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May 2017

TURNINGS

Official newsletter of

Avon and Bristol Woodturners

Affiliated to the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

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PICK-A-PEG NEEDS YOU

IN THIS EDITION

- **COMMENTS FROM A NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER**
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THREE SHOWS**
- **CAN YOU STORE A LATHE?**
- **MORE THAN A BIT OF DOWEL**

Don't forget you can read all the Club History to date in one place on our website at:

www.avon-and-bristol-woodturners.org.uk

Simply go to the **About** tab and choose **Club History**

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We now print Turnings

Editor's Comments

Almost half-way through the year already and, whilst the world around us heads ever more towards a state of turmoil we seem, somehow to be able to carry on with our lives, and why not? For as Clive reminds us in his piece (see pp 3) *"life is not a rehearsal so enjoy!"*

And this year, as in every year there is much to enjoy with no fewer than three shows where we can put to use not only our woodturning prowess but also our communication skills too. Captive audiences are the best ones to go for - they've spent money to get in so they'll take advantage of every chance to make the most of it - and that's where we can capitalise by giving them an interesting experience and, who knows?, generate enough interest for them to become members of the club. So please help John by volunteering to help out.

Ed

It's Showtime Again!

Your club needs to keep attracting new members if it is not to wither away. To do this we need to let people know that we exist. One of the ways we do this is to attend events where we can be seen. We can only do this with the support of members to:-

- set up the stand the day before the event;
- talk to visitors about woodturning and the club during the event;
- operate the demonstration lathe(s) to show visitors woodturners in action;
- provide examples of our work to open their minds to functional and artistic turning;
- disassemble the stand at the end of the event; and
- eat cake at the South Glos Show!

If you can help to keep our club thriving then Email Helen, John or talk to any committee member. More details and volunteer forms will be available at the May club meeting.

For the last few years we have had a stand at 2 events:

- The Bristol Model Engineering and Model Making Exhibition at Thornbury; and
- Treefest at Westonbirt Arboretum

2016 was the last Treefest so for 2017 your committee has decided to attend the South Gloucestershire Show.

South Gloucestershire Show, Westerleigh Road Showground, BS378QZ

The South Glos Show runs on **Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 August**. It is in its 4th year with last year's attendance at 30,000 people. It is different to Treefest in that it covers everything from classic cars to live music. Helpers will get free entry to the show so for a couple of hours you get to see everything that's on offer at the rest of the show.

It's our first time so all new for all of us. Saying that, most things will be the same. We will still need lots of help setting up, help with manning the stand, volunteers to man pick a peg and volunteers to demonstrate on both the lathes we will have there, (strong legs for the treadle lathe) and there will be plenty of cake. It's only a 2 day event so the more people who offer the less each will have to do. Thank you to everybody in advance who helps - and I can take cake requests.

Bristol Model Engineering and Model Making Exhibition (Thornbury)

This year's show runs from **Friday 18 to Sunday 20 August**. The event differs from the South Gloucestershire Show in that we don't have to pay to attend (indeed we get a small dividend from the exhibition profits) but we can't sell any of our members' products or run Pick-a Peg to boost our funds). However, visitors are much more likely to be interested in making things so we have a golden opportunity to emphasise the joys of working in wood as well as in metal.

John Maclellan



Clive Drake - new Committee member

Role: Monthly Competition supervisor

I joined the A & B Wood turners club in 2014 (I think).

I found out about the club from another member, John Wilson-Smith who has been a family friend and previous work colleague to my wife Margaret

For me, the initial benefits were to become acquainted with more experienced wood turners, with the aim of learning from their considerable experience. This quickly developed into a huge appreciation of the talent, creativity and skill available within the club, and the 'wonder' of seeing the Professional Turners that visit the club on a regular basis.

All of this has given me a desire to develop my own skills and creativity in this wonderful hobby. In turn, this has led to my joining 'The Mill' when a place became available.

