

July 2010



# TURNINGS

Official newsletter of  
**Avon and Bristol Woodturners**

(Honorary Life President - Max Carey)

Established 1989

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 Avon and Bristol Woodturners

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**Deadline for articles to be included in the August edition of Turnings is Friday, 13th August**

The next club meeting is on Thursday, 19th August - subject; Hands On - Natural form

## EDITORIAL

Following my plea in last month's edition I was delighted to receive excellent articles from several members. It wasn't quite the deluge I'd hoped for but it was a start and I'm very grateful to Kevin, Harold and The Dibbler for their contributions this month.

I was pleased also to see that Clive Brown's appeal for more raffle prizes and a greater participation by member has borne fruit, albeit the harvest is not yet up to Clive's aspirations. Clubs like ours are always in need of funds and if everyone were to chip in each month with at least £1 we'd make a clear £50+ every time.

"Conscience makes cowards of us all" and I'm sure that the Bard had me in mind when he penned those words. Long ago I promised Simon that I'd make some of the components for the traction engine project but, for some unaccountable reason nothing has emerged from my workshop so far. Last week a call from Simon prompted me to reiterate that promise so on Thursday, at the meeting, I will be bringing along a number of parts. If I fail to arrive then you will know that I again haven't kept faith.

Tich and Stuart are desperate for more tools for the apprentices. We all have our favourites and these usually are fewer than the armoury we possess so do look critically at the bowl gouges and skewers that you never use and probably never will again and give them to our tutors whose own tools are just wearing out. Don't worry about the condition of them - apprentices are always being told that they should never blame their tools for getting poor results. That's rubbish of course, but they don't know any different.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

## ABW, June Monthly Meeting

by John Ruffle

At the beginning of the June meeting, Malcolm Farrant was presented with his certificate, having completed the Apprenticeship Course. His coursework was on display, to be admired for its excellent quality.

The demonstration was given by Rod Page from Crewkerne. He worked as a tutor of Design and Technology and in 1977, accompanied a friend to the Yandles' Show. Never having previously given much thought to woodturning, he watched one of the demonstrators and became hooked. Rod has progressed into professional woodturning and brought with him some of the latticed boxes in which he specialises.

Rod demonstrated how to produce a lattice-work bowl using a modified router jig. He developed his own technique for this work



and was spurred on by his success in numerous competitions, most significantly, by one arranged by the Worshipful Company of Woodturners. This is intensely demanding work requiring great accuracy



and vessels take a great deal of time to complete. Several members of the audience said that they doubted whether they would have the patience to do this.

In the question time, one member asked whether the time taken could ever be justified in commercial terms. It was postulated that the rate would be considerably below the minimum wage. No wonder Rod needs to produce other things as well!

All in all, this was an excellent evening, and it was a treat to see the exercising of such precision and skill.

The winner of the monthly competition was Robin Goodman.

*My sincere thanks to John for standing in during my enforced absence (holiday!). So unexpected was it that John had to use his phone to do the photographs. Is it a phone with a camera, or a camera with a phone? Ed*

Details of the indexing system by ALISAM can be found at

[http://alisam.com/page/14g9e/Woodworking\\_turning\\_OT.html](http://alisam.com/page/14g9e/Woodworking_turning_OT.html) (with thanks to Ray Mellett for this info)

# The Severn Art Trail

by Kevin Daniels

I had been thinking that it would be a very long time before I could ever make any kind of contribution to the newsletter especially as I am heading to complete the apprenticeship in the slowest time on record. However the invitation in the last newsletter to write a short article if you had visited the Severn Vale Art trail helped me think again.

My wife, Jenny, and I never fail to be amazed by the wealth of talent on show at the art trails. And the Severn Art trail was no different. This time we had a specific purpose in mind as we were on the look out for a present for my brother's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. At the first stop Martin Lawrence was exhibiting some exceptionally well finished work including a hollow form yew vase with an ebony finial. This was going to be the ideal present for my brother and would fit well into their home. We were delighted to buy the vase.

I felt that as my brother knew that I was on the apprenticeship then I would have to try and produce an example of the woodturner's art no matter how simple. Fortunately we had bought a honey dipper from Mary Ashton on one of the Bristol art trails at Christmas. I started out by trying to make a copy but soon a number of unexpected design opportunities came my way as the dreaded skew found a life of its own – but the finished article was reasonable enough and anyway Titch would not be there to point out that it bore no resemblance to the original plan. So take courage other apprentices starting out – you can actually produce woodturnings, and not just woodshavings, earlier than you may think.

Then on to Simon Keen who was exhibiting in the country cottage owned by Esmond Wilson-Smith. Before seeing Simon's works of art I was fortunate enough to be given a peep behind the kitchen curtain to see a very fine chair made by Esmond- not actually on the art trail but it would have stood proudly alongside any of the other exhibits.

I found Simon's work fitted so well with the concept of the art trail where artistic flair is a key ingredient. It was not just woodturning but more working with wood to appeal to all of our senses. The tiny mushrooms and the box, made out of a packing case, to hold wooden eggs were just exquisite.

