

YOUR

TURN

Hampshire Woodturners Association Newsletter. Autumn issue, September 2014

14th November 1989

Fellow Woodturners,

This first newsletter is by way of a report on the outcome of the inaugural meeting of the Hampshire Chapter of AWGB and notification of the forthcoming programme.

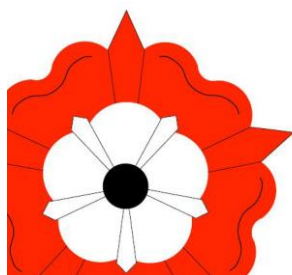
The inaugural meeting held at Brian Hannam's house on the evening of 10th October was well attended indicating a strong and healthy interest in establishing a Hampshire Chapter of the AWGB. However, one of the first decisions made was to drop the 'chapter' and call the newly formed association the "Hampshire Woodturners Association".

I look forward to an interesting and informative series of meetings.

Best regards,

Susan Dixon
Secretary

*With Reminiscences from 4 "originals" -
Brian Hannam, Ron Caddy,
Roy Nailor, Chris Davey*



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CONTENTS

- **Editorial**
- **Reports of HWA Meetings**
 - 2 June** – Peter Moncrief-Jury
 - 7 July** – Ron Caddy
 - 4 August** – Robert Bishop
- **13 July Kilham Lane Report**
- **Coming Events**
 - 1 September** – HWA Challenge and John Bennett “knee deep in shavings”
 - 6 October** – 25th Anniversary Meeting with Gary Rance
 - 3 November** – Les Thorne
 - 1 December** – Christmas Social
 - 30 August - Community Woodfair**, Zionshill Copse
- **Early days at HWA**
- **Memories** – Brian Hannam, Ron Caddy, Roy Nailor, Chris Davey
- **Novices in HWA** Dave Gibbard and Alan Baker
- **Membership** – Denis Hilditch
- **Minstead Training Trust** – Alan Sturgess
- **Signing off**

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EDITORIAL:

For this special issue I'm handing the editorial soap box to our Chairman, Lynda:-

“Welcome to this special edition of Your Turn, our brilliant club magazine, as we celebrate 25 years and say a special thank you to all those who began the club. Some of them still come to-day and give us their support and advice.

I don't think this quote was written for woodturners but it seems quite appropriate for a club that includes professionals and complete beginners.

“Every day you make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever lengthening, ever ascending and ever improving path. You know you will never get to end of the journey (the wood pile is still too high!). But this, so far from being discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb.” Sir Winston Churchill.

However long you have been woodturning there is still more to do, new ideas to put into practice and the large supply of wood just waiting to be created into something of beauty. If you have retired you don't have a day off any more so you have plenty of time to make huge piles of woodshavings and make more mess than ever before.

The aim of the club is to be helpful and encouraging to each other. We try very hard to make this a reality but it needs all of us to contribute to this each club night. Try and speak to one person that you have not spoken to before, they may live near you and would like some help.

Thank you to all those who bring examples of their work to share with us at the gallery. It is very scary the first time but this is a good way to learn to improve. Someone will be inspired by your work and reckon they can do as well.

Thank you to all those who have had responsibility for the club over the last 25 years and helped to make it the special club that it is to-day.

Happy Birthday
Lynda Barkaway

The first newsletter was published shortly after the founding and 6 of the thirty or so on the original members list are still members. Some have contributed reminiscences and I'll let them tell their stories later in this issue.

I wasn't one of the original members but I have been around since the meetings in the Log Cabin /scout hut in Winchester. I have made my contribution to this nostalgia trip with my recollections of my novice days under Syd Jenman.

Dave Gibbard, Editor

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

2 June – Peter Montcrief-Jury. Oriental design

Peter is a professional woodturner based in Wiltshire. He first learned to turn many years ago at school but didn't take it up again until eight years ago and "fell in love with it all over again". After redundancy in 2008 it became his full time source of income.



Peter subscribes to the Japanese philosophy of incorporating natural features in his work. (*Examples pictured left*) His sources of wood are what would often be rejected as containing too many "defects" like knots and splits.

He endeavours to incorporate these where it is safe to do so and sometimes uses fillers of powdered metal to enhance them.

For his demo he used a piece of yew with irregular surface and splits. Though he will have an idea of what sort of form might emerge, he is always ready to change his mind as the work progresses and features of the wood emerge. Sometimes he thinks the result does not work visually once it is off the lathe and he tries to retain options to enable it to be remounted for re-working.

Starting between centres he turned a spigot with a skew used as a scraper to get the security of chuck mounting. Even then the tailstock was used as a steady. He often uses a skew this way though concedes that it needs a lot of sharpening. Once in the chuck he shaped the outside with a gouge, aiming for a smooth simple outline albeit with irregular inclusions.

