



"TURNINGS"

Avon and Bristol Woodturners

*Affiliated to the Association of Woodturners of
Great Britain*

JUNE 2007

INTRODUCTION *(By Editor)*

This issue will be shorter than some, but there is one valuable development. This is the return of 'Musings From The Mill' by Max now that Derek E will be doing the 'Chairmanly bit'. With separate reports coming from the committee via Chairman and from 'The Mill' by Max we shall have a comprehensive update every month on everything of significance that occurs, or is planned, in the running and management of the Club.

It is up to the rest of us to keep our minds on other matters that are worth a mention in OUR newsletter. I shall try to do my bit with contributions on this and that, but I hope that a number of other members will do the same. Try to think of sharing occurrences in your ongoing turning experience that would be of interest or value to others, or pieces of news or topical information that come your way. Designs, and information on 'how to', are usually good value, along with useful hints and tips. We also need a volunteer to take over the role performed by Brian Oram until a few months back – that of reporting on the performance of visiting speakers and demonstrators. I trust that someone (or more than one) will come forward. I can offer a few pointers on how to tackle the task if that is needed. Ray Mellett, who has done a share of reporting, makes the point that while you are taking notes you do have to concentrate, but there is a positive benefit in having a reliable set of data in your own notebooks for later reference.

Jottings from the Chairman's Workshop

By a trick of circumstance and the time difference between the UK and the US, you can spare a sympathetic thought for me as the June Club meeting starts because I shall be sitting down to the morning sessions on the first day of the Utah Woodturning Symposium. Life is tough!! This trip is my retirement gift from my company. I was lucky to have had the opportunity to attend the symposium two years ago and promised myself a return visit at some time in the future. However, somebody at the office must have been paying attention and made a note. The gift came as a big surprise, and not only could I go to the Utah Symposium but also on to the American Association of Woodturners' annual meeting the week after in Portland, Oregon. I will meet up with Julie in Portland, and on our return we will put together a presentation about the AAW meeting and I will send you all to sleep whilst going on about the Utah Symposium.

In my absence Simon B will chair the June meeting.

The award of our first Life Presidency to Max Carey last month was a very pleasant way indeed for me to start my term as your Chairman. Max has been a great ambassador for our Club over many years and I know he will continue to be our ambassador in his new role.

Our first sub-committee will look into the possibility of obtaining funding and grants. Brian Howard and Ray Mellet will head it jointly. If any Club member has had experience of fundraising by grants and can give advice, Brian and Ray would be very pleased to hear from you. This is a very important sub-committee and its success will enable us to replace some of the older lathes and equipment at the Mill.

As this report has to be with our editor by first light on the Saturday before the club night I am writing this on the Friday night. We have completed the first day of the Lister Tyndale Steam Rally and I can therefore only give you a preliminary update. I have to say that day 1 was not a great success. In fact it was very poor. Only one light pull was sold and the marquee leaked every time it rained (and did it rain on Friday?). Of course each time that it rained the public came into the marquee but we could not display our wares because they had to be covered immediately to protect them against the rain. Our misery was intensified because we could not use our tea & coffee making equipment due to the generator being underpowered (and as all of you who have been to Westonbirt, etc., know, we need our tea & coffee!!). Let's hope days two & three are better; we will update you later.

I would like to thank all of you who came out to Berkeley Castle on the Thursday to help with the set-up for our first show of the year!!

Please don't forget the Bonnie Klein day on Thursday 16th August 07 at St. Teresa's Church Hall, from 10am – 4pm. The cost will be £12.50 for our Club members and £15.00 for non-members; coffee & tea will be supplied but DO bring a packed lunch. Entry will be by ticket only, and tickets are available from Dave Ward our Club 'moneybags'.

Well that will have to do for this month; I can claim 'force majeure'.

Best Regards.....Derek

MUSINGS FROM 'THE MILL' RETURNS! (By 'The Gaffer')

Hi! It's some time ago that the last 'Musings' were published. 'Chairman's Chat' conveyed the salient bits of info during the inter regnum. Having completed my term in office I was looking forward to taking a deep breath and a bit of relaxation. Wrong!! However, I did say that I would be able to devote all my time to 'The Mill' (taking a little time out for the odd holiday and my other commitments) and a resumption of 'Musings' is part of that.

Let me start by recognising that you all paid me the greatest of honours in making me our Club's first Honorary Life President, for which I am deeply grateful!! It means an awful lot.....to gain or earn such respect amongst one's peers!! I offer a sincere thank you to one and all; and for the framed certificate and the gavel produced lovingly by Tich.

And now, to 'The Mill'. It's well into its seventh year, the envy of most of our associated clubs, and an on-going success story. For a host of reasons staff and participants come and go, but the original concept and aims remain constant. At present, the staff (Tich Renee, Tim McEvoy, Ray Mellett and Steven Ellis are the mainstays of the 'AyeBee' Academy. They are the lynchpins of the organisation, and I trust you are very grateful for their largely unsung, voluntary and invaluable input. It's good to see Julie on the odd occasions imparting her expertise as well. Dave Ward looks after paperwork and stores. When his health

permits Neil Gow processes blanks and applies his technical know-how; Lorraine of course works on Pick-a-Peg products throughout the year (it's great to have you on board!).

