



'TURNINGS'

Avon & Bristol Woodturners
(Honorary Life President - Max Carey)

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 THE AVON & BRISTOL BRANCH

SEPTEMBER 2008

INTRODUCTION (By Editor)

After initial misgivings I soon warmed to the Committee's decision to dispense with an August issue of 'Turnings' even though I had already set it up and started work. The one disadvantage was that it worked against the concept of *topicality* that is a cornerstone of my Editorial thinking but never mind. As Neville Shute's heroes used to say "it'll all be the same in a hundred years". In our case a lot less I fancy!

There are two points to emphasise/explain this month. The first concerns Max' health (see Chairman's Jottings in which he speaks for all of us!!!). The second is the amount of space allocated to reports on Westonbirt. Three contributors have dealt with different aspects of this year's experience so you will find very little duplication in their reports.

And a third point. Nothing has come in about the Model Engineering Exhibition at Thornbury! This seems unfair on those who put in the effort. Is anyone in a position to plug this gap please?

ANNOUNCEMENT (From Programme Managers)

We have Mark Hancock booked for an all day demo at The Mill on Wednesday 29th October 2008. He will be demonstrating and instructing on methods of making vessels carved with an 'Arbortec' and reciprocating carver involving hollowing, plus carving, ebonising and air brushing techniques.

Jottings from the Chairman's WORKSHOP (By Derek Edwards)

As most of you will know by now, Max has been diagnosed with cancer. Unfortunately it is inoperable but he has started on his first course of chemotherapy. Last week was the second dose, and so by the time you get this copy he will have had three doses. June told me that he is taking it well but he gets very tired (I think it's just an excuse to get out of doing the housework; madam, will get wise to that one Max). It is very difficult to know that to say at a time like this but I think this sums it up - Max, from all of us at the Club we wish you a speedy recovery and STOP SMOKING and the pot calling the kettle black!!

On my return from my three days in Manchester last week (Wednesday) I was 'phoned and told that Tich had that day been taken into hospital with pneumonia. I am pleased to say that as I am writing this he has just rung to say he is out and back home but I understand that Dee had asked the doctors if he could stay

in hospital (in fact she was begging them) for at least two weeks; but the answer was 'if he stays all of the nurses will leave' so I assume he is getting better. Let's hope so. Best wishes Tich from us all!!

September is the month that brings good or bad news for Club finances as we get to know how good Westonbirt was. Well it was not as good as last year (but then last year was an exceptional one), but all-in-all, yes, I think it was a success! The figures are listed below and I understand 'Woodentop' will do his annual report later in this copy of "Turnings".

Total Income	£3171.38
Total Expenditure	£791.73
Total Profit	£2379.65
Paid to Members	£1290.58 leaving a Total Profit to Club of £1089.07

The Income came about as follows: -

Sale of members' work	£1519
Sale of old Club books	£119
Pick-a-Peg	£1081.53
Making Mice for the Kids	£336.25
Win a House	£115.60
Total	£3171.38

My thanks go out as ever to all the Club members and helpers who helped over the 6 days it takes to put on Westonbirt. For me this is one of the best weekends of the year; we all have a good time and no one is immune from the odd practical joke. This year we had our own live-in Security Guard, Mary Ashton. She kindly moved her tent so that she could look after our marquee during the night. Thanks Mary!

I do have to thank one person in particular this year and that is Martin Lawrence. Martin coordinated this year's show; his first, and according to him, his last; but I think not. At least I hope not!! Coordinating Westonbirt is one big headache from start to finish but Martin did it with panache. Once again Martin, on behalf of the Club, thank you very much indeed!!!

For some time now your committee has been working on a project with AWGB to run a Youth Training Weekend at the Mill next year. I am pleased to inform you that it will be in April '09. We will be able to take 10 youngsters aged between 14 and 18 for the two-day weekend workshop, the cost to each person being £10 for the two days. We would like to offer the places to our own Club members' children/grandchildren first, but please, the purpose of this is to encourage youngsters into woodturning and not just for one weekend. I will give more details and how to get an application form in the October issue of 'Turnings'.