On such wood, it is not possible to rub the bevel of the gouge as it would follow the irregularities. The tool has to be held firmly to the desired outline which can be seen at the edge of the spinning form. He uses shear scraping with the wings of the long ground gouge to minimise sanding. When hollowing he would start with a gouge and proceed with a hooked tool or similar. He didn't demonstrate this because of the time involved and the fact that there's little for the spectator to see. He did confess that he does use other ways of hollowing which are quicker than getting all the shavings out of a tiny hole. These involve carefully removing a collar to give a large access hole and gluing it back afterwards. This can also be done from the base.



He went on to fill the split with brass. To minimise the amount of brass dust required, he starts with wood dust then thin cyanoacrylate glue before rubbing in the brass dust and more glue.

Sinkage occurs and several applications are needed before sanding and buffing. Peter finds cyanoacrylate works better than epoxy as a binder for the dust. He buys metal dust on line and finds that brass and aluminium work best depending on the colour of the wood.

Hopefully he will have inspired some interesting pieces for future galleries. Speaking of which, he reviewed our members' gallery after his demo.

I'd like to say how impressed I am with the willingness of so many novices to put their work on the table and the high standard many of them are achieving. It bodes well for the future quality of work in the club and does Harry great credit that he has inspired such enthusiasm. Photos of all the gallery items are on the website.

Dave Gibbard

You might like to visit Peter's website where you will find a gallery of his work: www.bodrighywood.co.uk

7 July - Ron Caddy. Turning Pens

Sometimes I think we don't appreciate the talent in our midst. Some of our best evenings are when our own members entertain us and for me this was a good example. I confess I have never made a pen, I don't fancy the repetition nor the investment in jigs etc that is necessary to do the job efficiently, but I have to say that turned pens can be beautiful and there is obviously a large demand. Ron is very knowledgeable on the subject and the activity is a significant part of his business, Acorn Crafts at Weyhill Fairground.

Though the UK market seems very impressive, it is dwarfed by the demand in USA and it was from there that the first pen kits were introduced into the UK by Dale Nish in 1990.

Ron told the story of how George Bush wanted a presidential gift that was made in America but couldn't find anything – everything was made in China! Dick Cheney was given the task and came up with hand-made pens incorporating an inlaid presidential seal. I'm not sure which lucky turner got the job but it was a great boost to the market for pens. (I wonder where the pen mechanisms were made though.)

When the British Company Planet introduced a flexible adjustable mandrel it avoided the need for a lot of different sized ones. This has been copied by Axminster and Sorby but Ron thinks the Planet version remains the best.

So on with the show. Pen kits are supplied with the mechanism fitting inside metal tubes. The tubes are inserted and glued into pen blanks and assembled onto a jig for turning between centres. The blanks can be made of any material which can be turned; wood, acrylic, bone... The procedure is the same though tool technique and finishing may vary. What makes a pen really saleable is an attractive material and a high standard of finish.



Examples of materials available for pen making, left, and finished pens, below.

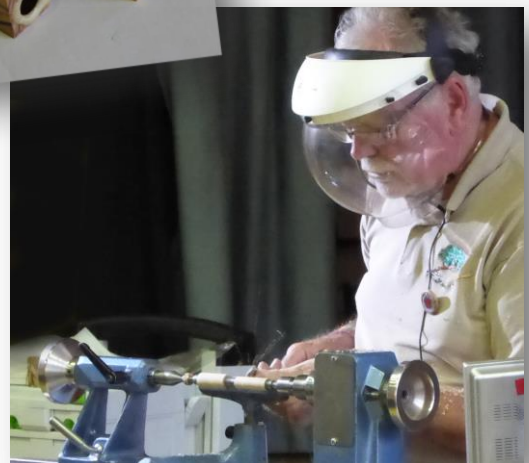


Ron was using olive wood for his first demo. This is one of his favourites, especially Bethlehem olive. Alarmed by the loss of olive trees which take hundreds of years to grow, the Israeli government now prohibits felling. But pruning is allowed though this has to be done by hand to minimise damage. And trees do die, so there is a supply albeit at a price. Still, you don't need much wood for a pen.

The tube must fit snugly into the drilled blank. Ron gently abrades the tube surface and uses polyurethane glue which works better than superglue. Another pen expert, Ian Woodford, asked whether Ron uses plugs to keep excess glue from the inside of the tubes. Ron acknowledged that some do, using potato plugs, but he is just careful. For a 2 part pen, the blank is parted in 2. To maintain a matching grain, the inside of the inserts is marked with a felt pen at the mating ends.



