



"TURNINGS"
Avon and Bristol Woodturners
*Affiliated to the Association of Woodturners of
Great Britain*

JANUARY 2007

INTRODUCTION *(By Editor)*

Thank are due to Mary Ashton for taking the time to describe the Tobias Kaye experience, and for using the bullet point method to convey his words of wisdom to the Club. As we settle into the new year I trust that others will be inspired to contribute to the newsletter so that we have a steady stream of instructive pieces!!! For my part I will select and reprint articles from the archives that are likely to help the less experienced in particular (but not this month because I have had major distractions to work at).

Thank you very much for the 'Clubman of the Year' award; and what a beauty of a trophy it is; rather like the FA Cup! It will be placed in a prominent position as soon as we reorganise after Christmas and New Year with hoards of children about.

FROM THE CHAIR

We launch into '07 which is the Club's 20th anniversary year! Happy New Year to you all, and thanks for your Christmas cards and good wishes!!

Our annual prize awards event/party/buffet proved to be a great evening. Huge credits to Tich and Dee, and Ken with his accomplished daughter (Stephanie Scott) who entertained us brilliantly with her great voice and superb repertoire of hit tunes from several decades!!

It was lovely to have Rosemary Harris in our company, and to hear her very favourable comments about the square plinth which now enhances the **Derek Harris Memorial Trophy**. The plinth was made by **Mary Ashton**, who was the 2005 recipient, and it is now resplendent with three silver shields. **Tony Lewis** was judged the winner, and well deserved too!

The 'Woodturner of the Year' Award results were a close run thing between first and second:

Well-deserved Winner.....	Tich Renee
Narrowly and Honourably Second.....	Mary Ashton
Third.....	Vernon Hughes

The range, quantity and quality of entries were substantial, and all the participants are to be congratulated! It is truly encouraging to see once again the strength of the Club demonstrated in this way. We know the talent is there; it is just a matter of getting the lids lifted to expose it!

The ‘Most Improved Turner’ Award went to **Robin Hunt**. The expression on his face when his name was announced was one of pure amazement mixed with pleasure, and there was more of this to come.

Vernon was busy noting details, as is his wont, when the announcement was made that he had been voted **‘Clubman of the Year’**. His reaction and expression were sights to behold. Congratulations Vernon; it is a real tribute recognising your valuable work carried out over many years, and the respect you have amongst your peers.

Intrusion By Ed: During the evening there was also a special presentation by The Committee to **Lorraine** in recognition of her caring spirit in hosting every committee meeting throughout the year! That sounds pretty impressive to me!

In summary, it was an excellent and truly entertaining evening! I sincerely recommend that you all enter **this year’s** date in your diaries!!

Dropping down abruptly to more routine business, please note that AWGB Subs are now due. The fee is £14.50 and, as ever, prompt payment is requested please so that we do not put Dave (Treasurer) or Nigel (Membership Secretary) to any trouble. If you pay by cheque **do remember to make it out to Avon and Bristol Branch, and NOT ‘AWGB’**. This is because the Club is granted a rebate of £1 per member when it organises a bulk payment to AWGB. Please pay the afore-mentioned Dave or Nigel at your earliest convenience.

The annual membership fee for St. Theresa’s will be due in March and is £5 for under-65s and £2.50 for seniors. Continuing the theme of financial pain it is worth mentioning that our Club Subs of £18 will be due at the AGM in April. If you wish to pay all three on one cheque **Now** please feel free to do so.

Diary Dates to note are:

‘The Mill’ is back in full swing after the Christmas recess **Every Tuesday and Wednesday** and last Saturday of each month.

Saturday 31st January will embrace 1. Apprentice Training; 2. Decorative Turning ongoing demo; 3. Bring your own blank – produce your own item, plus; 4. A Photo-Opportunity for your Gallery Standard work in our studio (bring or send your items). Please note that our Web Gallery does need to be updated, so a special effort would be appreciated, especially from those who are not able to make it to ‘The Mill’!

Thursday 15th February at St. Theresa’s - Chris Eagles.

Saturday 24th February - Similar programme as January’s last Saturday.

Thursday 19th March at St. Theresa’s - it’s on the website (By Ed: But for those without access remember that details were of course given by Julie in the December issue).

