



October 2020

# TURNINGS

Official newsletter of

**Avon and Bristol Woodturners**

Established 1989

Affiliated to the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

Contributions to "Turnings" are accepted in good faith but the inclusion of individuals' views and comments does not imply endorsement by Avon and Bristol Woodturners

## ***IN THIS EDITION***

***THE WAY FORWARD - MAINTAINING THE CLUB'S "ESPRIT-DE CORPS"  
IN THE FACE OF COVID 19***

***ABWT BREAKS NEW GROUND WITH THE CLUB'S FIRST VIRTUAL DEMONSTRATION***

***WOODTURNERS' WORLDWIDE VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM***



Please note below alteration to deadline date for submissions of articles



Please note the deadline :- for copy to be included in Turnings it must reach the editor (see contact details inside) no later than midday on the second Friday of the month. Submissions received after that time will be held over until the following month.

Don't forget you can read all the Club History to date in one place on our website at:

[www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk](http://www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk)

Simply go to the **About** tab and choose **Club History**

## From the editor

It is my painful duty to inform members of the recent death of Mark Baker. Mark will be known to most of us as the long-standing editor of Woodturning but he was not only an accomplished woodturner in his own right, he was also a superb communicator, as those of us privileged to have attended his presentation at the club's March 2015 meeting will attest to. I had the pleasure of meeting him at one of the Yandles' October events at which his popularity was self-evident from the size of the crowd clamouring around his stand.

I am sure that you all will wish me to offer our sincerest condolences to Mark's family at this very sad time



Chairman John Ruffle (left) thanks Mark Baker for his excellent and entertaining presentation, March 2015

## Changes afoot.

Not altogether unexpectedly, life during covid 19 has changed for us all and while it is impossible to predict the shape of the future we have to live in the present. To this end the committee has introduced a number of innovations which it is hoped will keep the club spirit alive and well. Virtual demonstrations cannot possibly replace the "real thing" but that said, I think that we should all be thankful that we live in an era where such facilities are available and therefore we should take full advantage of the benefits. Echoing comments by Michael, Zoom is not very difficult to use and for participants it is entirely free of charge. To those of us of a certain age it really is science fiction come true.

Mike

## USEFUL CONTACTS

Club website

[www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk](http://www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk)

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From the Chairman:

The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted most areas of life over the last 7 months or so and, if the government and scientific projections prove to be accurate, it will be many more months before life returns to the 'new normal' – whatever that will look like!

For the Avon and Bristol Woodturners club the most noticeable effect has been the requirement for 'lockdown' that has prevented the club from meeting physically since the pandemic started. If the projections are to be believed this will continue for the foreseeable future. This has had several negative effects on the club that your committee have tried, and continue to try, to mitigate as far as possible.

Alongside the lack of social contact, the lack of meetings has prevented a key communication link between you, the membership, and your committee. Updates were normally announced shortly after the mid-meeting break and currently this is no longer possible. We propose to mitigate this by regularly publishing the minutes of committee meetings in Turnings to keep you informed of our thinking and advise any changes proposed.

One of these changes is to book virtual demonstrations, hopefully on a monthly basis, with turners of the calibre we are used to seeing at our normal meetings. These demonstrations will usually take place on ZOOM that is fairly simple to use and cost-free to participants. One such demonstration has already taken place and the next demonstration will be on October 15<sup>th</sup>. You are invited and encouraged to view this event on your computer. Michael will send a link to you a little nearer the time.

The first report on the most recent committee meeting is published separately in this issue of Turnings. If you have any issues that you would like raised within a committee meeting, or any questions you like to be addressed, please let Michael know and he will direct it to the appropriate committee member(s).

Stay safe and keep well.

Alan

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*While it's important to mean what you say, it is equally, or perhaps even more important to say what you mean*

*Here are two examples:*

1. A mystic faith healer was touring England and holding rallies at various venues. When his tour was coming to an end his final rally happened to be in Liverpool. It was a long evening with many people seeking his help and it was finally time to wrap up when a young lad of about 18 came on to the stage.

"Can you help me with my hearing?" he asked.