Best Regards.....Derek

ABWT-WESTONBIRT 2008 (By 'Woodentop')

Doesn't it seem ages ago that we were huddled in our marquee at Westonbirt? But fond memories linger on, and this brief report recalls some of them for those who unfortunately were not able to share them with us.

Why do we do it? It's simply to give some publicity to the Club, to provide an outlet for those Club members wishing to sell their products, to give the public a chance to see the result of our efforts, to give pleasure to those who visit our marquee, and to provide the children with some activities which give them pleasure, and a chance to make and/or win something for a modest cost. And, yes, as Dave our treasurer keeps reminding me, to make a profit in order to keep our Club subs low for the benefit of all our members. So that, in a nutshell, is our objective, our "mission statement"

Did we achieve-were we successful? Emphatically, YES!!

Despite the public coming in numbers, they were loathe to part with their money, and there were no doubt many reasons for that (high entrance fees, economic turndown, etc?), which resulted in very poor sales income (below £400 to Club funds). However the Pick-a-Peg team, ably fronted by Lorraine, whose dulcet pleas to "come and spend your money with me" resulted in the first time record of taking over a £1000, yes £1k, or the equivalent of reducing each member's sub by £10! What a wonderful reward for all that hard work put in. That meant turning over 11 trees, and that is not easy, averaging 3 per day. In practical terms, that meant replacing nearly 8000 little pegs, bending down 8000 times, and aching all over 8000 times! More on that later.



Once gain, the marquee was a hive of activity, noise, laughter, shouts of pleasure, expressions of disbelief, of praise, and in some cases, envy. But everyone who entered gained from their experience. They were accosted, chatted up, encouraged to spend and above all to enjoy the combined efforts of our members. That's not to say there were no snags or faux pas. For example, I will admit to leaving the roof of the staff gazebo behind, but thanks to Doug, who lent us his, we got it up in no time. Or when I told one of the lovely lady (weren't they all lovely?) admirers "If you see anything that takes your fancy, don't be afraid to pick it up, caress it gently and lovingly to really appreciate it." By the smile she gave me I quickly had to add "I refer of course to the items, not our members, Madam"!

The children's theme was also taken up by Vicky, with the help of Melita and others, with her "decorate a mouse" stall. Children could buy a basic mouse - (turned by Vicky, of course), add a tail (pipe cleaner) and decorate its face, resulting in some colourful creations.

The "Plonker" Win a Birdbox stall was also a popular stop, and hopefully next year our contribution to the environment will result in many birds successfully nesting if the boxes all get put up.

But the look on the children's faces made it all worth while. Firstly, there was anticipation, which turned to the serious as they decided which peg to draw, then either disappointment, or elation as they won something. In between was the friendly banter between the stall teams and the parents.

In a different way, the Gallery team, with JWS, George, Derek, Mary and others, also set up their banter, taking enquiries, and a few commissions. All were willing to explain their versions of "How2" to those interested in the detailed technical side, and George's reversed turned candlesticks were the subject of a lot of interest. It was also good that in most cases they could talk to the member who had made the item, or done similar, which was much appreciated. Most of the visitors expressed interest, together with many compliments.

Although there were many and varied items on display, the public just were not buying, which was disappointing. Many other exhibitors also suffered this experience.

The Demonstration area was always well populated, with many queries and lots of interest being shown, from the professional to the wannabe. We had two lathes operating again this year, on a rota, so there was a variety of items being demonstrated. There was also our refurbished treadle lathe, which Mary and Ken



Dolling had been instrumental in bringing to fruition, and Ken has taken it under his wing (or should that be his foot?) During his time he demonstrated that wood does not need to spin like a bat out of hell, but by patience, understanding the wood, and exercising basic skills, plus a lot of leg effort, he produced some interesting and quality items.

Afterwards, it's a wonder he didn't walk in circles!

Steve exhibited a wonderful collection of Rose Engine turnings, and his stall was always crowded, as he talked and demonstrated the techniques used to produce some unbelievable items. It was so nice to see his enthusiasm being amply rewarded by an admiring and enquiring crowd.

We even had someone from Kent, and New Zealand, and many said they had remembered us from previous years and had made a special effort to look us up again.

That was the good news. But it didn't just happen, like Topsy!