Now.....to a notice to **all** members, whether regular weekly or not. Over the dates Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th and Saturday 28th July there is to be a special programme devoted wholly to grinding and sharpening. Note that there will be no turning! Tim McEvoy will demonstrate his way of grinding and sharpening. This idea has been mooted, and will be carried out, in response to the amount of time that our staff members spend each week sharpening and grinding members' tools. So, if you believe this will be a benefit for you, feel free to attend. **Bring your own grinders plus any dedicated jigs plus notebooks and cameras; and don't forget your sarnies and goggles!**

Short and sweet.....Kind Regards.....'The Gaffer'

Stop Press: On Wednesday 4th July a special Journeyman's Course will begin dealing with the making of wooden chucks including cutting threads to suit individual lathes. It is expected that three Wednesday sessions will be required in all.

STEAMED-UP GOGGLES DEFEATED *(By Ray Mellétt)*

I was talking to one of our newer (female) members, and she said that dust was a problem for her. Her answer to that is to wear a face mask, but she finds that sometimes it mists up. My mental reference library was placed on alert and I remembered Nick Agar having this problem. I therefore went back to my write-up, and there was the answer. Before donning the mask rub the inside of the visor with a wetting agent. Most use a little 'Squeezy' washing up liquid, which de-wets the inner surface and hence breaks down the surface tension of the condensation globules, thereby causing it to form a clear, thin moist film, that does not then distort vision.

This was an old car trick long before windscreen heaters were common!

Cheers.....Ray

UNUSUAL 'COMMISSIONS' *(By Vernon Hughes)*

This is a subject that many a Club member must have met. So, why not tell us about it? The pieces might be quite simple but the very fact that someone needs to have them made is the interesting point, especially in these days of cheap imports of many wooden items that push down interest in many of our crafted pieces. In an attempt to set this particular ball rolling I explain a few requests that have come my way.

There's a local Victorian School that is maintained just as it was well over a hundred years ago, and serves as a living museum and place of interest for people of all ages. There are educational visits by today's schoolchildren from a wide area, and coach parties of adult tourists include it in their pursuit of interesting places to visit. Replacement or additional wooden items for the inventory are required from time to time and I am currently making small dumbbells to a specified pattern. I have yet to check exactly how they were used but I think it was for small children's exercise and for coordination activity. (On a side-note it is a sobering fact found by looking back in the records that childhood death was quite common in that era, often from illnesses that would be readily cleared up today). I have also to complete a few more croquet balls, used alternatively in a form of bowls or skittles. I mentioned once before that I had also made a matching easel peg to support an old style blackboard.

The seamanship and knot-tying fraternity have come up with a couple of 'specials' recently, and I am beginning to see a few more opportunities in the latter. An exceptionally able and committed Sea Cadet leader in Cwmbran (ex-RN and the steelworks) gave me a couple of pieces of hardwood a few months

ago with a request that I make a pair of belaying pins from them. This was a 'barter job', he having helped me on something in the field of knotting. The nicely shaped handles had to be about 5 inches long with a collar below to hold the pins in their slot holes in a sailing ship (they hold sail cordage in position at about waist level). There was then a tapered section about 16 inches in length which had to have a rounded finishing end (i.e. not pointed). He explained though than in war at sea in the days of sail such pins often served as handy weapons; held at the 'wrong' end they gave a rather truncheon-like feel.

The same chap has now come up with a piece of driftwood fished out of the local river that is in fact a heavy-duty stake for use in gardening or similar work. I judge it to be Iroko and it is about 4 feet in length. Could I make him a walking stick with a spherical knob on the end please? It is another barter job; I now have a fine brass bell complete with bellrope. There will be some challenge in this task arising mainly from the length of the stick (say 33 inches) and my lack of a lathe-steady. We shall see how that goes, but I have already decided for reasons of proportion that the spherical knob needs to be made separately. A first prototype knob has been turned, stained, drilled out and fitted with a short steel bar to connect to the stem of the stick and it looks OK. I shall probably make another for the finished article. Now I have to decide whether to make the main stem in one piece or in sections. We shall see idc, **but TELL ME**, what would you the reader do? Incidentally, I should add that the stick is to be tapered and fitted with a finishing ferrule, but will then be decorated with handsome seaman's knotting. If I can get the turning right 'Selwyn' will develop it into a very attractive finished stick.

I try from time to time to come up with a challenge for fellow branch members using turned items as a basis for decoration with cord. Later this year I hope to produce a few simple designs. Some members will have seen in the past the design of shopping bag handle that I devised for this purpose. It had spheres at both ends to give scope for tiddly 'covering knots'. A pyrographic artist has even found imaginative ways of exercising her artistry on that particular pattern, and she and others create a slow trickle demand.

OK folks! There's a start for you, **and just a bit of a challenge. Please fill my post bag with reports of your experiences in this field of the 'not-so-ordinary'!** I suggest you try to think along the lines of..... purpose, design, working method, difficulties and solutions, finish, etc. **There must be some interesting experiences out there amongst the membership at large!! Mustn't there???**

WEB LINKS *(From Dave Ward)*

Dave has asked that the fact that there are two new web links on our website links page be highlighted. I can't say more because Dave gave no details, and until I acquire broadband I do not go to the 'dial-up' expense of accessing the www.

CONCLUSION *(By Ed)*

OK, this issue finishes conveniently at 4 sides of A4. I am happy with this because, as you know, I don't like padding for its own sake. **However**, selected 'Matters of Interest' have their place so don't hold back on them!

Website: www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk
Email: messages@avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk

Editor: Vernon Hughes