Divided blank with tubes glued in, left and Ron turning the pen assembled on mandrel, below



Turning between centres is straightforward with a gouge and a skew. Special sets of small tools are available of course but standard ones will do the job.

To avoid sanding marks, Ron sands along the axis without the lathe running, rotating slowly by hand. Ron favours Renaissance wax as a finish. It is synthetic wax which repels the skin oils so the finish is very durable. It can be used on almost any material. The British museum even uses it to protect stone and marble exhibits. Ron no longer uses cloth for buffing as it can snatch and remove fingers. Paper is preferred. Safety cloth is strong but tears when snagged though toilet or kitchen roll works for those on a tighter budget.

Ron Caddy, continued...

Once removed from the mandrel, the pen and mechanism parts are assembled and pressed together.



Pen parts being assembled on Miles Craft press jig.

Finished pen, below



After the break Ron gave a critique on some of the items that caught his eye on the gallery table. You can see all the pictures on the website.

For his second demo Ron made a pen from acrylic. The method is similar though for finishing, he used micromesh, wet, first with the lathe rotating then with it stopped with an axial movement of the mesh to remove any sanding rings. Having wiped off the slurry, the pen was burnished with Profile 300 and 500 cutting compound.

If you are wondering about those bespoke inlaid designs like the corporate pen with a penguin logo, the blanks are made to order by Ken Nelson. I Googled Ken Nelson inlaid acrylic and found a comprehensive article in downloadable pdf format.

If this has whetted your appetite, you might like to talk to Ron about all those jigs and materials and even sign up for a course. www.thepenmakers.co.uk

4 August - Robert Bishop, Hollow Forms

Robert is a professional woodturner from the High Wycombe area specialising in hollow forms whose favourite woods are monkey puzzle, yew and burrs of any type. He looks for interesting features in the wood which at one time would have been called defects by furniture makers. He prefers to call it "character" and can be burrs, bark inclusions, branches and spalting.



An example of Robert's work; this is from monkey puzzle.

He wondered if we knew the origin of the word "spalt". As nobody seemed to he explained that when furniture makers of old found such fungal pattern they considered the wood "spoilt". It's a good story anyway.

Robert's method is to rough turn wet wood outside then hollow the inside to a uniform wall thickness of about 15 mm then to allow it to dry slowly before re-mounting on the lathe to finish turning. He will have turned a tenon (spigot) at the base for re-mounting. The drying process has to be slowed down or the wood will split. Robert uses multi-layer paper sacks (from Ecosack), turning the sack inside out every so often to allow the wet inside layer to dry. This can take months so you need a lot of space to store the work in progress. The wood will distort during drying so the wall thickness has to be large enough to allow re-turning but small enough to allow it to dry without splitting.

Clearly this process is too long for a one night demo so he just showed the rough turning process using a log of wet yew which he had already mounted on a faceplate. Those in the front row will have shared the buzz you get as the shavings come streaming off when turning wet wood with grain parallel to the axis. Best not to think about having to clear up the mess later.



For this initial shaping of the outside, Robert used a roughing gouge and a bowl gouge with a long grind.

Hollowing starts by drilling a deep hole with a sawtooth bit mounted in a Jacob's chuck in the tailstock. Small items can be hollowed with a bowl gouge and scraper but for deep hollowing a specialist hollowing tool is required.

Continued...

Robert Bishop

continued...

Some are long tools with swan necks and scraping tips but the best have a cutting tip with an adjustable shield to control the depth of cut.



It helps to have a tool rest with a vertical peg against which to lever the tool (*see picture above*).

These tools are not cheap. Robert had an eye watering collection ranging from medium to enormous. I believe they were Hamlet Big Brother. He warned against tools with numerous adjustable links at the tip. They can create excessive twisting leverage and are prone to coming loose. (*I agree, but you don't have to fit the links. I wouldn't reject the Munro tool for example just because it comes with a number of links - ed.*)

The cavity gets filled with shavings that need to be cleared out regularly. Robert had adapted a large plastic spoon with the sides cut off for this purpose.

Having been asked so often whether wooden vases can be filled with water for flowers, Robert came up with a neat answer. He offers a waterproof insert made from a plastic loo brush container.

There was just time for a look at the members' gallery. Robert was brave enough to offer some criticism and advice about shapes and finishing. I hope people were not upset by this. I thought it was helpful. The gallery items can be seen on the website.

Dave Gibbard

13 July – Kilham Lane

Sunday 13th July saw Pierre Baumann and Chris West attending the annual Kilham Lane Residents Association Summer Fete in Winchester.