It took a lot of careful planning, and hard work. Martin kindly took over from Dave as "Organiser", and should be pleased at his first effort. But it takes a whole team of volunteers to get things ready, to ensure it is all there, that facilities are provided, that effort and manpower and know-how is harnessed in loading, transporting, and erecting. It took all day Thursday to do so, compared with an hour to dismantle and pack and load!

To all those who contributed, be it on the day, or in the background making Pick-a-Peg items, we are all grateful. But please remember, we rely on Pick-a-Peg for most of our income, to keep our fees low, and above all, for our survival. But to maintain this status quo, we need **YOUR** help. We are now out of everything; the cupboard is literally bare!! If we are to do the show at Shepton Mallet, on April 18th/19th, **we need a massive top up!!**

"If turning 100 items a day puts you off, just try 10" I read recently, so IF everyone produced just 10 items, we'd soon have our stock levels healthy again. As previously stated, we are out of everything, and badly need mushrooms, whistles, spinning tops, traditional dibbers, and other small items which would appeal to children; plus any new ideas will be most welcome.

We turned nearly 12 trees, taking about £90 per tree, but gave away 660 third prizes, 60 second prizes, and 12 first. Translating this data into meaningful terms works out that if every member turned 12 small items, 2 good items, and a special excellent item for first prize, we would be able to restock for Shepton Mallet and next year's Westonbirt. Otherwise the alternative will be a massive rise in fees, and we don't want that, do we?

As for the rest of the show well for obvious reasons I didn't get a lot of time for a good look around. There were some beautiful and clever works on display. It was a pleasure to see and talk to my old

friend, the Polish toymaker, and the maker of those wonderful quirky oak clocks, with not a straight edge to be seen but a big boot! Our friends from Gloucester did not look like a bordello's tent this year, but their display and layout were totally different to ours, maybe more functional, but not so intimate effort. After his setback it was nice to see Max and June, who had just returned on the Saturday from their brief holiday in France. Unfortunately, their plane was delayed by two hours due to airport closure whilst the French security hunted down those who were firing at the planes as they left or arrived at the airport! (Time for another deserved snifter!) We also had our annual visit from the "Whistle man" who kindly lent us his four note prairie train whistle to enable us to copy. (I'm nearly there!!) Finally, a great thanks to Mary. She had just finished pitching her tent, when the lads promptly went and took it down again, to re-pitch it just at the back of our gazebo, so she and her friends could be our "night watch guard", as there was no security provided!!

MUSINGS FROM THE MILL (By The Gaffer)

Thanks chaps for all your kind wishes and thoughts! It's quite humbling. I'll bet Ray Mellett felt the same way. Three friends are currently on a pilgrimage in Lourdes praying. My sister's husband, Bishop Roger, tells me they are praying fervently, so I'm saturated spiritually. On the medical side I couldn't have more expertise. Derek Edwards' advice was sound and I've acted upon it. My best friend is head of our local Medical Centre and is very supportive as are June and the family, including Ellie (granddaughter) along with the consultants and staff administering chemo. I'm feeling great; no side effects. Ellie graduated recently with double honours and a distinction in medicine and now works at Cardiff's Heath hospital. She is keen to learn woodturning and I've already *administered* her first lesson. I'm about to register her with Peter Oram and pay her subs.

August, our annual high profile show month was well presented, profitable, good fun, hard work but very enjoyable. It seems to get better every year. Well done, one and all!! Each year, new talented members gain confidence and bubble to the top. This year was no exception. Take George King for one; I could



see he was having a great time. It was a great team effort led by Martin Lawrence who came to the fore the previous year. He's a natural leader and currently one of our top men. Other features were Vicky's mice, Lorraine's P&P, Dave's accounting (shop and bird boxes), Peter Oram's Club promotion, JWS with a very creditable gallery. Mervyn took a bit of stick but administered high quality first aid to Melita's nasty laceration caused by dropping a lump of lumber onto her big toe; Ouch!! And finally there was Tich, the backbone with the demo area logistics, set-up and stripping giving his seventh year of invaluable, unstinting input. Dee had a little worry one day when he suffered, partly due to overwork.

