



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

JULY 2007

INTRODUCTION *(By Editor)*

You have to hand it to 'SnodgraZ' the observer of life! I would normally think twice about granting a full two sides to a report, BUT his coverage and style are so informative, entertaining and thought-provoking that I have accepted 'The Jewson Lot' for the benefit of members. There is also a welcome contribution from past Chairman, Ian Guy, on the theme of 'trying something new'. Thank you!

ON THE MEND I TRUST *(From Fred Pitt)*

"Many thanks to you all for your kind wishes during my recent stay in hospital! I am now home and hopefully on the mend, so with a bit of luck I shall see you all again soon and get my share of cuddles from Sandra and Lorraine.
Oh, and by the way, thank you Ray for visiting me, and please accept my apologies if I didn't appear to recognise you, but I was up to the eyeballs in drugs at the time.
Many thanks once again.....Fred

ANNOUNCEMENTS AT JUNE MEETING *(As jotted down by Ed.)*

These included the following that bear repetition:

- Simon and John have a substantial quantity of recently felled Yew and Walnut. It is available to members subject to you making arrangements with them and a donation to the Bursary Fund.
- The Club Shop still needs members' enthusiastic support. Do use it PLEASE to avoid losing it!
- Club Subscriptions - **Disappointingly some are still outstanding. Those concerned - Please act ASAP!**
- Berkeley Castle - 11 members of the public showed an interest in joining the Club. Thanks were extended to those who helped mount our stand.
- Pick-a-Peg - Many prizes are needed! Please get into production!
- Thornbury in August - **More helpers are needed. Please do volunteer!**
- Westonbirt at End of August - **It is not too soon** to start reporting which sessions and jobs you are up for!

Jottings from the Chairman's Workshop

July already, and only 5 weeks until Westonbirt. We need more items for "Pick-a-Peg" (Lorraine says approx 400) so if each member made just 4 items that would 'do it'; so please have a go. If you ask any of the committee members we can supply the wood. With Westonbirt in mind we will need helpers over the 5-day's (that's 1 day set up and the 4 days of the show); again please let a committee member know if you will be available and what days!!

I am sorry that I missed last months meeting, but I understand that it went off well and the demo was very good. As you will remember from last months "Turnings" I was in the US at the Utah Symposium and then the AAW meeting in Portland. All I can say about both meetings is that I very nearly came home and threw all my tools into the bin. If I make it to 90 I still won't be able to produce work to the standard on display. However, I have gained so much information that I will start to put into my humble efforts. I'll say no now because I plan to give a presentation on both of the US shows; and we will also look at the AWGB Seminar during our August meeting. That event is going to be a bit different as I will be asking some of the Club members to make a small item on the night that could be used for "Pick-a-Peg;" we may make it into a time competition, but wait and see.

Please do not forget the Bonnie Klein day on 16th August; we will start at about 10am and go on until 4.30pm and then the normal Club night will be in the evening. I went to one of Bonnie's demos at the AAW meeting in Portland and if that was anything to go by we are in for a real treat.

As indicated last month the Lister Tyndale Steam Rally was our first show of the year, and the first day and a half was not too good (see a full report elsewhere in this issue). I was unable to attend the last day and a half but reports are that it got better as time went on and we in fact covered our costs. So if the weather had been better it could have been a success; we will try again next year.

Footnote: I thought that when I retired I would be able to spend lots of time in my workshop, but that's just not the case. When I was at work, retired people would tell me that they "just could not understand how they ever had time to go to work", I used to look at them and think what a load of old rubbish! Well, now I understand.

Best Regards.....Derek

TRYING SOMETHING NEW - THREAD CHASING (By Ian Guy)

I have been woodturning for 15 years plus, and have turned most things from Lace Bobbins to 5ft Newel Posts.