George King showed very fine craftsman ship as you would expect and he was selling out fast. The Victorian toys were a delight and he very kindly e-mailed me the plans for a Victorian spinning top.

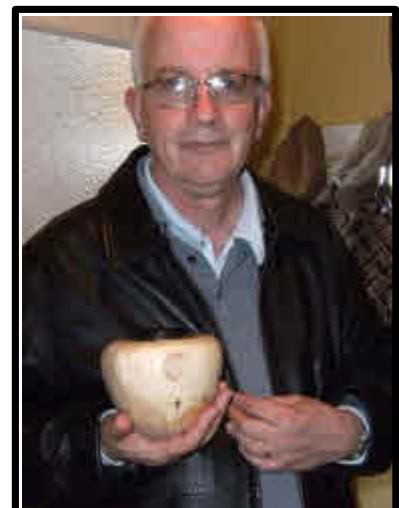
**I cannot let this opportunity pass without passing on my grateful thanks for the huge support given by the club to the apprentices and especially to Tich who is so very generous with his time - a big thank you to you all.**

*"The finished article was reasonable enough and anyway, Tich would not be there to point out that it bore no resemblance to the original plan"*

**The honey dipper made by the author**



*"A hollow form yew vase with an ebony finial and made by Martin Lawrence was going to be the ideal present for my brother on his 60th birthday"*



## **CAN YOU SPARE ANY OLD TOOLS?**

This is a request from the Mill.

We are currently teaching about 19 New Turners ( apprentices ) and do not have enough 3/8" spindle gouges, 3/8" bowl gouges and skew chisels. Both Stuart and I loan many of our tools out every Tuesday and Wednesday. If anyone has any surplus tools they could let us have it would be greatly appreciated and you can rest assured that they would be put to good use.

Many Thanks

Tich.

## **News from** *Down Under*

by Harold Colebrooke

One benefit (but certainly not the main one!) of marrying Sheila in 2006 was to join her on her frequent visits to Perth, Western Australia - a beautiful city  
During our last visit the icing on the cake was first to visit friends just outside Sydney and to tour around Tasmania. Woodturners must not gather timber in the Cradle Mountains, which is a protected area, even if the wood is dead and bleached by the sun!

### **A Burning Desire Fulfilled and the Jarrah March**

Sheila's son has one of the older houses in Perth, all the floors of which are covered in solid planks of Jarrah wood which nowadays would cost an arm and a leg. We did visit a Jarrah forest in the Darling Hills and I did manage to get a great close-up photo of a kookaburra bird.  
When we got home to the UK Sheila, who is quite "arty" and was greatly inspired by a demonstration of pyrography at a "hands-on" club evening, produced two lovely pyrographic pictures of the kookaburra, one of which she sent to the friends who had showed us the fire site.

I was keen to bring home a reminder of the Jarrah forests, so when we visited Fremantle's large, busy market we bought some items made of Jarrah wood from a stall called "Tricky Timber". Despite the questionable name, the stallholder turned up trumps because she said that she would bring some pieces of timber suitable for turning pens, which she did the following week, beautifully prepared and at no charge!

Due to the patient and encouraging tuition I received during the same "hands-on" evening I have since been able to produce quite a few pens turned in Jarrah which, although not the most beautiful of timbers for this application, evoke for me many pleasant recollections.

As a footnote, members might be interested to hear of the restrictions imposed by the Australian Government on the cutting down of trees. These are very strictly applied, even though the trees might present great fire risks, particularly the eucalyptus variety which because of their high resin content tend to easily ignite during the frequent hot, dry spells. As an example, one resident, living near the Blue Mountains decided to cut down the trees surrounding his house. He was fined \$50,000. The irony is that when later on that area suffered a devastating forest fire his was the only house left standing!

Some folk are advocating the planting of deciduous trees such as the English Oak to skirt residential areas because they are not as combustible as the indigenous species. This appears to be effective - I read of one experiment in which "foreign" trees were planted round an industrial park and when the inevitable forest fire engulfed the area it did not devastate the buildings.

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# Eggs at the Mill

by The Dibbler

One of the most pleasing aspects of training at the mill is the comradeship and sense of humour always present on a Tuesday and Wednesday.

When I resumed going to the mill after my broken ankle back in January I have been very fortunate in being given permission to park on adjoining property owned by Clarice. Clarice is one of the older generation - older, even, I think than some of us woodturners

Every week Alan brings with him eggs from his "city farm". On the day in question I was leaving early, with Alan providing me with a dozen eggs. These I placed in the boot of my car. At the same time Clarice appeared so I suggested to Alan that I give her six eggs. I thought he said that was a good idea so I gave Clarice her eggs which gesture was greatly appreciated. As I was returning to the Mill I was met by Alan who, wearing an unusually worried expression on his face said, "You didn't give her any eggs, did you?" I was a little taken aback as I replied, "Yes, that was what had been agreed".