This was the first Kilham Lane fete without one of the originators, Stephen Hewitt, an HWA member who passed away earlier this year. Around 80 people attended and in the fine weather enjoyed the bouncy castle and children's races. Pierre came fourth in the egg and spoon race.

A wonderful BBQ was critiqued by Chris to ensure that the hot dogs, burgers and desserts were up to the standard of previous years!

Pierre and Chris were kept busy all day turning simple items whilst being observed by the families.

Chris West



Picture of HWA stand at Kilham Lane, courtesy of Simon Newman

Another "outreach" event at Sholing Valley scheduled for 10 May was cancelled.

COMING EVENTS

1 September – HWA Challenge

Make something incorporating 1 or more spheres. Cash prizes for members' 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices. Plus a talk on wood technology by **John Bennett** "knee deep in shavings".

6 October – 25th Anniversary Meeting

Very accomplished turner, regular visitor to the Club and jolly nice fellow, **Gary Rance** will be demonstrating for us.

Commemorative mugs for members too. Don't miss it.

3 November – The **Les Thorne** Show.

1 December – **Christmas Social plus special event.**

Outreach Events

30 August - Community Woodfair, Zionshill Copse, Chandlers Ford SO53 4SJ.

A regular Test Valley Council all day event. Free entry and something for all the family. Download a leaflet from www.testvalley.gov.uk

Early days at HWA



An evening in the log cabin with the very colourful Jan Sanders

Les Revell and Derek Carter discuss the finer points of John Bovis's bowl in the senior competition.



The irrepressible Monty tries his hand at pole lathe turning at the Red Cross hall. I've forgotten the name of the visiting turner in the picture. Can anyone help me there?

Also at the Red Cross, Ron Caddy gives Ian Woodford the benefit of his opinion as Ian scores an entry for the Novice task.



MEMORIES...

*Now for some memories from some of our original members starting with the first chairman,
Brian Hannam*

After 10 years as a hobby woodturner selling my surplus at craft fairs, I had met 2 other woodturners. There were no magazines, very few books- most of them useless, and no knowledge exchange. Today's newcomers will be amazed at the lack of contact and the carbon steel tools which was all we had. I suppose we mostly used native woods which aren't so hard on the tools as many of the tropical woods that we use nowadays.

Then I went to the second AWGB seminar at Loughborough when there was still little in the way of local/county activity. I asked the AWGB management 'who is organising Hampshire woodturners?'. The answer was 'since you ask, you are, matey!!' I'm always up for a challenge, so I did! They gave me a mailing list of their members in and around Hampshire, and I invited all those listed within a reasonable range of Basingstoke to come to my home with a view to starting a group. We were all amazed that there were 14 of us! That kind gent Syd Jenman couldn't make it, but sent me good wishes and enough stamps to cover my initial costs! Two of the 14 worked at Winchester Prison and were able to get the Officer's Mess as our initial meeting venue.

For many years after the formation of the club, our meetings were in Winchester as this was judged to be a central location. Our earliest meetings were upstairs in the Officers Mess at Winchester prison; this was because 2 of our 14 original members worked in the prison. We dragged a Tyme Cub lathe up the stairs for our meetings. I won a bottle of wine in one of our early raffles there, but I was so brain-numbed by the onset of flu that I had forgotten the bottle by the end of the meeting. We often wondered if there were contract cleaners there or if the prisoners were put to work cleaning the room- whichever it was, someone struck lucky the next day.

We were pretty amazed to start out with 14 members, but soon more appeared and we quickly outgrew the prison. Our next venue was a Winchester Scout hut, very appropriately it was 'The Log Cabin'. And there was The Roebuck pub across the road with good beer and good food- not so common back then.

At this time our committee meetings were held in the bar of The Swan in Alton as this was a reasonably central location for most of the committee at that time. Susan Dixon had by far the longest journey as she lived near Newbury, but the deal was that she would drive to Basingstoke and I would take her onwards.

They looked after us in The Swan; if there were sandwiches left over from a function they would offer them to us! Later when the composition of the committee changed, we moved to the Bullington Cross pub.



As well as regular committee meetings, some of the committee went to an AWGB meeting for club officers. It was a very heated meeting as at the time many clubs felt that the AWGB was just taking the money for affiliation and not helping clubs at all. A sample of the meeting...a questioner asked the AWGB publicity officer if he gave out introductory leaflets to enquirers, the reply was 'no, if I did that I wouldn't have any left'... what an attitude!!