My first attempts at woodturning were at school, at the age of 14 or so. I still have a small wooden bowl that I made from a glue up of two pieces of wood. The evidence of the three screw holes are still in the base from the faceplate that I had used to mount it (something that would be unacceptable to me now). I had also made a lamp, with a piece of copper pipe for the stem, but this has been lost over the years. Since those early days, I have always enjoyed working with wood, but my exposure has been limited to replacing domestic woodwork around old Victorian homes in which we have lived. My serious interest only started in 2014, when I bought a second hand lathe, chuck and a few tools from a chap on ebay. This was quickly set up in my garage, and You Tube became my new best friend until I joined 'The Mill'. Whilst there is an awful lot of good content on You Tube, there are also a lot of examples of bad, or simply dangerous practice. So, I would advocate anyone who is interested in taking up this fascinating hobby to seek proper training, this will ensure you start well, and get the most enjoyment from this wonderful pastime.

My first item when I started in 2014 was a tiny goblet. Quite a challenge you might think for a first project – but if you could see it, you would immediately realise that it was, shall we say, lacking a little something (sharp tools, technique, an eye for design, to name just a few points). But, it did not deter me, it just spurred me on to do better. I still keep this piece, just to remind me of my very humble beginnings. Yes, I have improved, but even after three years, two of which have been spent at 'The Mill', there is still plenty more to learn, and I shall strive to do so.

One of initial influences was a very large, deep bowl, resembling the size of a waste paper basket. This was made for us by John Wilson-Smith, a club member, from a piece of wood we gave him. Whilst I do not yet aspire to his dizzy heights, I am still in awe of his patience and skill to turn this magnificent piece from wet wood, over several months. I had not appreciated the time and work involve when he originally gave it to us – now I do, so thank you John. Other inspirational woodturners who influence my work are Nick Arnall, Nick Agar, David Springett, to mention but a few. Each has his own style and I find their work and books to be truly inspirational. I should not let the opportunity go by also to mention some of the outstanding work done by my fellow club members, who constantly amaze me with their monthly competition entries.

What is my favourite piece, now? - that is a question. I have several that I am proud of, and quite often it is the last project I completed, or maybe the one I am working on at any given time. But, if pinned down, I would say it is a piece that I made in the style of an American woodturner by the name of Alan Carter. I came across this particular piece whilst watching You Tube. He calls his it 'Emerald suspended'. Whilst mine is approx. 50% scale, it provided a sufficient challenge for me to consider it one of my best works so far.

My advice to anyone just starting out? Well, there a few things I would like to say to offer some guidance. Buy the best tools you can afford, quality over quantity. You can turn some amazing projects with a very basic set of tools. Learn to sharpen your tools, and very importantly, learn to use all of your tools, including the lathe, safely. Most importantly though – have fun. If this is not to be a living for you, relax and enjoy your adventure, be reasonable with your own expectations. Start with the basics and build your skills. If you do this, you will develop into a good wood turner, and your work will reflect this.

Joining a local club is a great idea. It will provide you with many of the benefits I have already outlined. But, as with most things, you get out what you put in. Taking the time to talk to people will be amply rewarded with help, support and ideas. And if you are really lucky, with some great new friends along the way.

My personal background could not be much further from woodturning, as I suspect is the case with the majority of my fellow club members. I started life as a time served apprentice (seven years) in Intruder alarms (electrical bias in those days). After 10 years, I moved into a technical support role for the same industry before getting involved in Sales after a further year. From then on my time was spent within the Sales and Marketing environment for some of the largest security manufacturing companies in the UK, Europe and USA. In my mid forties, I decided to take a break from work to look after my parents. Sadly after a few years my services were no longer needed, so my wife and I decided to use our time exploring Europe. This was something we had always wanted to do, but finances and family commitments had not allowed. So, in my mid fifties I decided to renew my interest in wood, and, I guess, that brings us up to the present day.

Good luck in all you do, and remember, **life is not a rehearsal, so enjoy!**

Clive



Chairman's Report April 2017

Looking back over what has happened in the last twelve months in whatever area of our lives inevitably throws up highs and lows.

In general as you have heard and will hear further it has been a fairly stable year for the Avon & Bristol Woodturners.