Alan's expression changed to one of shock and horror. "We must go and have a look at what you've given her". An inspection by Alan then led to a complete draining of any remaining colour in his face. "You will have to exchange the eggs you have given her for the ones in your car," he said, without explanation.

A knock on the door, "Clarice", say I, "I'm afraid I've given you the wrong eggs. Please will you have these and give back the others?" This she did but both she and I needed an explanation. What transpired was that Alan had tried to give me a very realistic egg made of hard rubber, hoping that I would go home and try to boil the said egg.

I think the end result was good. Clarice had six nice eggs, I finished up with five and Alan ended up with....I think, egg on his face.

Needless to say, when we both returned to the Mill we were greeted by much laughter from Tich, Stuart and many others.

Since then I give this advice to anyone getting eggs from Alan.....MAKE SURE THEY ARE REAL

So, yes we have had to turn eggs as a part of the apprenticeship scheme, but NOT, I am pleased to say, rubber ones.

*Perhaps another time I will relate the story of Alan cleaning his goose pool. I know that the geese all had a good laugh.*

Thank you, Alan, for being the source of much amusement.

## Club Raffle Update

June's club night raffle was successful in raising funds for your club, though I must say it could have been a little more so. Fifty-eight pounds was raised. Come on all of you who don't participate - if everyone spent just a pound we could raise a little bit more - don't forget that all the money goes back into the pot to benefit our club. And of course a big thank-you to those who do purchase a ticket or tickets in a lot of cases.


Thank you for those who have responded so quickly following my request for raffle prizes. I have had at least six other club members who have promised to contribute so I think that's a promising start. If you have any suggestions or comments to improve the raffle they would be warmly received. Good luck!

Clive Brown

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# Ideas from Glass

by Mike Openshaw

When it comes to design we are all constantly searching for inspiration. Some find this process easy while others like me really don't have a clue. So the best we



can hope for is for someone else to do the hard work while we simply emulate (plagiarise?) their creations. Maybe then we might be able to change them ever so slightly and claim the work as our own.

Last week I visited an old school friend who now lives in St Helens. He was anxious to show Maureen and me as much of his adopted town as could be seen in the three days we'd be spending there.

Of course, with Liverpool being only a stone's (an unintentional pun) throw away we had to see the Cavern and other Beatles-related sites. I was never a fan of the "Fab Four" (pop music passed me by then and certainly does now) but Maureen had a different take on it so down into the dark interior we did go. I couldn't help but wonder at how on earth anyone could possibly stand the noise in that confined dungeon-like space as the decibel rate must surely have exceeded by a wide margin anything created by Frank Whittle.

Next day we saw the real St Helens and the real St Helens is actually Pilkingtons glass works so a visit to the World of Glass exhibition is a "must". Built on the site of the old factory and situated adjacent to the new the visitor is treated to a truly dazzling experience of both light and sound, not to mention heat in the glass-blowing demonstration room.

But where the interest lies for us aspiring designers is in the amazing works of art on display. In the same way as non-turners are bemused by the creations of expert turners, so too are we in awe of the skill of the glass worker. But that aside, many of the problems encountered by these people are similar to those we meet with - notably those of design. So, in an effort to inspire, here are a few images taken of the artefacts on display. Obviously many would simply not work in wood but they should stimulate ideas - in particular I would imagine, in the use of colour.



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# NOTICE BOARD

## Heavy-duty Lathe for Sale

Medical reasons (a stroke) require me to sell my beloved hand-built lathe. The details are as follows:

- Heavy-duty One horse-power motor and industrial switch.
- Fixed headstock with a one and half inch ext. threaded shaft with 2MT taper with four pulley block, giving four speeds from 400 up to 2400 rpm, plus wire wheel at the other end of the shaft.
- Turning height above the bed giving permanent 24 inches. Turning length approx. 1 metre plus.
- Ext. threaded hollow tailstock (bolted to 56 lb weight for solidity!)
- Bed (welded to the headstock) is a pair of 4 inch RSJs, bolted to steel angled legs and feet with drill holes for rawlbolts.
- Threaded 4 and 6 inch Faceplates, heavy duty Cup Chuck for the shaft plus two large spanners.
- Multistar four-jaw chucks, with various accessories (extra jaws, two pin chucks and a screw chuck etc).

NB You need to re-assemble the motor to the headstock. The motor rests below the headstock assembly and its position adjusted by a car jack. I have the requisite items for that but it needs some patience! Alternatively you could mount the motor behind the headstock.

**OFFERS in the region of £100**



Please contact: David Cooper  
36, Quarry Close,  
Totnes,  
Devon,  
TQ9 5FA  
Tel: 01803-847897  
E mail: [coopaubaret@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:coopaubaret@tiscali.co.uk)

Please note that one of the effects of my stroke is impaired speech so please be patient if I and not my wife answer the phone

### *Editor's note:*

This lathe was still available for sale when I telephoned Mr Cooper on Saturday last, 10th July