(By Ed: The photograph at inset shows just one of Tich's many superb items – portraying his skill at piercing. There will be no prize for anyone spotting his name, worked neatly into the decorated rim).

Back to The Mill where re-storage of exhibition material and early month work-party tasks were completed. It's back to our regular schedule now. We have room for several new apprentices so perhaps Peter O's list of interested people from Thornbury and Westonbirt can be studied to identify the possibles. I know they will receive a warm welcome, sound tuition and every encouragement we can offer. Hand and eye coordination is a very difficult thing to teach, but fortunately, it is second nature to some. They are the ones who advance quickly.

Coming Up - As you will see in the announcement in this issue there is to be an entertaining mid-week seminar with Mark Hancock on Wednesday 29th October. **Your attendance will make it a success!!** It is sure to be both instructional and enjoyable!!

(By Ed: In his contribution this month Max included some philosophical thoughts about the history and development of Turning, and our Club and the Mill's part in it, all against the backdrop of the huge scientific, technical and social advances made in the 20th century. For reasons of timing and balance I have extracted it for inclusion in its own right in a future issue of the newsletter.)

HINTS AND TIPS (By Vernon Hughes)

A good one that I omitted to mention in July was about carnauba wax (that stuff you can eat if things get desperate). A demonstrator at North Wilts told us that he obtains his wax in the form of flakes which he melts down into a mould to get an acute angle at the edges which enables him to wax those 'hard-to-reach' places that the usual chunky blocks cannot reach. His shallow, oval (? pastry) mould must have been from a kitchen supplies shop. The shape seemed familiar, although I can't say for sure what kind of delicacy is made like that. I may try melting down my block into a mould, or I suppose I could shape it using a sharp blade and then melt and mould the scraps to avoid waste.

If anyone is thinking of making a rotating sphere-making jig (à la Dave Springett) be aware that I E-mailed him to ask for details of the cutting tool he used at his demo (see also his fine book 'Woodturning Wizardry' for full construction details). He responded in 48 hours with the part number listed in the huge J & L Industrial Supplies catalogue (do you all get that or have access to it?). The bit is on page 333Z and is a square section 1/4" 'Eclipse' toolbit, ordering code ECB-22530D for a 3" and ECB-22540J for a 4" size. VAT-ex prices are £7.59 and £9.85 respectively. These bits have a 5% cobalt content 'to give optimum hardness, grindability and cutting performance'.

Picked up from Mark Hancock - (1) Use cabinet scrapers freehand to get the curve you want or to blend one curve into another or to remove the pip at the centre of a piece. Obtain the rectangular shaped one and either keep to that, or shape it on the grinder, to meet your requirements. Sharpen on the grinder which gives a burr on one edge, and then use whichever edge works best on the job in hand. The edge does not have to be prepared to cabinet maker's standard.

(2) Placing a plumbing cone on the point of a tail centre turns it into a cup centre, which is most useful when there is a risk of splitting the timber.

SOURCES OF SUPPLIES (By Ray Mellett). As promised details of suppliers I've used:

For Screws, Inserts and General Fixings.....Talbot Owen, Stoke View, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3AE - Tel: 0117 9651846. (On Fishponds Road towards city, first right after Causeway junction. Small quantities catered for; much cheaper than B & Q.

GR Fasteners - 0117 381122 (For further details see Peter Oram). (By Ed: one digit missing it seems)

TIPS AND HINTS	WHAT BEES HAVE YOU GOT IN YOUR BONNET? Please be sure to let Editor know any tips or hints that can be passed on in these columns!!
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FOR SALE A 10" Blade Table Saw mounted in a free-standing aluminium table of convenient height. Dimensions of the stand top are say 3' X 2'. The cable needs some very minor attention. Price: a snip at £15. Contact Tich Renee on 01179 312523.

YEW FOR SALE (By Vernon Hughes) - Do you remember the photograph of all that freshly cut Yew branch wood in the July issue of 'Turnings'. Well, I've been and gone and bought it, mainly because I could not live with the thought of it going for firewood! I've started hauling it over to my place and it will take another four or five trips to complete the task. As it would be rather a challenge to turn the lot myself, and I would like to get back some of my cash, I shall be happy to sell pieces off at very moderate cost. So, if you want some please get in touch (01249 782971). This timber is ideal for thin-walled, natural edge bowls, amongst other things. Members may recall that a master of this form of turning (Dick Mather) is going to make two such pieces for church fundraising purposes.