Many years ago during a visit to a woodturning exhibition I marvelled at Bill Jones chasing threads in ivory in the construction of chessmen. I have always had a wish to master this part of woodturning but considered it far too daunting and beyond my capabilities. Several years elapsed and I read lots of articles on the subject, but still no action! Then a couple of years back John Berkeley visited the Club and my interest was sparked again. On that occasion I bought his book and a pair of chasers. The section on thread chasing was studied many times, but still I fought shy of making an attempt until about 3 weeks ago when, reading his book once again I read his words as follows:

"If you stick to the principles that I will outline, and practice them, I am sure you will be successful in acquiring this skill. I myself learnt from a book, so it can't be too difficult".

Getting Started: You will need a pair of chasers say 22 t.p.i. (threads per inch). You may think that a coarser thread of about 6 t.p.i. would be easier, but in fact starting with the finer thread is much more practical. Well seasoned, close-grained, hardwood such as Box, Yew heartwood, Lignum Vitae, etc., etc. should be used. The underside of the chasers must be free of any sharp edges, and the toolrest must be perfectly smooth to allow the chasers to glide effortlessly over the rest.

The chaser moves in a circular motion on the rest; anti-clockwise for the external thread and clockwise for the internal. This will produce a right hand thread. Lathe speed used was 400-450 r.p.m.

Practice is the key!!! Try to chase a thread each day for about 2 weeks, starting each day with the thought - "give us our daily thread" and you will achieve. In the past 3 weeks I have completed 15 boxes ranging in size from 3/4" diameter up to 4", and I am pleased with the results.

UPDATE ON 'THE STICK' (By Vernon Hughes)

I was very grateful to Ian Guy who wrote to me with some practical advice and relevant comments about my project, and to Ray Mellett who offered more Iroko for me to practice with. As it so happened, however, I had taken the plunge and tackled the task head-on after weighing the options and thinking carefully about the order of work. There was nothing to lose in **trying** to make the stem in a single piece,

even though I lacked a steady, so I decided to 'give it a go'. The approx 1½" square Iroko stake was reduced to about 33½" in length, and mounted on the 'Record' CL3 (36" bed) lathe for which I have a 17" long toolrest mounted on two banjos. A 4-jaw chuck was used to hold one end, although once roughed down to a cylinder the piece was reversed immediately to turn down the short residual square section. To keep things brief I can report that the tapering of the stick was achieved somewhat painstakingly, with the most delicate (surgeon's) touch on the tools, and steadying with the fingers a little (and rather clumsily due to unfamiliarity) when working near the half way point. Tools used in tapering were roughing and spindle gouges, skew chisel of course **and, surprisingly**, a ½" square ended scraper. When it came to drilling a 10mm hole in the top end to take the steel rod by which the knob was to be connected, I had to switch to the longer-bed, 'Turnstyler' lathe to accommodate the reach of the Jacobs chuck and drill bit. Having to use a 2 morse taper sleeve to take the 1 morse taper Jacobs chuck stem meant that there was only just enough available distance, even on the larger lathe. It was a huge relief to find that despite having a different 4-jaw chuck on that lathe, the stick held dead true using the point of the 10mm drill as a tail centre, and the drilling operation could not have been more straightforward. The stick did spring slightly out of true though once the tail centre support was removed.

There was one irritating mistake at the end of the job. Having roughly judged the diameter of the tip end of the taper by eye 'twas a shock to find that it was a slack fit in the smallest tip cup in the accessories tin. Blast!! Or similar!! There was nothing for it but to take between ½" to ¾" off the tip. In doing this I lost the exact centre point and therefore ended up with an imperfectly cut shoulder for the cup to sit against. So, we live and learn! I shall have the stick with me at the July Club night for anyone interested to see.

Two final points! I suspect that heavy duty Iroko is one of the few common timbers with which an 'unsteadied' piece of this length could be made. Finally, I have suggested to Chairman that the Club's steady held at 'The Mill' be brought in to a Club Night to get non-engineer members' brains going on designing and making their own steadies. Incidentally, I remember past Chairman Colin Hazell advising us some years ago that the quality of bearings in modern roller blades and skates makes their wheels ideal for use in steadies. (In the **June 1994 (repeat 1994) issue of 'Turnings'** it was reported that 'Colin Hazell gave an interesting, informative and brief explanation of how to make a steady using skateboard wheels for the rollers.' My recollection was of a later date so he must have advised us more than once).