"Well, let's see what we can do" replied the healer, who then placed his hands over the boy's ears and murmured an appropriate incantation.

When he had finished he removed his hands and asked the boy how his hearing was now.

"I don't know" said the boy, "I don't go to court until next Wednesday"

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2. A rifle club secretary received the following invitation from another club:

"We have arranged a competition to take place at our range on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. If you do not wish to shoot yourself would you please pass this on to other members who might be interested"

\*\*\*\*\*

# Avon and Bristol Woodturners

Notes on virtual committee meeting 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 @ 4:00pm

**Present:** Stuart Bradfield, John MacLellan, Vic Atkins, Richard Lane, Robin Goodman, Michael McCrae-Steele, Alan Griffiths.

**Apologies for Absence:** Ian Burke

## **Matters regarding re-opening of Club Meetings:**

1. Follow-up with Fr. James at St Teresa's indicated that the social club will not re-open in the foreseeable future. The staff have been laid off and the bar has been closed permanently.
2. There was some discussion on seeking an alternative venue but Government information received after the meeting showed that current restrictions make this option impractical for now.
3. The club has already held one Zoom meeting with a demonstration by a 'visiting' turner. It was agreed that these meetings should continue and Richard is working on a programme. Stewart Furini will demonstrate by Zoom on 15<sup>th</sup> October with other guests in coming months.

ACTION – Richard.

4. Albeit early days the options for a virtual Christmas meeting were discussed and it was agreed that Alan will prepare a quiz for the first half of the meeting while John will explore the technical aspects of a virtual competition with club members turning in their home workshop.

ACTION – Alan & John

5. Due to a misunderstanding the transportation box/lathe stand has been disposed of. Ian has kindly donated a suitable lathe stand as a replacement and the committee has agreed to make a small donation to him in recognition.

## **Turnings**

1. There was some discussion regarding the continuation of the very successful virtual gallery of photographs of objects turned by club members. It was agreed to continue the concept of a monthly gallery but without the competition element, as the logistics of judging may prove contentious. The plan is to set a "theme" for each month to be announced in Turnings.

ACTION – TBA

## **Subscriptions**

1. A significant proportion of Members subscription is a fee to AWGB which normally covers items such as access to training, insurance, demonstrator grants, Revolutions, etc.. Earlier this year AWGB indicated that their fees for 2021 would be that same as 2020. However, given the fluctuating circumstance around Covid-19 it was agreed that Robin will approach AWGB to clarify their intentions before the club looks at membership subs. Robin will also prepare a spread sheet of the club's fixed costs to help the committee set a subscription for 2021.

ACTION – Robin

**Date of next virtual meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> October starting at 4:00pm**

# Phil Irons' Zoom Demonstration for the Club

An appreciation by Michael McCreaSteele

As you all know, Covid has meant that we have not been able to have club meetings for several months. It is unlikely that the situation will change for a while at least. St. Theresa's Hall is not open and government regulations around meeting other people keep changing. The club committee has therefore been looking at alternatives and decided that Zoom demonstrations are a way to provide similar content to the meetings in a safe way. We understand that this, unfortunately, does preclude some members from participating due to lack of access to a computer, tablet or smart phone. Other members may feel that it is too complicated to take part in a Zoom call. I would encourage any members that have misgivings to contact me ([mccreasteelem.aol.com](mailto:mccreasteelem.aol.com) or 07527 909428) to discuss how to participate. It is not that difficult. I did help one or two members before the Phil Irons demonstration, and I was pleased to see that they were able to log in and see the demonstration.

Richard Lane is the member of the committee who books demonstrators and was able to secure Phil Irons' services for our first club Zoom meeting on 17/9/20 (normal third Thursday of the month when we used to have meetings at the hall). Phil is a UK woodturner born in Australia and is now based in Warwickshire. He has been a professional turner for over 20 years. You can look up more on his on his website [www.philironswoodturning.co.uk](http://www.philironswoodturning.co.uk)

One of Phil's specialities is metal inlays in his turnings, and this was the subject that he was asked to cover in the demonstration.