Julie and Simon Barnard are organising this year’s events, hopefully with three gallery/sales opportunities including Westonbirt.....**for which NB** Pick-a-Peg items are requested please. It is never too early to get into production of these!!

It is planned to have four Saturday Demos at ‘The Mill’ by well-respected exponents of our chosen craft. Full details will be given at the AGM. Please make every effort to attend! Forty or so came to Ray Key’s splendid session (see October 2006 issue); and we can seat sixty. The income from these top events swells the funds and goes a long way in keeping us solvent!

Our membership list is updated quarterly, and is now due. If you would like a copy please ask the Treasurer.

It is intended to assemble a list of members' Email addresses with the aim of saving on printing and postage costs of our monthly newsletter. A request form will be attached to the March issue. (Ed's feedback note to Committee: You may wish to assure members that Email addresses will not be promulgated without permission. My recent experience of having my domain name pinched by what I call 'the ungodly' (with acknowledgements to Leslie Charteris and 'The Saint) persuades me that Email addresses should be guarded with some care).

And so for now.....Kind Regards.....Max

HAVE YOUR SAY

NIL! Perhaps the season has blunted your resolve, or you did not get a new nib for Christmas?

AN 'ENGINEERING' SNIPPET *(From Simon Keen)*

Dennis Wanklyn came round to see me with two needle cases he had made with threaded stoppers. He had managed to cut the male threads with a die borrowed from a neighbour! This is something I have yet to master. Well done Dennis! (By Ed: What wood was used please? It will be worth reporting.)

A REPORT ON TOBIAS KAYE *(By Mary Ashton)*

I intended to do a write up on the Tobias Kaye demo earlier but unfortunately have had no time, so sorry it is late, but here goes.

Whilst attending ISCA Hardwood's October Show (always worth a visit by the way), I came across a display of work by members of a relatively new club, 'Crow Valley Woodturners', who are based in Cwmbran. What particularly caught my attention was a rather large 'sounding bowl'. If there are any among us who have not come across one of these they are originally designed and made by Tobias Kaye. They may vary in size and string number but when produced to exact dimensions produce wonderful sound in a similar way as any other stringed instrument. I have always been keen to have a go at making one of these and so struck up conversation with Peter Bradwick who was demonstrating at the show and tutoring for the club. It turned out that he had made the above said bowl himself and had received tuition from Tobias and built up a friendship with him. He then mentioned that Tobias was to demo at their club the following month. I asked him if it would be possible to attend but he was a little reluctant at first saying that places would have to be given to their club members first. After a little more begging I encouraged him to take money for the demo there and then to secure my place. This was **Why** I did not publicise it further, although I was aware that other Avon & Bristol members had enquired.

I set off on Saturday 18th November for Cwmbran and was made extremely welcome on arrival by Peter, the guys from ISCA and other club members. I also found out that Max and Tich were there too! Tobias started his demo by making a pair of soup bowls cut from separate blanks of Lacewood complete with band sawn handles and glued back together prior to turning. His second project was an off centre candle stick and finally he made a lidded box from Masur Birch.

I picked up many tips from Tobias' demo which I am sure I shall find particularly useful when teaching others myself – i.e. different ways of getting information across to others. The one thing that he repeated frequently was that wood should be cut the way that it likes to be cut, which generally means with the grain (or downhill) but occasionally may mean trying something different on a stubborn piece of timber. Sometimes we have to allow the wood to tell us which way it wants to be cut.

I think it may be easier for the reader if I bullet point other tips which I picked up and took note of on the day as follows:

Tobias Kaye Tips (with extra input from Mary):