MUSINGS FROM 'THE MILL' (By *The Gaffer*)

Down here at 'The Mill' we have learned that there is a turner (not far from these parts) who still works to the old adage "that's for me to know and you to find out sonny." It takes me back nearly 60 years and I'll fill in some family background and experience of trade secrecy when Ed has the space to spare. How different the attitudes of most turners are today. Our line down here is...."if you want to know, just ask! There's an enormous fund of knowledge amongst our members that will be freely divulged. Moving right up to date.....

The 'Aye-Bee Academy turns a new dimension. July 4th witnessed the much needed, and awaited inauguration of 'the Journeyman Experience', with 19 keen founder members (inclgd. 4 staff) on the books. 10 arrived on the day anxiously awaiting the launch. There was detailed discussion of the format, then demonstration, then production. In essence, each journeyman in turn will evolve an idea, prepare/research at home, advise colleagues of kit and blanks required, a week or so in advance. Then at 10am the following Wednesday he/she will introduce, display, initiate discussion and then demonstrate and complete production.

Kicking it off on day 1 our Senior Mill Tutor, Tich Renee, was chucking stuff, demoing and providing blanks for wooden spring chucks, 2" nominal home made wooden screw chucks and alternative work holding methods (glue and paper, hot melt, double sided tape, jam and fruit chucks, foam-faced MDF discs, drilling and tapping 18mm MDF discs to fit your own lathe, sanding discs, wooden accessory Cole jaws as an addition to your scroll chuck). Whew!!! General comments were very encouraging and there was plenty of banter. The chucks will come in handy for a 1⅞" diameter egg making session.

The normal 'run-of-the-Mill' stuff ran in conjunction with the journeymen. 18 members were in attendance, 4 on apprentice work, 1 on an urgent commission and 3 working on refurbishment of the treadle lathe.

9 weeks' projects are listed below for your diaries. If any members think 'that's just up my street' contact a member of staff and turn up ready and prepared to enjoy!

July 11th (WAS) Steve Ellis and Vicky Sanders on Small Pots with Ornamental Cabochons.

“ 18th (WAS) Ray Mellett on No 1 & 2 MT drive centres and revolving centre protection.

“ 24, 25 & 28th Tim McEvoy on Grinding, Sharpening & Honing.

August 1st Lorraine on mass production work (Pick-a-Peg needs 400 items).

“ 8th Intensive practice; blanks will be provided - your choice of item.

“ 15th ME set-up day; Journeymen wooden eggs.

“ 22nd Ken Dolling on Mortars & Pestles.

“ 29th Ralph Tilbrook on Setting up his Vacuum Chuck with a test drive for all.

Sept 6th Derek Edwards on Pen Making.

PS: Steve Ellis and Vicky Sanders on 11 July were superb! Decorative lidded boxes were on display and there was box making and decorative turning. 10 journeymen participated. Very well done! All is extremely encouraging and bodes well! Come and join us! There's room for more!

A Personal View of the Berkley Steam Fair *(By SnodgraZ)*

I once thought being retired meant that I had plenty of time on my hands in which to do as I liked.

WRONG. After a decade, I have discovered that the old advice given to me that if you want anything done, do it before you retire, since you will have no spare time afterwards, is so true. So it was with the Berkeley Steam Fair

To set the scene, it's now Sunday, 9pm, and I've just got home after helping Max and Simon empty Simon's big trailer at the Mill:- a 14 hour day, on Father's day! Tich still has the lathe bits and pieces, and Ralph somehow got the Gallery display stand and kit into his Corsa. My Volvo is crammed with Steve's homebuilt "Rose Engine" kit, Pic-a-Peg kit, and the oddies. The stand was all cleared down and packed in 1¼ hours- less than a quarter of the set up time!!! So after over 45 hours (more than my old working week!) and 200 odd miles, it was over for me. Well, not quite, as my car still has to be emptied at the Mill on Tuesday.,