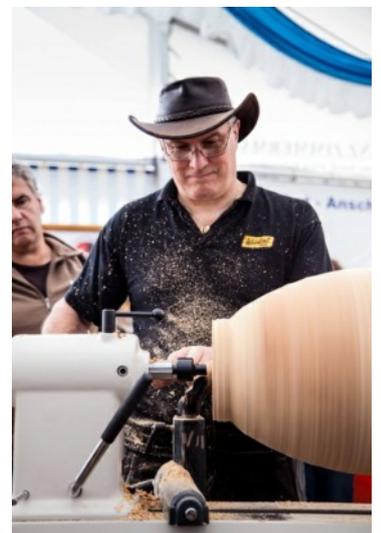
I sent a link to all members via email and people clicked on the link and then they were admitted to the session by the administrator (Carl Burns who was employed for this task by Phil). I gave a list of members to Phil so that they could check that only members were joining. A total of 28 members joined and I have had messages from a number of them telling me that they enjoyed the experience. 28 is less than we would normally get at face to face meetings but a good attendance for the first Zoom demonstration.

We started the evening with some "housekeeping" on how the demonstration would be conducted and, most importantly, how and when members could ask questions. Most of the questions were in written format in the "chat" window on Zoom and the moderator read them out at appropriate times to Phil. Useful information and links were also posted on the chat which we have already sent to all members (other than those without an email address).

Phil showed some finished hollow forms with inlays and then started work on an elm burr hollow form that he had rough turned some months ago and was now ready for a final turn and finish. Most of his hollow forms he now sells as urns with threaded lids. He first trued up the tenon to then hold securely in his chuck. Once secure, he trued up the sides and then looked for any cracks or voids and opened them up with a power carver fitted with a 60-degree V shaped chisel. He has found this to be the best angle that opens up the crack enough to fill in.

The next step was to prepare the metal filling compound. He has found that using clear epoxy glue works best and uses Gorilla clear epoxy. Having estimated the amount of epoxy glue required, the metal shavings powder was added. In this case he used bronze (aluminium, copper and brass also available). He mixed the glue and metal powder quickly as it is only workable for about two minutes. Once it was properly mixed and with the right consistency, he then used an artist's putty knife to feed in and over areas where he had carved V shaped grooves. The hollow form was then set aside to dry which does not take long.

He then took us through the next step with another hollow form that he had already filled in with metal powder earlier. Having mounted this hollow form on his chuck he took off all the excess metal/epoxy compound by shear scraping the form. Phil uses a Woodcut Irons shear scraper which he'd designed. This was followed by sanding and finishing.



The evening ended with a prize of a wooden spoon with glitter inlays that Phil had made and finished sanding during the demonstration. The lucky winner was Geoff Buckeridge and Phil has sent the prize to him.

Photos below are of another hollow form/urn that Phil has made. This shows how metal inlays enhance the turning.



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An old miser was on his deathbed when he asked to see his priest, his doctor, and his lawyer with one last request...

The old man tells them that he knows he is supposed to be unable to take his money with him, but he wants to try. He feels he can trust them so he will give them ten million pounds each, on condition that they deposit the money in his coffin and bare witness as it is sealed and lowered into the ground.

On the day of the funeral, unsurprisingly, the priest, doctor and lawyer are the only three in attendance. As they gather around the coffin the priest speaks first.

"I'm sorry, gentlemen. I could not fully honour our friend's dying wish. His money can do nothing for him in the afterlife, but here on earth it can still do some good. So I confess that I've donated one million to several reputable charities that I know are in need of funds, and used another million to sponsor missionaries to spread the word of God. But look. He opened a bag of cash he had with him.

"I still have the remaining eight million. I trust this will be enough to satisfy our friend and justify me before the Lord." And he dropped the money into the coffin.

The doctor spoke next.

"I too have partially betrayed the trust of our friend. I feel a little guilty, but I can't condone burying all this money while so many people are suffering. I gave two million to my hospital to help them update and replace all our old, outdated equipment and I donated two million to Doctors Without Borders to help them save countless lives in the developing world.

"But I've brought the other six million." With that he opened the bag he carried and dropped the cash into the coffin.

"Our greedy friend can still rest in peace and I can still live with myself."

