



# "TURNINGS"

*Avon and Bristol Woodturners*

*Affiliated to the Association of Woodturners of  
Great Britain*

MARCH 2007

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Management Committee of the Avon & Bristol Branch of the AWGB hereby gives formal notice that the Annual General Meeting of the Branch will be held at 7.30 pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at St Theresa's Church Hall, Gloucester Road North, Bristol.

Members may forward details of motions they wish to put forward for discussion at the AGM to the Secretary or other officer of the committee at the earliest opportunity. The agenda will include an election of officers and committee members plus the appointment of post holders to perform other tasks (e.g. Newsletter Editor). Nominations for any post can be made on the appropriate form, obtainable from the secretariat. Nominations should be seconded by another member and must show that the agreement of the nominee has been obtained.

## **PROJECT Reminder - A Laminated Piece**

### INTRODUCTION *(By Editor)*

**This is a significant moment in the Club's history!** As you will read below in his customary and cheery review of the times, this is the last occasion that Max will address us in print with his steady hand on the tiller of the good ship 'A & B Branch'. With six years of energetic and imaginative steering behind him he feels the need to step back and hand over the watch to a new helmsman. Reflecting on a rumoured change of leader 'in another place' we must give credit for this one having been planned without secrecy, and after a six year watch in which a respected 'place in history' will have been fully earned. That place may be more apparent in the strength and quality of the Club/AWGB Branch as it now stands and projects into the future, than in any words of tribute we might place on record, **but deeds and results outlast words** ('trust me, I'm an editor')! My job involves observation, and two particular qualities that have made their mark on me have been Max's instinct for setting a course and sticking to it whilst riding out weather and squalls, and his wide, penetrating and caring grasp of many a detail in the affairs of the Club. Over the years we developed a knack of me sometimes reading from a distance (though accurately as it always turned out) between the lines of his thoughts, but he got better and better at writing them down so that I could often type 'the words wot he wrote' or something close. I have no doubt that we shall all feel the benefit of his legacy, albeit sometimes unconsciously. **Thanks Max!!!**

### FROM THE CHAIR

March madness; 'in like a lion' perhaps 'out like a lamb'. I trust that 'April showers' don't dampen the AGM. No nominations or items to raise under AOB have yet emerged into the light of day.

Chris Eagles' demo was extremely well presented and thoroughly enjoyed!! He inspired us all in his own innovative way, with a truly professional presentation. I'm pretty sure he studies our newsletter each month, so here's a big thank you Chris from your neighbouring Club at A & B!!!

The February newsletter was well up to its solid standard, brimming with a good cross section of info, comments and ideas from Brian, Julie, 'Woodentop', Melita, VFH and the editorials. It **was** good to hear from our 'Founding Father' Don White clarifying the date when the Club was formed. Our archives, currently held in store by Vernon,

are not so strong on the early years, so ascertaining dates for our Honours Board demanded patient and not always successful research. We now trust that the new Board will be accurate and reliable at last. This leads me to pick up on Brian's work in his new role as 'cub reporter' (and commentator) on Club Night demonstrators, taking over the task that Vernon had imposed on himself long ago. Vernon reminds me that a report on Club Nights was one of the objects set when 'Turnings' was initiated so that members could refresh memories and collect useful points of advice and instruction; also that he had developed a system for honing this down to essentials. He did develop doubts though as to whether members were actually extracting value from the fairly time-consuming process, and now Brian is showing signs of wondering too. I remain in favour personally, but the members must decide. That prompts me to clear up some points on the January Club night and Brian's coverage which, although aimed at 'management', did disturb Tich who felt that it focussed on him unfairly. It had been decided with the best of intentions to fill out the Q & A session with some in-house demonstration because Q & A on its own can be a bit of a gamble. In the event the demo plans then had to be altered at short notice, and the ever-willing Tich ended up with the short straw. So, management must apologise for getting a little disorganised (for once) and we should all be very grateful to him for stepping into the gap/spotlight, and entertaining us on his own, on top of all the work that he does for the Club in so many ways day in, day out!!