The local Severn weather is changeable but mainly wet which did not help at all - **Nor did the limited response to the appeal for help at the stand**, which meant in the main, with a few exceptions from the "younger" members, it was left to the "old faithful few" to set it up and run, thus ensuring that those that did attend saw very little of the actual show. (However, "C'est la guerre", as General Charles de Gaulle was heard muttering as he walked up the Seine). These divided neatly into the end Gallery led by Ralph, the Sales led by Derek, and the Demonstration led by Tich. All was co-ordinated by Derek ("Heavy is the head that wears the crown"- a suitable quote inspired by the setting!)

After several "re-adjustments", "minor changes" and other euphemisms for the genuine "departmental malfunction" the stand grew, a bit like Topsy, & it was up - the tables adorned in the green cloths, the kit installed in the demonstration area thanks mainly to Tich and Steve, and the Gallery stand ready. At last we were all set. But then Derek told us he would not be able to cover all the days, as he was off somewhere, (but I can't remember where). By late afternoon, we were ready for the standard industrial lubricant - that "cuppa". With the generator running, and "the man" running around testing, I thought our luck was in. 'twas not to be! When he reached **our** distribution box, I asked "OK?" He replied "OK!" So, naturally I plugged in, and switched on our boiler. Unknown to me, he was outside still testing, and whilst so doing got a right "belt" as a result. He was not amused. The boiler was banned, and I was public enemy number one! (I've always maintained that the greatest humour is in the greatest tragedy! After all, the definition of a sense of humour is laughing at something, which, if it happened to you, would make you raving mad!)

However, on Friday, the Severn dished up its worst weather, with thunder, lightning, more rain, and more rain, interspersed with a few showers and brief spells of respite. "Great", we thought - "that will drive the punters in to shelter". WRONG again. We were subjected to continuous showers from the roof of the marquee, which meant we had to learn a new rain dance of jump to miss the drips. It got so bad that after several attempts to cover up the displays, and a new game called "drip watching", we gave up. All our efforts for the whole day were rewarded with takings of £1.20!

On the social side, a couple of our members celebrated their birthdays over the weekend (no names, no pack drill), but as one was away celebrating, our "Timber Tones" Choir sent, via my mobile phone, their impromptu greetings in what is best described as "loose harmony". (It was appreciated, but we all missed you!) It was also Father's Day, not that I noticed. One stall holder said she had no time to prepare, so had not told her husband! Another, I know, got a quick card in a box filled with Fudge, all obtained within the marquee. When I showed a woman who operated a similar board to Pick-a-Peg for her school that pegs were easier than straws, and the board swivelled to give an instant "refill", she smiled, and said "That IS a good idea", then paused, adding reluctantly, "for a man!" You can't win. Dave and Neil also did a wonderful job with persuasive powers, ably helped by Neil's wife on the Sunday, but in one instance, it was too good. A woman had £1's worth or 5 goes, and won a third, a second and the first prize! (To the mathematicians out there, what are the chances of that?)

The Stands and Demonstrations attracted a lot of interest, and the increased space, and hence layout, enabled far more to view and talk to Steve with his beautiful intricate patterns - (someone suggested I made a set of draughts like that!) and whoever was demonstrating on the lathe. A well known law said that Tich had a bowl disintegrate on him, but he had his fans, some of whom kept coming back! One small girl was fascinated, and despite Mum's pleas, insisted she saw Tich finish his small bowl. She was so pleased to see the finished product, but Tich made her day when he gave her the finished bowl, just as he had finished turning it. She was delighted, and was full of gratitude. But there is a sequel. On Sunday morning, early, she asked me with what should she finish it? I took her to Tich, who took off what he was turning, re-chucked the bowl, sanded it, and wax polished it for her, whilst talking to Mum about oils, scents etc, etc, and showing her his Australian orange oil. (Makes a change from etchings!) The look on that little girl's face made the whole weekend worthwhile, and I know it touched Tich, too. Simon did the same with some of his yew mushrooms, and I gave away my dibber to another small girl, who was ecstatic.