The log cabin was a great venue, we had many well known turners come and demonstrate there; Richard Raffan, Ray Key, Reg Sherwin, Melvyn Firmager. In the end Scouting took preference over us and we moved up the road to the Red Cross HQ. Then we moved to a primary school in Kingsworthy- that's just part of Winchester to me. The only problem with that venue was that the seats were appropriate to the venue, and consequently rather too low and too small for most of us. I think it was there that we had the infamous Craft Supplies demonstration of how not to turn a bowl, when the large lump of wood that was under violent attack left the lathe and made its bid for freedom. Luckily no-one was hit by it, but it did serve as a useful reminder of health and safety issues! After that there was a brief period at the Discovery Centre before the meetings moved south to the present location.

*That incident with the flying wood blank impressed a number of us, though the general recollection is that it happened at the log cabin. Here's **Ron Caddy**:*

As a present from my wife I was given a weekend 's woodturning tuition with John & Jan Sanders. I was told that if I was serious about woodturning then I should join the AWGB. I duly contacted the secretary and in those days they would put you in contact with someone nearby. For me this turned out to be Brian Hannam at Basingstoke. I rang him just as he was planning to go out for an evening with a few others to discuss whether to form a woodturning club in the area. Their decision was yes and I joined them in the Officers Mess in Winchester Prison at the next meeting of the HWA

Continued...



Ron Caddy, cont...

One of our founder members was Les Revell. A joke at his funeral was that his motto was 'He who has the most tools wins!' On the occasion I am thinking of he had bought a set of tools for the so-called 'multi coring' or 'nesting' He did not know how to use them though!

It had been arranged for Nick Davidson the owner of Craft Supplies to visit the club, we met in those days in the 'Old Scout Hut' wooden floors and all!. He was asked to demonstrate the 'coring system', Nick didn't turn himself and so brought Jamie Wallwin with him. After introductions and a discussion of the tools it was time for Jamie to demonstrate! I have already mentioned that the hut had a wooden floor, well as the lathe was switched on it started to rock and then started 'dancing' across the floor!! Next it would appear that either Jamie tried to take too big a cut or the large blank was not fixed to the chuck with sufficiently long screws, for this large piece of wood came suddenly away from the lathe and across the room. From memory the rest of the evening was spent with discussion rather than demonstration!! I am sure that was the nearest thing to a serious accident that we have had up to now at HWA. Others may have different ideas.

Thanks Ron. Here's how it all started for Roy Nailor

Being "Good With My Hands", and a "tool-aholic" I've been interested in making things using carpentry and mechanics for as long as I can remember. (My Mum said that at aged 4 I nailed the washing to the fence posts, and bent the nails right over to do a proper job.)

Tool shows in London and Axminster (do you remember the very first Axminster show?) made me aware of woodturning but I'd never been lucky enough to have a go at school. Anyway in 1988 we were camping at Cricket St Thomas and I became fascinated by their "tame" turner, Jon Sanders, who was making souvenir items out of fallen estate timber. He was using a "proper" lathe, but all I had at that time was a contraption based upon an old Black and Decker drill. Back home I set about investigating "proper" lathes and at that time the only real choices were from Coronet or Tyme, and all were priced beyond my budget.

Further research revealed the Peatol lathe which was a self-assembly job from a kit of parts and seemed to fit the bill since it was far cheaper and I could use my own motor, drive pulleys and belt tensioning arrangement. I could also decide upon the bed length, inboard or outboard configuration and other such details.

The basic kit of parts I'd chosen duly arrived, consisting of simple banjo, head and tail stock castings, and various steel bars, some for use as the bed and others welded to form a tool rest. All adjustments had to be made using a spanner, and the revolving centre was a very crude device which had a loose thrust washer and no radial bearing whatsoever. The head stock was equally crude, however the thread was $\frac{3}{4} \times 16$ so standard "posher" accessories could be used. My motor came from a surplus store and looked to be about the right size ($\sim \frac{3}{4}$ HP). I'd hoped that it was an everyday 240V AC single phase motor, but a closer look revealed it to be a shunt wound 200V DC machine requiring different field and armature excitation (here I need to reveal to any readers that don't know me that my profession was an Electrical / Electronics Engineer). This caused me the headache of how the dickens could it be used?

So, not to be daunted, I set about designing and building a motor controller to generate the right voltages and currents. This was no easy task since back then high voltage / high current semiconductors were expensive and hard to come by. Today such a controller could probably be sourced as a single chip or module. Anyway after several false starts and expensive burn outs I finally achieved the desired aim and ended up with a variable speed drive - was this therefore one of the earliest electronically speed controlled lathes?

The motor and controller were mounted on the lathe bed board and hitched up to the lathe by means of my homespun "V" belt, pulleys and belt tensioner. Tension was provided solely by the weight of the motor through a lever arrangement. Thus if there was a problem the belt would slip - and it often did with my amateur attempts to turn.