I must mention, and commend here, Brian Howard's unsung role as 'OIC Sound & Vision'. He has sourced more bits to enhance sound quality, and Steve Ellis has joined in to assist with this electronics wizardry. I'm sure you all noticed a marked improvement last month! If you see an opportunity to lend a helping hand on the night, or wish to suggest an adjustment of the equipment at any time, just mention it to one of them so that they can tweak to the benefit of all. (By Ed: If I may be allowed a word, it is worth reflecting on how far we have come down this path! There was a time when we had little or no sound or visual aid, **nor did we expect it.** Expectations have only risen in line with the achievements of volunteers who have dedicated themselves to developing this service for us. He/they certainly got it spot on at February's Club Night when a 'high point' was reached. )

And now, abruptly but inevitably, I must move to MY main business. Having withstood 'the slings and arrows' over the past few years it seems to have come up rather suddenly that this is the last epistle from this incumbent apostle. At the AGM the Chairmanship will pass to another. In stepping down my foremost thought is to give thanks and recognition to one and all for your support and general input during my term in office. We do enjoy a great atmosphere of fun and comradeship, with everyone participating in our progress in one way or another. **Our management team must be congratulated for the immense amount of work that they have undertaken and the time they have given so unselfishly/generously in the interests of the Club and its membership.** Some examples of the developments and progress made over the last six years, and for which they can take credit, are:

20% increase in membership associated with founding/developing 'The Mill' facility and the new St. Theresa venue with excellent food and cheaper beer.

Introduction of the new categories of Clubman of the Year and Most Improved Turner complete with trophies and inscribed glasses, recorded with the others on an Honours Board.

The improvements and additional equipment at 'The Mill' which now boasts 25 lathes from a 'VB36' to a 'Perform', an ornamental turning rig and an 1880 treddle lathe (as illustrated in an edition by Mr Holtzapfel) plus two loan lathes.

The permanent venue for regular Seminars by the cream of professional demonstrators worldwide.

The consolidation and success of the AyeBee Academy with its associated Apprenticeship Training Scheme. Copies of the course manual have been requested by clubs across the globe.

Turning our main annual showcase (Westonbirt) from a loss to a substantial profit, presented to the public with an admirable gallery, demo and sales area with sponsors, all at the finest arboretum on earth.

The addition of Berkeley Castle to the programme (**15 - 17 June this year**).

A well stocked 'shop' with very favourable prices.....Plus numerous others.....

The management team is in waiting for the smooth transition. There are too many people to thank individually. Nevertheless, a heartfelt thank you to one and all for having made my tenure so rewarding!!

Usual Kind Regards until the AGM.....Max

## **Apprenticeship at 'The Mill'** (by Stuart Bradfield)

It's interesting how life goes full circle. In days past, youngsters started their career as apprentices, giving them a sound base for an interesting and worthwhile working life. That's why after 40 years in business it's fascinating to be an apprentice once again, especially at 'The Mill'.

***Apprentice**-(definition) learns a craft, bound to serve, and entitled to instruction as from his employer for specified term, beginner, novice.*

How well this definition fits what 'The Mill' has to offer. Despite all the advances in education, training and the business environment, nothing can beat the traditional ways of doing things! In the past craftsmen were proud to pass on their skills to secure the trade for future generations. Somewhere along the line these values have disappeared and have been replaced by a culture of living for today.

Fortunately for us there is a group of craftspeople that are happy and willing to pass on their skills to others. This merry band of men and women is known as 'the Avon and Bristol Woodturners'. Within the Club there is tremendous dedication and forethought to secure the future of this ancient craft.

The Apprenticeship Scheme has been reinvented at 'The Mill'. It offers a structured programme which teaches the basics skills and techniques to develop the proficiency to enjoy this timeless craft.

At any one time there are between four and seven apprentices going through the scheme!

The course is designed to cover 21 weeks and is supported by a very professional manual produced by Club members. The programme is set out in ten modules covering H & S, the use of equipment, design, materials and a range of projects designed to develop skills and techniques essential to master the craft.

It was interesting each week to look forward to the challenge of making a new item. From light pulls to carrier bag handles and on to a garden line, learning how difficult it is to make four stool legs the same! Then suddenly the techniques you're acquiring start to come together. With patience and practice you realise that you can make the tools do what you want them to.

There's always someone on hand to provide the support and encouragement to overcome those early doubts and after only a few weeks you can look at your latest piece of work and compare it with your first attempts at beads and coves and think 'yes, this is great'.

The commissions are now rolling in, well from the family, for three more snowmen (copyright Lorraine), four of Tich's idiot sticks for team building at Orange and a fruit bowl for my daughter's new kitchen.

There are plans afoot for an advanced course, building on the success of the existing scheme. I am sure it will be as rewarding and fascinating as the apprentice programme.