ADVERTISE HERE! If you have tools, equipment or materials that you wish to sell, or want to acquire, please contact Editor to advertise in this newsletter

FREE TO MEMBERS!

SNIPPETS FROM OUR NEIGHBOURING NORTH WILTS CLUB (By Editor)

The following is an extract from their recently updated website. It has been included for A & B members' interest, and as an example of a way of spreading knowledge of woodturning within a given population.

'Club Display at North Swindon Library

For several weeks now our club has had a selection of members' work on display at [North Swindon Library](#) (click on the link for more information on the library itself). Many thanks to those members who contributed items of their work. Thanks also to the library for being willing to host our work. Here are some pictures of the display for those who haven't been able to visit the library to see it "in the flesh", as it were.



We have to hand it to the chaps managing this new club. They have succeeded in obtaining grant money, a chunk of which has already gone to the purchase of a superb 'Wivamac' lathe with two chucks which was on show in a small anteroom at this month's meeting, prior to being set up and commissioned. It looks superb, and this make is praised highly in the November issue of 'Woodturning'. Consideration is now being given to further major purchases - maybe a sharpening system, audio/visual equipment, Powerpoint gear, etc.

At least fifty people attended this month's meeting at which, by coincidence, the demonstrator was Mark Hancock. Following prior discussion with our Chairman Derek I explained that if any of them wanted a longer, deeper, session with Mark they would be very welcome at our day at The Mill on Wednesday 29th October. I advised them to bring warm clothing and a packed lunch in addition to the entrance fee. Incidentally, I shall probably be asked what effect the Avonmouth bridge repair project is having on M5 traffic movement (or lack of it). Would those who have experience of this please advise me!!

By Ed: The following two articles were penned when it seemed likely that this would be a thin issue, but you can skip them if they do not catch your interest. The idea was that members further back down the learning curve than me might find some value in them.

ENGINEERING ADVICE NEEDED PLEASE..... (By Vernon Hughes)



This is about a chuck well and truly jammed solid on the headstock spindle of my 'Record' CL3 lathe. It is the first problem of this type encountered in about 13 or 14 years ownership of the lathe. Inside the pulley belt housing the spindle has two flats to take a 'Record' supplied spanner so that the spindle can be held in a fixed position whilst any screw-on device such as a chuck is unscrewed. The spanner is a *very* slack fit but has always done its job by providing the resistance needed to allow efficient chuck removal. In this case though the chuck stayed firmly in position! I therefore inserted the key and administered a few taps with a hammer. Due to the 'play' the effect of this was to cause the spanner to jam on the spindle 'corners' with risk of damage to one or both. Fortunately I sensed early on from the feel of things that the chuck was jammed unusually tightly and that a more disciplined approach was going to be needed to remove it. By good luck I found a short, hard tommy bar that fitted the key hole in the chuck rim *exactly*, and I also found a sturdy adjustable 'spaniard' that fitted snugly in the pulley housing to hold the spindle efficiently and without risk of further 'chewing up'. I then had to resort to the hammer again but applied sharp but determined taps to the free end of the tommy bar. It took three such taps to get the desired result but the chuck then loosened its grip and was removed without further ado; and so far as I can tell initially the spindle bearing has not suffered in the process.

If one of our many engineers can offer an explanation of the cause of the problem, and advise on the need for any follow-up action, I should be most grateful for it. I have always marvelled at the engineering precision that (until now) ensures that such a problem as this does not occur. I shall now be reluctant to fit that chuck on that lathe, although I have tried it on the small 'RPML 300' and it did not jam on that. Might this be just a one-off bit of bad luck or is there a chance that it could recur? If I need to use that lathe again before advice is forthcoming I will fit a different chuck initially and observe/monitor the outcome with interest.