Next came turning tools and this was about the time when HSS was coming on the scene. Since it was more durable than carbon steel I decided to only buy HSS tools, and purchased about 6 Henry Taylor tools from Axminster.



Roy Nailor continued...

As for timber, the kind burgers at Totton Timber allowed me to rake over their scrap pile and in this way I obtained several lengths of some kind of brownish hardwood from broken pallets and worm eaten rejects. This didn't matter to me since I was only in all probability going to turn it into shavings and sawdust. Thus started my fledgling turning, and with no guidance or tuition made my first batch of rubbishy items, including a goblet which was more like a stunted egg cup. I searched around for some help and heard about a new turning group that was to meet at Winchester Prison. How I heard this I'm not sure, it could have been via the library or (more likely) from the proprietor of a tool shop that used to be in Shirley.

So, along I went to what was the first regular meeting of the HWA in the Officer's Mess at Winchester Prison. (There had been an inaugural meeting before at Brian Hannam's house). This was quite a novelty since to get in one had to pass through security. Two of the members were Prison Officers ("screws") and sometimes I think they were still on shift since they walked around with large bunches of keys hanging from their belts. Once inside the Mess it was quite cosy and there was an array of massive armchairs to sit in. Unfortunately this became our downfall since after a relatively few meetings our burgeoning membership meant that we had to move to larger premises, and we duly moved to the Scout Hut in Winchester - a log cabin that really suited our *modus operandi* since wood shavings on the floor looked entirely at home. Does anyone remember the summer barbecues that we held once a year in the grounds?

Other places that we've occupied over the years before finishing up at the Railway Institute include the Winchester Red Cross Centre, a school (it's name escapes me) and Winchester's Intech Science Centre. As to the members that I remember from the earliest days there's Brian Hannam, Ron Caddy, David Barlow, Les Revel and Susan & Tony Dixon. Susan was our secretary and used to be responsible for the club newsletter before that function was hived off, and I believe that Philip Hall was the first incumbent of that office. No doubt there were others whose names I should remember, but like a lot of other things those memories have headed south over the years, and I'm sorry if I've left you out.

So that's how it all started for me; where have all those years gone, and am I a better turner for belonging for so long? The answer is a resounding YES since I've made a lot of friends and learnt a lot from the HWA, its members and guest speakers. I'm looking forward to the next 25!

And now from Chris Davey:

At a woodwork show in London the AWGB were recruiting members and giving out information on the newly formed Local Woodturning Groups. I joined the Hampshire group at Winchester Prison for their 2nd or 3rd meeting.

At one of their early meetings I brought along some Lace bobbins and have been showing them ever since.

The first time I did a demo with the Treadle lathe we had moved to the Scout Hut (Log Cabin). It was here that the tea committee was formed and I joined Phil Hill and John (now involved with Forest of Bere Woodturners) and have been doing it ever since. When John left Roy took over. It was here that we had a demo by Craft Supplies of a bowl saving device and the large bowl blank being used came off the lathe and joined the front row of members at speed. No one seriously hurt. When we moved to the Red Cross at Weeke we had a demo by a pole lathe turner and I was encouraged to have a go as I was used to keeping my upper body steady and my legs going up and down. Kingsworthy School hall was the next meeting place before we moved to the Intec Centre where we had many happy hours with all the exhibition pieces before our normal meetings began.

It was here that I brought in my box of bobbins made from 155 different woods.

Then onto Eastleigh where we still meet.

The treadle lathe has been used at various shows where Hampshire Woodturners have been demonstrating, these include :- Queen Elizabeth Country Park where the treadle lathe was the only one running until the generator arrived, Broadlands where a young boy showed how to demonstrate without any fear of those watching, Winchester Sports Centre at a Woodwork Show organised by a tool supplier from Shirley in Southampton. Our stand was opposite the Robert Sorby stand and their staff tried in vain to make the treadle work easier by adding springs. But I won a challenge with them to make a bobbin the fastest, his broke as he tried to complete the thin long neck. I was given a miniature skew by them.



Chris Davey, continued...

Over the years I have made a few thousand bobbins not only on the treadle lathe but on a Naerok round bed lathe, Tyme Cub and mostly on a Tyme Little Gem that I obtained from Les Revell one of our founding Members who was a Prison Officer at Winchester. The Novice trophy is named after him.

I still enjoy making them and get great satisfaction when I find one or more of my bobbins on the pillows of lacemakers from around the country. I have never forgiven Adrian for bringing in a rough bit of old mahogany for me to make a bobbin at one of my Demonstrations, It did not last long as it snapped at 6mm long before I tried 1.5mm for the long neck.

Long may the club survive.