Many thanks to Tich, Max, our new tutor Tim and the rest of the team for all their help and providing such an excellent training manual and programme.

### **Another angle on stools 'from Woodentop'**

This is further to Tich's response to my article on Stools, and I am grateful that someone bothered to comment. However, as I am working my way through some recycling of mahogany stair treads and spindles, etc., I will stick to my three legged stools for the grandchildren, before I venture into the mysteries of Teddy Bear chairs, etc., and will face those challenges when I get to them. However, having made my first stool, I soon realised that having been concerned with the leg angle, the points at which the legs contact the ground, although stable in the direction of each leg, are unstable in the direction at right

angles to any pair of legs, when leaning backwards. This is the important point, which I had neglected. If one draws an imaginary line on the seat between the top of the legs, it is a triangle, and it becomes apparent that this triangle sits on the inside of the seat, and the adjoining lines are at only ½ the radius of the seat, (as shown in separate diagram due to ‘cut and paste’ problem).

However, far greater stability is given if this imaginary triangle encloses, as a minimum, the outside of the seat (as also shown separately). This then gives the angles as in table:-

Seat Diameter	Height of Stool	10”	15”	20”	25”
10”	Jig Angle	15	10	8	6
8”		12	8	6	4

Incidentally, I found that by counter-boring the seat 30mm diameter for approx 5 mm, and then boring a 25mm hole (such that the point of the Forstner bit does not penetrate the seat side) then turning the tops of the legs 30mm, by about 5mm deep, feathered into the larger diameter of the leg, and then 25 mm by slightly less than the depth of the 25mm hole in the seat, it avoids that gap if only the leg top is turned with a square end for the undercut spigot, since it is at an angle to the seat (again see separate diagram).

### **FEBRUARY MEETING - CHRIS EAGLES** *(By Brian Oram)*

This was a splendid demonstration – interesting, humorous, instructive – and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Chris (Chairman of Gloucester Branch) started by saying that he was a ‘traditional’ woodturner and that the tools and techniques he uses are all based on the past history of turning, some of which has been lost by the upsurge of factory made tools and equipment for the burgeoning amateur market.

The most important need, as we all know, even if we don’t always do it, is the sharpest possible edge to your tool. His were an object lesson in sharpening skill. The main thrust of his demo was the dreaded skew chisel. I taught myself to use a standard skew by making a dozen rolling pins and thereby mastered the beast. However, I don’t pick up a standard skew and think “this is my favourite tool” although clearly it is for Chris. (I do now have a round skew with a straight across, rounded edge, which is very sweet, if anyone is interested!)

Chris Eagles’ skew was ground to a tapered curve with a shallow convex, so that the ‘belly’ of the edge never obstructed the point and it wasn’t half sharp! He used it as a roughening tool (a demonstration party piece, he said) and then to produce a fine, off the chisel, finish on the wood, which was pine. Enough said!

He made a lidded box, explaining the techniques and tools and demonstrated hollowing out, using a hook tool. I must confess that I had never seen one of those before, and it was very impressive in use. Then, of course, he fitted the lid to the box first time – a tight fit. It’s not fair; it takes me hours to make a muck of a fit.

Also shown was his ‘Box Chuck’, which was made of MDF, with three concentric rings to take different diameter lids for finishing the inside and a ‘Die Chuck’, where the piece screws into a coarse thread on the spigot for absolutely accurate re-chucking and offset turning.

He offset an insert into a box lid using two jaws of a four jaw chuck and then made an offset finial in a box top. His intended method had been ‘pinched’ by last month’s article in ‘Woodturning’ so he showed an elaborate (and expensive) offset chuck to effect a neat offset.

A most satisfactory demonstration that inspired me to go out to my workshop the next day, take out my old skew, unused for ages, grind it to an ‘Eagles’ shape, sharpen **all six edges** and have a go. After a nearly disastrous start, I remembered that he used it parallel to the work at about 10 o’clock and with a gentle, sideways movement – and it works! I made the best, accurately sized and finished off, chisel dowel ever. I was chuffed!