- bowl gouge is designed to cut curves (and to deal with end grain, found twice on every revolution on standard bowl blanks); a bowl gouge can be recognised by its deep flute in comparison to the shallower flute of a spindle gouge
- spindle gouge is designed to cut shapes and finer sharp details, hence the need to use a spindle gouge if applying beads, or fancy detail to bowls
- 'traditional' grind on bowl gouge (flat across top) gives a better finish; won't catch as badly
- 'swept back' grind (wings back) removes more material quickly, requires less skill, can catch more viciously
- ideal angle 50 degrees (60 degrees on brittle woods) - coarser angle creates less broken grain - finer angle creates more broken grain
- mouth of the tool open to rotating grain cuts better; professional quality cut
- tipped over cuts easier; amateur quality scraping (listen to sound difference!)
- experiment to discover best cuts and listen; if wood cuts like butter the cut is correct
- don't use a roughing gouge on a bowl blank as the thin tang can break
- Tobias' favourite bowl gouge is made by 'Robert Sorby' due to it's parabolic curved flute
- he recommends Hamlet tools (me too! I think they are just as good as the more expensive products)
- don't poke the bowl with a parting tool to make a chuck recess; use a spindle gouge from edge towards centre. Tobias also used the spindle gouge to cut the dovetail recess which personally I would not recommend to learners but would stick to using a skew for this purpose (By Ed; May I be allowed to use memory recall to say that the late great Chris Lindup showed us in a demo how to use the spindle gouge for recess making, so it is perhaps something to strive for as confidence grows. I spoke to him about it over at his place, and amongst masses of bowls he said that he always did it that way.)
- accidents can happen under stress!
- be aware of what can go wrong
- 'TURN THE WOOD THE WAY IT LIKES TO BE TURNED'
- sharpen tool for final cut
- when making a lidded pot make a taper where the lid is to fit; then when you try to fit the lid it will leave a polished mark at point of contact, then cut back to polished line
- timbers suitable for food use: Lacewood (ideal), Sycamore, Maple, Mulberry, Walnut.
- unsuitable timbers: oak or any that contain tannin
- timber for children's toys: Birch best; also Beech. Apparently there is an energising drink produced from birch sap. (By Ed: It is even better than energising; it is an old style English country wine!! The sap is easy to collect in spring but after 'tapping' you must plug the hole drilled in the tree.) Fruit woods are fine for toys but prone to splitting

These are just a few points that I thought may be of interest, although there were far more. Tobias also talked a lot about design and the 'golden mean'. He is an enthusiastic tutor who put loads of energy into his demo and I found the whole experience very rewarding and interesting. Although I did not get the chance to witness him making a 'sounding bowl' I am hoping to attend one of his courses and actually make one myself. A day well spent! (By Ed .to Julie and Simon - just a thought. Could we work sounding bowls into the demo programme?)

(Editorial Licence: Under the 'safe for food use' point Mary reported that she thought Tobias included Rhododendron and Yew in his list but expressed her own personal doubts. She believes Rhododendron contains arsenic and Yew tannin, and asks for members' knowledge of the subject. In case anyone took

the wrong inference from this being discussed under the 'safe with food' heading I have separated the subject down to this footnote. I do not know about Rhododendron so look to others to answer up on that. As for Yew I believe most woodturners rule it out on safety grounds and I think the problem may be worse than tannin, which after all is abundant in oak which in turn is ideal for storing wine and whisky. It is certainly true that Yew foliage is fatal to animals that browse on it. Although I have heard doubts expressed about the poisonous nature of Yew berries and mature timber I would certainly advise that Yew be kept out of use for food items altogether; then you can't be caught out. Views of members better versed in the actual science of the matter are invited, however).

FEATURE YOUR WORK IN 'WOODTURNING' *(Spotted by Ed. In February's Issue)*

Details will be found on page 13 of an opportunity to have photographs of your handiwork featured in the magazine. You take the photos and send them off with a brief description, and several will be featured each month. The article specifies 'a 3 mega-pixel' camera, but it would be worth checking if that is the minimum acceptable rating. Most cameras these days are 5 mega-pixel standard or more. The idea seems very good in principle, but I expect the competition for a slot will be hot.

In Response to 'Woodentop's Few Lines *(By Tich)*

If you look at the plans for a mini chair or plant stand you will find that the angles for the backrest part of the chair are drilled at 15° for the middle 3 spindles, whilst the two outside spindles are drilled at 10°. Holes in the top of the seat are drilled at the same angle as the backrest. For the bottom of the seat, the front pair of holes are drilled blind, the diameter being 3/4" and the depth 1/2" but the angle is 10°, and you use a sight line for all four legs, The back pair of legs are also drilled blind at 3/4" diameter and 1/2" depth, but the angle is altered to 20°. I have used this same angle for bar stools and breakfast stools as well as the teddy bear chairs that I have made, and helped the new beginners to make. I have only had one stool come back for re-gluing. All my customers have been very pleased with the end results. There is of course an adjustable table (angled that is). This table was very well made by Dennis May. He has made several stools, and to my knowledge he has used the same angles as above. There is of course the exception to the rule. When you make a footstool the top ends of the legs are usually square so that you can put a mortise and tenon joint in the stool leg. I hope this has been of use to those of us who want to make a bar stool or teddy bear chair.....Regards.....