NOVICES IN HWA - Dave Gibbard and Alan Baker

It was soon after the founding of HWA that a novice section was set up in 1990 under the tutelage of Syd Jenman. It was very different to what we have now. Syd took it all very seriously and expected his protégées to do the same. You could never have accused Syd of frivolity. The object was to teach everybody to become proficient in all aspects of turning.

A task was set each month and Syd would talk through the method. According to Syd there were just 2 ways of doing anything in woodturning – his way and the wrong way.

The next month he would judge all the work according to defined criteria, similar to those used for the senior and intermediate competitions which also ran every month though with a different topic. Some didn't like the criticism but I actually found it very helpful and challenging. My turning improved rapidly though Syd always found something wrong. I remember the fear of what he would say as he slowly turned my effort over to view the base. Marks were added up for the year and a league table of novices was published and prizes were awarded. Consistency was most important; you certainly wouldn't win if you didn't have a go at most of the tasks. Once Syd thought you were good enough you were banished to the intermediate section and you couldn't put any more work on the novice table.

As Syd's health deteriorated he resigned from the job in 1994 and rarely came to the Club any more. I used to visit him at home where he lived alone. His workshop, like his house, was a health and safety hazard. He generally had some part of his body bandaged up when I called and I rather hoped he wouldn't invite me into the workshop to show me his latest project. He became obsessed with fluorescence and would insist on turning the lights out to look at turned wood under UV light. He was always interested in the latest thing I had made and after turning it over and tutting he would shove it under the lamp. I must confess I never saw the fascination. One of Syd's star protégées Ian Woodford took on the novice section using a similar formula but with arguably a more sympathetic approach.

As the appetite for competitive turning faded in the senior and intermediate competitions, it also became more difficult to get the new generations of novice to put their efforts forward for such scrutiny. Several others had a go at running the section, including me and John Davis, but eventually the task was abandoned for lack of interest.

There was general dismay at this situation and eventually Harry Woollhead started a new novice section with a much less formal approach. This seems to be very successful judging by the enthusiasm in the corner. Here's what Alan Baker thinks of Harry's regime:-

I joined the club in 2010 and found to my delight it had a Novice corner. I was keen to sit and listen to Harry Woollhead. His comments are always laced with humour and he asks open questions that encourage you to join in a discussion. Harry will gently tease you, but always you are given an explanation for what has gone wrong and a solution plus a challenge to improve next time. His favourite comment is "you can look at my work but do as I say and do not criticise my work." This of course sparks a group discussion of the work! The atmosphere is light hearted and pleasurable. In fact we over run our time and are the noisiest section of the club. All members are talking and enjoying the learning process. This speeds up the process of picking up skills and encourages all to join in.

Harry is a fine turner and has produced lots of examples to copy and think about.

Most of the new members are, like myself, at the end of our working careers and starting something new. We have the time, but are not so nimble at absorbing new skills and listening to or watching what has gone on. It is advisable to follow the session up with practice once, twice and often 3 times. I prepare 3 items of wood for turning any new item and the first two end up as firewood.

It was surprising to me that as a mature person with several years as a Coach I found it hard to become the pupil. I had to learn to listen and practice to achieve new skills.

Novices in HWA continued...

I think the hands-on days are nuggets of gold to the novice because for a nominal sum you can watch and try your hand at what is being produced or even have a go on the lathe at something new to you. You can bring your tools to be shown how to sharpen them and you will have expert comment from all the members who take the time and trouble to come along. Often after seeing someone turn with skill you start to appreciate the little things that have to be in place before you are able to replicate it. With an expert standing over you and guiding and commenting on the individual steps you soon get the confidence to continue. Not with the same success but with the satisfaction of knowing you have learned and demonstrated to yourself that you can achieve more than you sometimes give yourself credit for.

These sessions are so useful because of the hands on approach and we all need the encouragement from time to time when tackling something new. We all need a little spark of stimulus to encourage us to move forward and the combination that the club presents has been just the ticket for me. Although I am realistic in my aspirations, I now have the confidence to tackle most projects because of the club's support. That is in itself is a delight to me and I hope all our new members take part in Harry's table and the hands-on days.

I would like to say thank you on behalf of the beginners to all the members who have given their time to demonstrate and teach us new members how to achieve even more pleasure from turning.

Alan Baker

Thank you for giving us a peek into the "Corner", Alan.

Dave Gibbard

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to new members
David Simpson, from Fareham.
Keith Bateman, from Chandlers Ford.

Our current membership stands at 83. Sadly we have lost a small number of now ex members as I have not received their subs. for this year, but I feel confident that these will be replaced by newcomers. I would like to ask members to let me know if you change any of your details such as address, E-mail address, telephone number etc. Also if you hear of other members who have any change of circumstances I would be pleased take this on board.

