying not just the woodturners but also the trade with the timber to enable us to be creative in our own world.





Member Training Workshops

Colwin Way

Crow Valley Woodturners, The Highway, Croesyceiliog, Wales

27th September 2024

Intermediate/Advanced
German Nut Cracker

Mick Hanbury

Turners Retreat

1st October 2024

Intermediate/Advanced
Bowl & colour

Gary Rance

Wendover, Buckinghamshire

11th October 2024

Beginner/Intermediate
Humming Top

Simon Hope

Great Bromley, Essex

16th October 2024

Intermediate/Advanced
Turning spheres

Chris Parker

Leyland, Lancashire

6th November 2024

Beginner/Intermediate
Texture and colour

These workshops are subject to restrictions at the time and unfortunately may need to be cancelled at short notice. Preference will be given to those that have been allocated places previously that were cancelled. If you have any questions, please contact our Training Officer - email at training@awgb.co.uk.

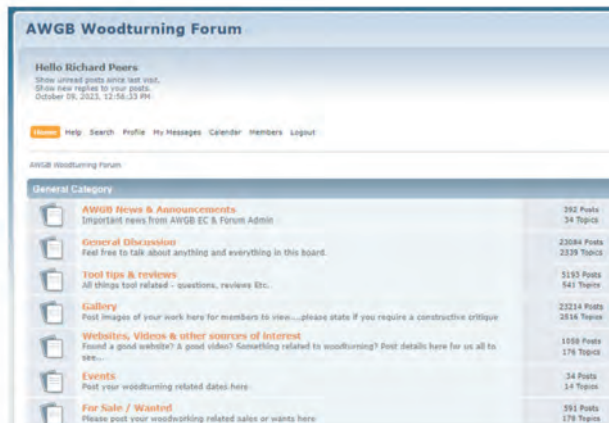
If a workshop is oversubscribed, there will be a ballot for places.

To apply - visit the AWGB website: www.awgb.co.uk and download an application form and send to the coordinator shown on the form. Or complete a 'Training Workshop Application' web form. Only fully completed application forms will be considered.

AWGB On-Line Forum

Did you know that there is an on-line forum on the AWGB web site? This useful feature allows you to post messages that can be read by other members who can then reply – a bit like Facebook groups, but without the spam, vitriol and security risks. As well as showing off your work, you can ask questions about anything to do with the craft, from wood to tools to how to source a particular item. There is even a section for buying and selling tools or wood.

The forum can be found from the AWGB home page – just select Resources, then Forum – or click this link: <https://www.awgb.co.uk/awgbforum/>.



Conquer the Skew

Richard Peers

Many turners have difficulty with the skew chisel, and cast it aside to a dusty corner of the workshop, never to be used again. This is a shame, as when mastered, it is an incredibly versatile tool that also leaves a finish-ready surface on your work.

Most turners are recommended to get wide skews, say 1 inch across. However, it is very easy to get a catch with such tools when making a planing cut: to avoid this, it is important to cut with the lower third of the edge. This ensures the tool has support from the toolrest directly under (or close to) the point where it contacts the wood, thus ensuring there is no or low twisting force, which is what causes the catch.

When I first started turning, I was given a miniature turning set that included a skew chisel. This is about 6mm across, and I never seemed to get any catches with it. Thinking about it, that 6mm is less than the lower third of the 1 inch skew; if it is safe to turn with that, then it is super-safe to use the 6mm skew. Even if the upper part of the edge hits the wood, the twisting force is the same as when you cut 6mm up on the 1 inch skew, and we know that our grip is enough to hold the tool in place.



I took this further recently, and bought some lengths of 6mm high speed steel from Amazon that I made up into skew chisels. These are much longer than my miniature tool, which makes them easier to sharpen, and lets me cut a dovetail recess in a bowl blank even while the tailstock is in place, which I sometimes do with thinner pieces where I don't want to drill a hole for the worm screw. If you're interested in learning to use the skew, I suggest you do the same: it cost me about £13 for a pack of 5 steel lengths, so with a bit of grinding to shape, some brass tube for a ferrule and some wood for a handle, you can have a 6mm skew chisel for about £5 a tool. Even better, you can grind them to the angle and shape you prefer!

Note from the editor

I love to receive all your ramblings and tales, stories and tips, jokes and yarns. Are you working on a project you can write about - how you are doing it? Don't forget to include photographs, maybe some illustrations and any supporting materials if applicable.

This is **your** newsletter, I need your contributions please.

We pay for your "How to" and "turning tips" articles.