FIELD DIARY NOVEMBER – DECEMBER '06 *(By Simon Keen) (Converted to narrative form by Ed)*

At the end of November Avon Forestry visited the field to agree on the planting plan and that opened the way to start fencing the proposed new wooded area. Due to soggy ground the fence posts had to be hand-carried to their positions two at a time. After the thrill of carrying posts and marking out positions we managed to get a JCB on site. The driver first cleared out the bottom pond, and then set about driving the posts in mechanically. The tyres cut up the soft ground quite badly. However, this will recover quite naturally over time, but meanwhile the soft ground reveals the tracks of different animals that have walked over the area, including deer.

The very heavy rain has meant that the ponds are overflowing. This has given the stream life in both noise and motion. John has been busy planting Flag Iris, Marsh marigolds, Sedge, etc.

For the planting scheme we marked out positions for the first 250 trees; and Derek Edwards came over for a visit so we gave him the grand tour on what can only be described as a beautiful day with blue sky and bright sunshine. The first 500 trees arrived at the beginning of December and Derek Edwards came over again to help with planting. The field now looks like a forest of green tubes. At the time of writing there were still 270 of the 1000 trees to be planted, but that work will be over by the time this is printed. Having saved up my holiday for this, going back to work in January is going to seem like a welcome rest.

Mysterious PS - Wire Coat Hangers Needed Please (By Ed: Presumably this is project-related in some way)

THE DECEMBER 'WOODCHOPPERS BALL' (*By the Social Editor*)

Max has given you the flavour of a most entertaining evening but here are a few more details.

In place of the usual quizzes Mervyn took the role of support artist and delivered a string of humour with jokes and amusing quotes extracted from the www. etc. This kept us rolling in the aisles and saved me having to deliver the hugely dated 'Green eye of the little yellow god'. Then, in no time at all, we were being invited to take our seats for the surprise package (except to the committee) of a professional singer (Stephanie Scott) to entertain us both sides of the 'troughing slot'. Armed with a huge voice, all the proper kit and an inexhaustible repertoire she started off with Petula Clark's 'Downtown' (No.2 in 1964 in UK and No.1 in the USA) and then took us through Dusty Springfield, Showaddywaddy, The Crystals, Cilla Black, Boney M, Tina Turner, Slade and others. 'The Crystals' number was of course the evergreen 'Da Doo Ron Ron' from 1963 and didn't she 'give it to us'! In response, throughout her performance we clapped arduously and took part in a little audience participation, but to her great disappointment, and our stoic embarrassment, she could not persuade anyone to dance. Roy Stewart made a valiant effort to save our blushes by rising with his lady for one number right at the end; but for the rest I'm afraid it was a great opportunity missed! (We must hope that Ken will be able to find the words to save our reputation!)

THE FOOD - Was truly excellent thanks to LYNNE who hereby gets the special mention that everyone demands be printed!!!! This is yet another reason to resolve to come to next year's event, accompanied by your partner of choice so that she/he can persuade you, or someone else, to dance. Mind you I must watch my Ps & Qs here. One tall, important chap has explained to me, at least, for years, that if there is dancing he won't come. 'Lord luv us'! How do we please 'em all, all the time?

Another highly successful innovation was the new-style raffle. Everyone brings a prize (except the guests I think?) so everyone takes one home as well. The quality of prizes was consistently high, and the organisers had even arranged cover for anyone who had failed to realise the need to bring one. In conversation I found that a number of members had not fully understood the new rules, so if this concept is repeated next year it might be a good idea to spell them out more clearly in advance.

At this point I had hoped to describe the great array of turned exhibits on the table with as much explanatory material as I could manage. However, space and time are both running out so I shall have to leave it over for another occasion. I hope/think it will keep without use of a fridge, although my memory usually has to support my jottings, and that may not be fully up to the mark. We shall see.

Meanwhile.....at the **Turn** of the year.....A Guid New Year tae Ye All.....!

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