The Gallery, ably manned by Ralph and his team of helpers, attracted a great following. Simon Barnard's two new pieces, executed whilst with Nick Agar, were two extremes of Nick's theme - "What can I do with that odd bit of wood?" I also noticed he practiced on his hollow bored piece Nick's advice to keep the hole small enough so inquisitive turners can't get their finger in to feel how smooth it is inside!. Congratulations, Simon-two stunning pieces!

However, it was not all positive. Our other Simon got quizzed as to why he had not included the circlips each side of the ballrace in his model of the split bearing housing! (And where are the double helical flat spring washers that should be under the nuts?) But that really is a terrific piece of ingenuity, precision, and skill. I find more to admire every time I see it.

From a personal view, I feel the Club gained a lot of "street cred". Every stall holder I talked to congratulated us on the stand - the attractiveness, the pieces, and their presentation, the professionalism of all the helpers, neatly presentable in their ABWT shirts, and the expertise and organisation that went into it all (if only they knew.) What they failed to see, behind the scenes, was the emergence of the new ABWT male fashion - Dave and Mervyn in their steel toe-capped safety wellie boots!! It takes all sorts.

The interest shown was great, and it was so pleasing to be able to chat to so many, from all walks of life, who shared our love of wood and associated crafts. What was pleasing, from a wrinkly's point of view, was the number of young and very young (14 year olds) that wanted to visit the Mill and have a go. (But I knew I was optimistic when I did my enquiry record form with 20 rows!)

Thanks to all who contributed their pieces, but just a small request. PLEASE, oh PLEASE, state the wood you have used. Everyone who picks up a piece asks "What's the wood?"

And please think of sparing just a few hours of your time to advance the interests of what is, after all, YOUR club. We were very short of helpers this time!

But, thanks to those who did help to "man the fort", and to Derek for leading us (he left early to go somewhere, but again I can't remember where he said he was going)

Our thanks go to the team that produced the new laminated Mood Boards for the Gallery, and my friends at 'HEADLINES' that printed off some of our new coloured Tri-fold leaflets at the last minute, so I could fold them, and we could give them out to our enquirers.

The Ultimate Test - Would I do it again? Answer - YES!

Although it is hard work, there is also great fun, and it's part of **our** Club's ethos - it is about: comradeship, sharing ideas and helping each other. Long may it be so! So, do come and join us at our next show - you don't have to be a masochist like me and do all 4 days -just a few hours.

See you at the Model Exhibition at Thornbury???.....SnodgraZ

HINTS & TIPS (*Culled from The Archives*)

1. Pieces of foam at the back of the lathe or in the tool tray or wherever appropriate will protect the edge of cutting tools when laid down. (*Simon Keen - June 1993*)
2. **Using masonry nails for small, intricate or detailed turning** - Ever thought of these nails, ground at either end, to make miniature turning tools? Regrind either the point or the head to give small /hard tools. Make a handle to hold the nail and you have a very effective, small turning tool for hardly any cost. (*Our founder, Don White - October 1993*) (Simon Keen is a current expert).
3. **Health & Safety Stop Press:** Don't spit with your facemask on! (*Source - Ditto H & T 2*).

TIPS DO YOU KNOW SOMETHING WE DON'T??
AND Please let Editor know any tips or hints that can be passed
HINTS on in these columns (Time was when members did this).

CONCLUSION (*By Editor*)

Due to huge changes in the makeup of the membership over recent years I now know far fewer members than used to be the case. This gives rise to some unease because an editor needs to know, and have a rapport with, the readership. It does actually affect the way one approaches the job! All readers, but particularly newer members, are welcome to come and buttonhole me on any subject you like on Club nights (I don't miss many). Or, give me a ring (01249 782971). (*See also 'Turnings' March 1995 page 3*).

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