### **JANUARY SMALL DEMO - SOME WORDS OF EXPLANATION** *(By ‘Spinning Top’)*

For the January Meeting I was asked to do a turn on the lathe by Derek Edwards at the last moment. It had been planned that he would be turning as a support feature for the Q & A session, but he realised that

he might not be back in Bristol in time for our meeting. So it was a last minute hitch, and he thought that he should ask someone else, and not rely on Simon Keen as we have so often done in the past. **In those circumstances** I was happy to oblige and thought my choice of an 'idiot stick' and my style would 'fill the bill' and that members would accept the situation. (By Ed: There was more from Tich but the crunch point is that he felt, understandably, that it was unfair that the report seemed to criticise him personally.)

**Editor's Footnote and Sincere Apology!! It is my job as Editor to guard against the appearance in the newsletter of anything that implies, or seems to imply, personal criticism of one member by another. In this instance (i.e. the report on the January meeting) I let my guard drop, and by doing so have let down both Brian Oram and Tich Renee, and indeed the Avon & Bristol Branch. I know that Brian did not intend to personalise his critique of the evening, but accept that there was a risk of it being seen in that light; a risk that I should have guarded against.**

### **YEW & FOOD** (By Ed)

The saga continues. In the April issue of 'Woodturning' Bill Care has an article showing the making of a peppermill in (yes, you've guessed it) Yew!

**CLUB SHOP SUPPLIES LIST** - This is presented by 'Shop Organiser/Manager' Tich who seeks here to ensure that ALL members are aware of the great value on offer! **(Ed. Adds - Please do pause for a few moments to consider the effort Tich puts in on our behalf to making this excellent range available at such terrific prices. We owe it to him to reward that effort by taking up as much as we can rather than look elsewhere!!)**

Sanding Paper Grades 120/240/320/400/600 Cost Per Roll £1.30p  
Wet & Dry Grades 800/1000/1500. Cost Per Item £0 35p  
Paint Brushes Sizes 14 & 16 Item Prices 80p & 60p. Face Masks £3 per pack.  
Test Tubes (7 sizes priced by size) Sanding Sealer (Tich Special) £4 per 500ml.  
Glue Sticks 12mm x 300mm – 12p each Club Pens and Badges - £4 each  
Corian Blanks 50mm sq - 20p each. Pen Blanks (15mm sq) - 10p each

### **TIMBER LIST (All measurements imperial!!)**

**ASH: Board:** 48.5" x 21" x 1.25" **£10.** **Bowl Blanks:** 12 x 3 **£6;** 7.25 x 3.5 **£4;** 9.75 x 1.5 **£3;** 6 x 3 **£2.**  
**Square:** 11.5 x 3 x 3 **£6;** 15 x 3 x 3.25 **£4;** 8 x 2.5 x 2.5 **£3;** **Log:** 15.5 x 4.5 x 4 **£5.**

**YEW: Logs:** 27 x 3.5 **£4;** 22 x 6 x 2 **£4;** **Square:** 7.5 x 3 x 3 **£3;** 7.5 x 4 x 4 **£3;** 7 x 9 x 1 **£2;** 5.25 x 2 **£2.**

**BEECH: Bowl Blanks:** 9.25 x 3.25 **£4;** 10 x 3 **£4;** 8 x 4 **£4;** 8 x 4 x 3 **£4** (By Ed: ? 3 dimensions)

**Slabs:** 15 x 7 x 3 **£4;** 12 x 7 x 3 **£4;** 13 x 5 x 2.5 **£4;** 11 x 6 x 3 **£4;** 14 x 10 x 3.5 **£5.**

**Square:** 9 x 8 x 3 **£4;** 6 x 3 x 3 **£3;** 8 x 7 x 1.5 **£3;** **Log:** 9 x 9 x 4 **£5.**

**OAK: Square:** 12 x 4 x 4 **£4;** 9 x 4 x 2 **£2;** 9.75 x 3.5 x 2.75 **£3;** 9 x 9.5 x 2.5 **£4;** **Slab:** 16 x 13 x 4 **£5;**  
**Bowl Blank:** 8.25 x 4 **£3.**