One significant low point was the death in February of Simon Keen, one of the founder members of this club.



Newer members will no doubt have read the tributes to him in Turnings from longer-serving club members and from them realise what a considerable contribution he made to the development of the Avon & Bristol woodturning club. We should all be grateful to Simon for what he did in helping to lay the foundations and developing our club.

At last year's AGM at least a few of you may remember I spent some time thanking committee members and others for what they had done in the previous twelve months for our club. I make no apology for doing something similar tonight.

Ian has been Club secretary for a number of years and not only does he take the minutes at the bi-monthly committee meetings he emails them out religiously to committee members together with the agendas for the next meeting – this despite having some of the worst internet access in the area! He also writes to and liaises with the AWGB on club matters, looks after the arrangements for this meeting and of course on club nights acts as club librarian. Thank you Ian for all you do for our club.

You have already heard from Robin, our Treasurer. He keeps tabs on the money, arranging payment for the demonstrators, for this hall and anyone else who is owed money as well as liaising with Peter over the receipt of your subscriptions and other income – thank you Robin for all you do for our club

Those of you who use the facilities at the Max Carey Woodturning Trust know full well the incredible amount of work that Stuart does to keep it going and continuing improving the facilities there. As the Mill representative on the committee he brings that experience, knowledge and thoughtful input to the club matters too. Thank you Stuart for all you do for our club.

Being membership secretary can be a thankless task, particularly when it comes to collecting annual subscriptions, but Peter has been doing it for a number of years as well as linking on their part of the subs with the AWGB and checking people in each club night, welcoming new members and guests.

Many of you will know that Peter is not here tonight because he had undergone major surgery, but I am glad to say that he is now at home recuperating.

Even though he is not here I would like to say Thank you Peter for all you do for our club and I'm sure that I speak on behalf of us all when I express the hope that you will be well enough to be with us on a club night very soon.

Alan takes responsibility for the audio visual equipment which enhances your enjoyment of the demonstrators - he, with help, assembles, operates and then disassembles it and stores it too, as well as contributing in a number of other ways.

Alan, thank you for all you do for our club.

Helen Woodward cannot be here tonight - the second AGM she has missed on the trot (somebody will have to have a word with her!)

Helen organised the club stand at Westonbirt last year. She also provided cakes for club members who helped on the stand and jolly good they were too.

Thank you Helen for all you do for our club.

This year will be a new challenge for Helen because as you will know the Westonbirt Treefest is not happening any more and so your committee has decided to exhibit at the South Gloucestershire Show which is the first weekend in August. *(See article from John Maclellan - Ed)*

John Mclellan was voted onto the committee at last years AGM and has been helping Alan with the Audio visual equipment and organises the stand at the Thornbury Show.

Thank you John for all you do for our club.

We are saddened to hear that one committee member, Bryan had decided to retire from the committee.

As you will know, Bryan not only organised and ran the competition each month at club nights but he also booked the demonstrators - not an easy task and one which is made all the more difficult as professional wood turners are not renowned for responding to communications in a timely manner – so thank you Bryan for all you do for our club. He leaves that position in rude health as demonstrators are booked for all relevant club nights right up to July – that is July 2018.

And of course we all know that Bryan could not have achieved such success in the role without the considerable help of his wife Marilyn.

Marilyn thank you for all you have done for our club *(at this point the Chairman presented Marilyn with a bouquet as a token of the club's appreciation of all the work that she has done Ed)*

I am delighted to tell you all that John has agreed to take on the responsibility for organising and booking the demonstrators for future club nights, starting with August next year!

All your committee members give their time and expertise freely to make sure our club runs smoothly. Ladies and gentlemen, I think that all your committee member deserve a round of applause in appreciation of all they do.

We have already rightly thanked both Debbie for all she does for our club, including a great deal behind-the-scenes help for Peter as well as the raffle at club nights and Lorraine for the invaluable contribution she makes with Pick-a-Peg.

Each month the newsletter Turnings is edited by Mike Openshaw. As he can no longer attend club nights Joe Page has been doing the reports each month.