Send to: editor@awgb.co.uk

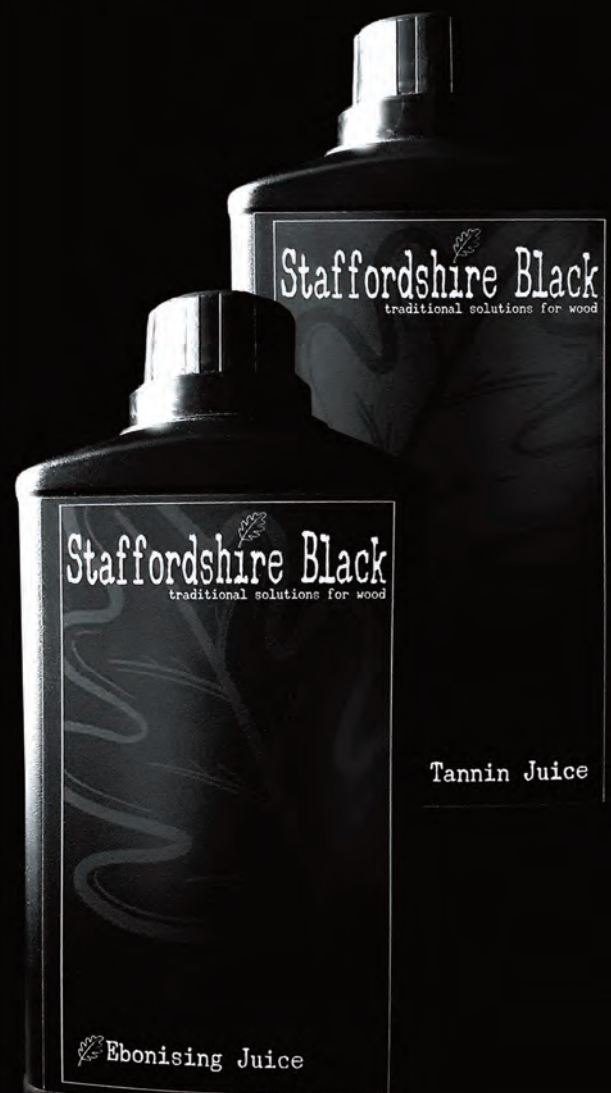
or my address is on page 3.

sheila

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* When we say "dummies" we don't necessarily mean those nightmarish, dead-eyed, floppy-jawed creations from the '70s that gang on about gottles o'geer all the time or the slobbery silicone germ farms that get jammed in to the faces of tiny screaming humans...

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Young Turners Training Programme

Date	Topic/Technique		Venue
November 2nd 2024	Workshop Health & Safety, Various Techniques & Projects	Les Thorne	The Woodturning Shop Four Marks, Alton GU34 5AJ

Applications are invited for places by 12-21 year old Young Turners on
'Young Turners Training days'

For application forms and information visit... www.awgb.co.uk

Or contact... Ron Caddy - 07903 313065 e-mail youthtraining@awgb.co.uk

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Filming for ITV programme

Steven Ricketts

ITV came to my workshop and following an interview and filming my story is going to be showing in September, the date is to be confirmed.

My name, is Steven Ricketts, I'm a woodturner and AWGB Approved Tutor based in Llanelli, South Wales. I'm also a member of Llanelli Woodturning Club - nothing strange so far!

However, in 2013 I became blind! The hows and whys are immaterial but, currently, I am registered blind with 20% vision supported by my wife Tracey and guide dog Crompton.



I joined Llanelli Woodturning Club (LWTC) in 2017 never having turned a piece of wood in my life - it was a challenge (or more precisely, an adventure). You would think that a blind or partially sighted person would be a danger not only

to himself but others. That's true!! But there are ways to overcome every adversity.

LWTC were forward thinking - it became a challenge and opportunity for them also. The Club is open to all - membership is open to able-bodied as well as those with limitations. They recognised that I had problems, but despite that, "normal" turning was a target for both them and me.

So how did I manage to reach the dizzy heights of assessment by the AWGB as an Approved Tutor?

Well, in the beginning, I didn't turn anything! LWTC holds monthly Members' competitions - and I entered a piece. It was rough, with a shape approximate to that required for the competition - but created using an angle grinder! Sacrilege! Rejected? Not at all!! My efforts were recognised, and I was praised for "having a go" - I was hooked.

From there, the path to using a woodturning lathe safely was (literally) in my hands and that of the Club tutors. I had managed to rebuild my life from the time I became blind by adapting - this was no different. They say that when one of your five senses diminishes - or is removed - the others step up to compensate. The question was how I could adapt my remaining four (and a bit) senses to compensate-whilest operating a lathe safely at over 1,000 rpm.

There were a number of obstacles. Firstly, my sight was and is extremely limited both in clarity and depth perception. Secondly I didn't have a lathe of my own, far less having used one when I was sighted. And finally, I had no idea how to turn wood!

All three obstacles needed to be taken as a single problem. I had never used a lathe, or seen one (joke!!), I worked with the Club tutors to see (sense?) the lathe and what it and I could do. Their teaching methodology had to change - after all woodturning is perceived as a primarily visual hobby - you need to see what you are doing. With patience, cajoling, physical direction (and more patience!) I was moulded into the semblance of a safe woodturner. This took long practice by me, and the never failing support of my tutors - for which I am eternally grateful. A lathe was offered so that I could turn in my own workshop and, having proved to myself that it was a hobby worth pursuing, I bought my own lathe and other equipment.

So how do I actually turn wood? I can see a little bit - my face is sometimes only a few inches from the wood (don't worry, I use a good visor!). I feel the wood and hear the tools - between all three I manage to create turned wood. We developed ways for me to turn that, on the face of it, shouldn't work - but they do. Sounds easy - but it's not! With patience, a few mishaps on the way, the support of my tutors and the Club, it all seemed to fall into place.

So where am I at now? As previously mentioned I attained the AWGB's Approved Tutor qualification in May 2024. At first, I didn't think it was possible. I had the support of the Club, but would the AWGB countenance a blind/visually impaired turner being assessed as a Tutor? I spoke with the AWGB, followed by an in-depth telephone conversation before they agreed to me being assessed in my own workshop. I put the spadework in, did the on-line course, and all of my homework. Honed my skills (and my tools!) then the assessment.

The challenge has not finished - I've only proved that I have competence - there's still much to learn.

To the best of our knowledge Steven is the only blind woodturner in Wales that has passed his Tutor Assessment.

These are some photographs from the days filming for ITV News.



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