**BLACK WALNUT:** 5 x 2 **£3;** 8 x 4 **£4;** 6 x 2 **£3;** 8 x 2 **£3;** 6 x 11.5 x 2 **£3.**

**APPLE: Bowl Blanks:** 7.5 x 3.25 **£3;** 4 x 2 **£2.** **OLIVE ASH:** 6.25 x 4 **£5.** **BODO: Blank** 5 x 2 **£3.**

**SPALTED BEECH: Bowl Blanks:** 9 x 3 **£4;** 3.25 x 2 **£3.**

**Square:** 7.5 x 3 x 3; 11.5 x 3 x 3; 14 x 3 x 1.25; 14 x 2 x 1.25 **All @ £4 each.**

**Square:** 14 x 5.5 x 4 **£5;** 17.75 x 9 x 3.5 **£5.**

**HOLLY: Log:** 26 x 3 **£4.** **IMBUYA: Board:** 51 x 9.25 x 2 **£20.** **TEAK: Bowl Blank:** 4 x 3 **£2.**

**CHERRY: Logs:** 18.5 x 8 x 4 **£5**; 18.5 x 7 x 3 **£4**; 9.25 x 8 x 3 **£3**; 24 x 3.5 **£4**. **Bowl Blank:** 10 x 2.5 **£5**.  
**Square:** 7.25 x 2.75 x 2 **£3**. **Misc:** 10.25 x 8 x 4 **£4**; 8 x 5 x 2 **£3**; 20 x 5.5 x 5 **£5**;  
13 x 5.25 x 3 **£4**.

**AMERICAN CHERRY:** 5.5 x 2 **£3**. **PADAUK: Blank** 4 x 2.5 **£2**. **SANTOS ROSEWOOD:** 4.5 x 1.5 **£3**.

**SILVER BIRCH:** 11.25 X 4.5 X 4 **£5**. **MAHOGANY:** 8 x 3 x 3 **£2**.

**TREE OF HEAVEN:** 9 x 3.25 **£4**; 11 x 5 x 5 **£5**; 10 x 7 **£4**; 11 x 9 x 3 **£4**.

**SYCAMORE: Bowl Blanks:** 12.5 x 4 **£6**; 11.5 x 3.5 **£6**.

**NB: Timber stocks are held at Portishead and will be supplied ON REQUEST. Just ‘phone me on 0117 9312523 and I’ll do my best for you.**

**FINALLY: May I remind/advise you that the shop is a non-profit making entity!!! Neither Max nor I take any income from the proceeds of sale. Furthermore, any profit that results from turners’ donations of items to the shop is ploughed back into the shop and the Club!!**

**(BY ED: JUST REFLECT FOR A MOMENT ON WHAT WE HAVE TO BE THANKFUL FOR!!)**

**TWO DIARY DATES (Additional to Berkeley Castle announced by Chairman above)**

17 – 19 August - Thornbury Model Engineering Exhibition.

24 – 27 August - Westonbirt Exhibtree

**FIELD UPDATES** (From Simon and John)

January 2007 – we started coppicing the first area in the wood, cutting down the Hazel to form stools. This is done with a bow saw; the vibration caused by a chain saw can reduce growth potential. Once the area is cleared and more light can penetrate, some Hazel whips will be planted in the more open spots. We hope to polish off this job within 2 more weeks to avoid damaging the ancient woodland floor that will be carpeted with bluebells, etc., in the spring.

Derek Edwards visited us again to help with tree felling and clearing. We were treated to use of one of John’s Christmas presents – a water boiler. This magical little unit allows you to light a tiny fire in the base. The chimney is the hot water boiler, and within minutes we had a coffee break.

February 2007 – We have started to erect the new stock fence and expect to spend a few weeks at this work. Completion must be before end April when the cattle arrive. The neighbouring parish of Alveston has asked us to supply details of our project for their local newsletter. ‘Woodturning’ magazine has shown an interest in the draft article I sent in. John continues to make gates from recycled timber; each being given a name after a family member.

Simon Barnard and Julie Heryet have supplied shavings from their workshops to supplement the wood chip we are using as mulch around the base of trees. John informs me that our wood ‘Harty Grove Brake’ is a Google Wack!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The snow early in-month brought a new species to the fields – the comparatively rare portly snowman. The snow made it easier to recognise animal tracks including that of ‘greater spotted youth on toboggan’. (By Ed: ‘brake’ was an answer in a recent crossword. The clue was ‘thicket’ and took some considerable head scratching to get it).

**FINIS** (By Ed) Space defeats us once again. I had intended to mention our North Wilts visitors at the February meeting and to start something going on the vast array of decorated turning that is all the rage these days. BUT please do write in with your thoughts and views on the latter.

Website: [www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk](http://www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk)  
Email: [messages@avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk](mailto:messages@avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk)

*Editor: Vernon Hughes*

*”Si-Rusa” 6 Little Sands Yatton Keynell Chippenham Wilts SN14 7BA*

*Tel: 01249 782971*