JIGS 'N THINGS (By Vernon Hughes)

Dave Springett jerked me out of my 'manjana' state of mind regarding jig-making, with his demonstration of the rotating sphere-cutting jig he had made from fairly basic materials. I have encountered the need for one from time to time, and **also** had my 'back-burner' eye on the thought of making a lathe steady and an indexing set. I have several chucks with indexing rings but they have

remained unused until now. Sothere are three jobs that really need an injection of energy instead of saying 'oh, I'll make one of those one day' (and I have *two lathes* that need fitting out). I thought I would mention these ideas in case other members are in a similar state of inertia and might be encouraged by this article to leap into action. ***Incidentally, how staggeringly coincidental it is that October's 'Woodturning' magazine carries a detailed article on the subject of indexing, complete with instruction!***

I decided to go for the indexing kit first and made a 'locking post' for one of the lathes from spare bits of timber, and metal in my 'come-in-hand-y-one-day' stock up in a corner of the garage loft. Of course it would be great to have a nice-looking, engineered one but I have no access to engineering resources, and shall be able to manage well enough with my crude design, although I have since decided to make a 'mark 2' version to overcome one design flaw in the prototype. You learn as you go when in uncharted waters! I am still working on the design for a precision drilling guide and shall pay close attention to the 'Woodturning' article, but have made a first piece using crude methods. The following two photographs show the indexing post and the first decorated piece, a dice shaker in Boxwood with twelve dots (six each in Rosewood and Yew for contrast).

A lathe steady will probably be 'project 2' because I want to make some walking sticks for decoration with ornamental knotting. You may remember that I made one last year ***without a steady*** using an Iroko stake fished out of a Welsh river by a resident over there, who has decorated it beautifully. He has given me a second stake from the same source and I want to use a steady this time. Taking Colin Hazell's advice I acquired some roller blade wheels recently and will use them in fabricating a jig.

And sphere-cutting? Well, I'm about to order the toolbit, but there may still be a touch of 'manjana' about the making process because it will have to find its place in the queue.

Whilst in this 'let's go for it' state of mind I have also tightened up my skew chisel sharpening discipline. Some while back I bought the 'Record' slow turning white wheel grinder which rotates in a water reservoir (and, incidentally, also has a reversing switch), but due to shortage of bench-space it has often lain unused in a tool cupboard. I have now forced the issue and made space. The rest is kept permanently set for skew sharpening and will be the only grinder used for that purpose henceforward (i.e. it has sometimes been too easy to use another grinder, over-confident in one's ability to keep the existing bevel, only to find all too often, that reliance on hand-positioning does not work). With this type of grinder you need a splashback, and some strategically positioned rags, to mop up the unavoidable water splashes, but using it religiously removes the uncertainty factor when sharpening skews. You would be right to infer that I have never felt justified in forking out for a 'Tormek'.

Final thought on this subject by Editor! Perhaps other Club members have ideas and experiences to offer on the subject of jig-making, working disciplines, etc. Please get in touch if you do! [We need inputs from a wide range of members!](#) Widening the picture still further please do share with us some of the plans, ideas and concepts that influence your thinking about our turning hobby!

And maybe we could have a teaching session at which the engineers (of whom there seem to be many in the Club) could explain designs and methods of making jigs and aids that we more ordinary mortals could aspire to and find helpful!! What say you, oh programme organisers?? Is there a need and could this be fitted in?

CONCLUSION (By Editor)

Don't forget that I step down next April **at the latest**. I trust that 'the chosen one' is limbering up! A fresh mind may help to bring some original thought to the way ahead for our newsletter.



I could not resist inclusion of these shots as a reminder of the other activities that go on at Westonbirt whilst we concentrate so hard on our contribution. If there is space next month it may be worth taking a look at the bigger picture. I have a few thoughts running on that, and some more photographs, so we'll see whether these will fit in next time. Incidentally, do you remember my observation last year that the weather always seems to be fine for the Westonbirt Festival. Incredibly, luck held again this year. There was not so much sun but at least conditions were dry most of the time! The picture on the right above is of an organ that the stallholder built in 18 months. I stopped there to buy some Box and African Blackwood just as the Festival was ending, and I showed such an interest in the stall that the organ maker treated me to a most entertaining recital, at which I was soon joined by a larger audience.

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Avon and Bristol Woodturners gratefully acknowledge the support of Magnox North (Oldbury Power Station) for the printing of 'Turnings'!!