The lawyer glared at the other two with a stern expression.

"How dare you? Both of you should be ashamed of yourselves! It's not a question of what this money could or could not be used for. It's a question of legal and moral responsibility. Our poor friend wasn't benevolent, or generous, or even very nice. That caused everyone he knew to abandon him. Everyone but we three. We were the only three in the world he trusted to honour his last request." At this he produced an envelope from his coat pocket.

"That is why I will leave this cheque for the full ten million with our dearly departed friend."

# Woodturners Worldwide Virtual Symposium



An appreciation by Robin Goodman

The 5-day Woodturners Worldwide symposium ran from 22 to 26<sup>th</sup> September and included 45 demonstrations from more than 30 demonstrators. Some were live demos, others were pre-recorded. The pre-recorded demos had the demonstrator live on the chat box during the demo and nearly all demos had a separate live question and answer session immediately following.

Matthew Deighton from Utah has spent several years building the Woodturners Worldwide Instagram page with over 125,000 followers. The arrival of covid was all he needed to inspire him to organise this impressive event, which attracted a large number of participants on line.

The first day consisted of a variety of pre-recorded demos and videos from around the world, varying from a few minutes to over an hour. Cindy Drozda had the shortest demo about how she sharpens her bandsaw blades with a Dremel and there were several demos on how to use tools such as skew and hook tool.



Richard Kennedy from the UK had a short interesting video showing how he makes his signature pierced tree bowls, **photo 1**. Part pierced bowl is shown in **photo 2**



Alan Stratton had a demo of inside-out turning, **photo 3**.

Cindy Pei-si Young from Taiwan showed how to make her unusual tripod box, **photo 4**.

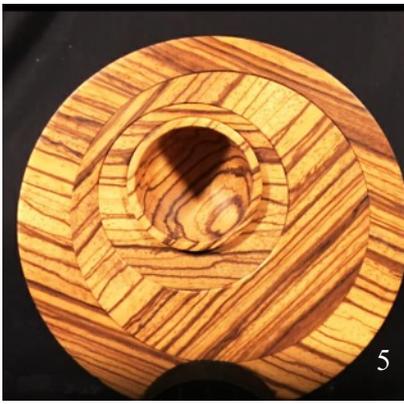
The next day was a series of networking sessions, where participants could network with other turners about various subjects including pens, miniature turning and hollow forms. Along the lines of speed-dating, there was also an opportunity to have 5 minute individual sessions with 6 other turners, either for a specific interest group or for general interests.

For the 3 main demo days, there were 3 simultaneous demos for each of 5 time slots each day. All demos were available for viewing at a later date and time - particularly useful in view of different time zones.

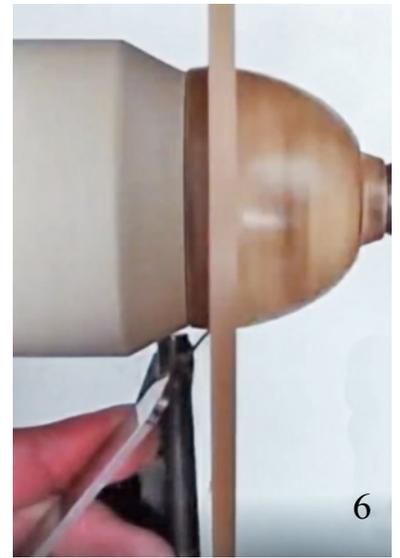


The event was based on US Pacific time, which is 8 hours behind the UK, so the last demo of the day started at 2am UK time! Conveniently, the organisers had arranged for everybody's personal programme to be adjusted to their own time zone. However, there were a few hiccups; one demonstrator I saw had mistaken the time zones and thought he had another 2 hours to prepare for his live demo!

Demonstrators were mostly from the USA, but there also 3 from the UK – Emma Cook (the Tiny Turner) Andrew Hall and Phil Irons, plus a few other nationalities. The demos covered a large number of subjects and techniques, including texturing, airbrushing and colouring. Many showed how to make their signature pieces or specialities and a few of these are briefly described below.