Numbers signed on at meetings (it's important that you do):
June 56
July 53
August 52.

Denis Hilditch. Membership Secretary.



Royal visits and Skittles, what a 3 months it's been at Minstead

HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex Visit

HRH visited the Trust on 27th June to plant a plum tree in the orchard as a part of his 50th birthday celebrations. The planting was followed by a tour of the Minstead facilities which included our woodturning area. We had been asked to put on a short demonstration of what the students had achieved and also make a small item for his two children. It was agreed that we would make them rounders bats. So we had each pair of students make a bat in Oak and one in Mahogany, all as identical as possible, then one of each was chosen to be presented on the day. That way all the students could feel they made the gift. The day arrived and so did the excitement. About 10:30 we had a steady stream of the Honourable guests come through on their tours and David Jenkins and Liam Dempsey were on the lathes guided by Len Osborne and myself and supported by Les Barrow and Pierre Baumann.



Alan, David and Les with HRH

The guests included Alan Styles and two other members of Axminster Power Tools who had helped so much in setting up the new facility. His Royal Highness arrived at around 11am had coffee in the long room and then went to plant the Plum Tree. We went and watched the planting and then made a hasty retreat to the workshop as we were the first port of call for the Royal tour. David and Liam were very excited as HRH entered the woodturning area.

He stayed about 7 minutes which is quite a long time especially with a number of MTT departments to tour and a very tight schedule for the day. In fact he had 6 engagements that day. David finished off polishing the Bowl he was making, took the chuck key removed the bowl from the lathe and presented it to the Earl. They also presented him with the rounders bats for his children. He commented that he hoped they would use them for the purpose they were intended. At the end of the visit the students and volunteers lined the drive and cheered him off.

Are we now by Royal Appointment???

Open Day, 19 July

Dave Gibbard had this idea for the MTT Open Day that we could make Garden Skittles sets and sell them and also perhaps have a Skittles competition on the day.

The students and volunteers set forth and started making sets of nine pins. However it wasn't long before we had run out of suitable timber. Len Osborne contact his friend Ian Saunders who owns "Timbco" at Windwhistle Way, Wellow and he donated 10 meters of 4" x 4" Beech from which we created seven sets of skittles. They were mounted on boards ready for sale.

The next problem was the balls. Hard as our students tried they found the delicate cuts required quite difficult. We managed an assortment of 28 balls and then matched them best we could into sets.

Thankfully Adrian Smith, HWA ball supremo, came to the rescue and made us two sets, one we used for the completion and one went with the prize.

Yes you guessed it, first prize was a set of Minstead Garden Skittles.

The weather forecast for Saturday 19th July was awful, predicting rain all day, but it turned out to be dry and very warm.

Continued...

Minstead skittles, continued...

Our skittles competition started slowly but got going after Dr Julian Lewis (New Forest MP) and Laura Trant (BBC South News Reader) had a bit of a challenge match. *(Pictures, right)* All very honourable with each scoring 12 from 6 balls.

Up until 3:30 pm it looked like we had a 3 way bowl off with 3 contestants all on 8. Then along came our champion knocking down all 9 and then 6 with the extra go. The competition and sale of skittles from our stall raised £300 and was manned by Dave Gibbard, John Holden, Len Osborne, Ken Comley and myself.

The Open Day in total raised over £4000 for the Trust.

Alan Sturgess



Signing Off

Denis Hilditch spotted that I misunderstood the purpose of his jig for straightening goblet stems. Here's his correction:-

Long Stemmed Goblets, Intentionally Turned In Tension.

Thank you to all who took an interest, which took me by surprise, and thank you Dave for doing the write up in the last 'Your Turn'.

He did this with one hand tied behind his back, so to speak, as he didn't hear my commentary and only had the pictures for guidance. Despite this he got almost all of it right, it was just the last picture that misled him! The picture showed the goblets anchored at the base and pulled over at the top by string, and Dave thought that I was trying to BEND the stems, but in reality, mother nature bent the stems when the tension in the fibres was released during the turning. The string 'rig' was my attempt to straighten the stems by leaving them in 'purgatory' overnight. The attempt was about 80% successful, so my next plan was to steam the stems and cramp them between two straight battens. Bob McFarland suggested steaming the stems and putting them back in tension, which I think I will try in due course. I will let you know the result, but if goes wrongit was Bob's fault!!

Denis Hilditch

Thank you Denis. I actually rather like the wonky stems!

I can't believe this is the only thing I have got wrong lately but nobody else has picked me up on anything. Please feel free to write or Email, I'd love to hear from you even if it is to challenge my infallibility.

Dave Gibbard, Editor