**Jason Clark's** Saturn bowl intrigued me, **photo 5**. The wide but thin rim had cleverly been transformed into several rings that could rotate independently and could be offset. He originally picked up the idea from Hans Weisslog, who made a bowl, where the rim was free to rotate separately around the inner bowl. To make the additional rings free to rotate, Jason had to overcome several problems such as: how to mount the bowl off-centre, how to stop flexing of a thin rim and how to exactly match the diameter of ring cuts from top and bottom.



His solution was to make 2 cuts through the rim to form a v shape on its side and to arrange to have a guide corner on top and bottom at exactly the same diameter, **photo 6**. I have since tried to make such a bowl and found it more difficult than it looks. I prepared a special very narrow parting tool only 0.4 mm wide, which needed to be positioned at exactly 45 degrees to cut into the 3mm thick ring to a depth of about 2.7 mm, before

repeating the same cut from the other side to break through into the first cut. This precision - tolerance on depth of cut is less than 0.5mm - is extremely difficult to achieve and my first attempt was not successful; the rim fell off the bowl. However, I intend to try again, with some modifications to thicknesses and technique and also consider different ways of decorating the rotatable rings.

If using natural wood finish as Jason does, then zebrano is one of the best woods to use because of its very strong straight contrasting grain. After cutting the rim into several rings, the rings can be individually rotated to produce the best effect and altered whenever you want.



New Zealander **Graeme Priddle** made a couple of interesting pre-recorded joint presentations with his partner **Melissa Engler**, **photo 7**. From a room in the house with a table and recliner chair, in which they normally sit to carry

out most of their decoration, they showed how they texture a traditional Koru bowl and an ammonite bowl, using pyrography on the bowl as shown in **photo 8**. Some carving detail is shown in **photo 9**.



Frenchman **Laurent Niclot** also showed how to use pyrography and burning to great effect. The realistic metal plate effect in **photo 10** is all done by burning, as is his rope-like texture in **photo 11**. He also uses gilding waxes and dry-brushed acrylics to enhance his burning.



**Michael Alguire's** Wheels of Delicacy looked interesting, **photo 12**. He went through the stages of making them, starting with 2 identical bowls, rectangular in section and only 3mm thick, that were carefully glued together, **photo 13**. For shapes such as butterflies, he photocopies directly onto self-adhesive paper that is then stuck onto the wheel prior to piercing. He uses high speed piercing tools and to work on the inside rim of the wheel he uses a handpiece with an angled head, since the normal straight tool will not fit. The piercing is very extensive and time consuming, but the overall effect is impressive.



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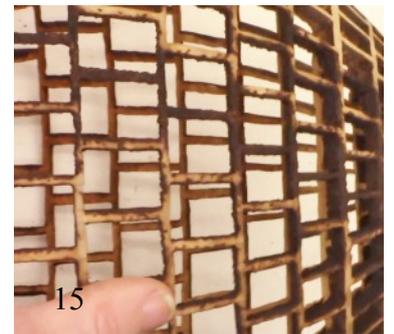


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Irishman **Pat Carroll** also uses extensive piercing for his Erosion Series, **photo 14**. The voids are very geometric and particularly time consuming, **photo 15**. These pieces typically take him 60-100 hours !



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I liked the look of **Rebecca Degroot's** whimsical Walking Mushrooms, **photo 16**. Although not difficult to make, they take a lot longer to make than our more usual simple mushrooms. She impressed me with her detail of the underside of the mushrooms, **photo 17**, formed by a knife tip in a pyrography hand piece.



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The above is just a sample of some of the interesting demos at the event. There was also a trade exhibitors' 'area', where 30 manufacturers and suppliers could show off their products, including with the use of videos, and where participants could chat directly with them on line. I believe the organiser set up his own channel. It was broadly similar to Zoom, but seen. Question and answer sessions plus chat during



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participants could not be the demos worked well.

At just over £50 for 5 days, I thought it excellent value, providing a great opportunity to see so many demos on such a variety of subjects and find out how to make some of the more challenging pieces that turners have come up with. I believe there was only one other club member attending, so the opportunity was obviously not taken up by most members. The organiser already has plans to hold another event in 2021, so it is worth considering next time.