We thank him for having done so but Joe, too, is now unable to attend club nights so Debbie has agreed to take on that role as well as delivering Turnings to club nights as her husband has the contract to print it.

The club website is an excellent ambassador for the club and a useful source of information for both club members and visitors. This doesn't happen by accident. Paul Brooks spends a great deal of time ensuring it is regularly updated with current useful information. Thank you Paul for all you do for our club.

More club members have done the demonstrations on club nights over the past year. Bryan Millham made a return appearance, Richard Lane, David Smith and Andy Mason all shared their expertise and knowledge - thank you for what you do for our club.

Atul has stored the club lathe for us and brought it to club nights each month, but now he has bought his own he no longer has room, **so we will be looking for someone else to take on the role.** Good luck with your new toy, Atul, and thank you for what you have done for our club.

Many of you helped with demonstrations and manning the stand at Thornbury and Westonbirt – Thank you for what you have done for our club.

Helen and John will no doubt be looking for that support again over the next month or two so please offer to help if you can.

.....And if I have missed out anybody – I am sorry, but you know what you do and thank you anyway!

Last year I asked the question of each of you - 'what can you do for our club?' and I pointed out two things which are equally relevant this year. We are still looking for many more items for prizes for the Pick a Peg – if everybody does just one piece a month no one person will have to do a lot – please help if you can.

Simon Keen's family have donated a quantity of partly finished items that they have found in sorting out his workshop and it is their wish that they are used to help our club. We have decided to use them as prizes for Pick-a-Peg, but they do however need finishing so if you could all take one away and bring it back finished that would be a tremendous help.

For our club to continue to prosper and grow we need new members all the time as the number of grey hairs (or no hair at all) around the room is increasing all the time.

We all know at least one and usually more than one local wood turner who isn't a member of the club

Why not invite them along? We are happy for them to attend a couple of times without making any commitment to join – who can you ask?

Oh, and as an added incentive your committee will happily present a bottle of wine to any club member who introduces somebody who subsequently becomes a new full member of the club.

On that merrily alcoholic note I would like to thank you all for attending our club's AGM.

Harry



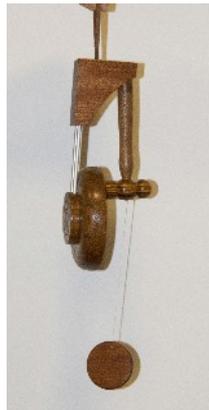
The AGM was not all speeches and figures - with the formalities and coffee/beverages break behind them members were treated to an entertaining presentation by one of our former club chairmen , Derek Edwards. Derek explained, in the unique style which was so recognisable to those who know him well, what the Worshipful Company of Turners is all about - its history and the process by which he became a Freeman of the Turners Company and of the City of London - an achievement which all can perhaps aspire to but which so few, if any, will manage to attain. Thanks, Derek for an enlightening exposé of a world that will probably remain closed to most of us.

Last month’s competition (subject, Wind Chimes)

Advanced - Winner - Alan Griffiths (sole entry)

Intermediate - 1st - Mike Neave 2nd - Rick Lock

There were fewer entries than usual but, also as usual, the standard was as high as ever (see photos below, courtesy of Rick Lock). Perhaps it is better to go for Quality rather than Quantity, but, with a membership of around 80, if we could aim a little higher on the latter without sacrificing any of the former?



This is the last competition that was hosted by Marilyn and Bryan and I should like to add my grateful thanks to those already expressed by Harry for this husband-and-wife team’s immense contribution to the club’s activities over the years and for making my job as editor a lot easier by keeping me posted. May you both enjoy a long and happy “retirement”.

Ed

When does “tapping a skill” aid a “skill in tapping”?

That well-known star of television, George King, has recently extended his association with the arts by venturing into the world of classical music. George was approached by a celebrated and world-renowned timpanist to produce for him a set of drumsticks. To the uninitiated this might appear to be a simple task - after all, a drumstick is merely a bit of dowel with a rounded end, isn’t it? Well, not quite - that’s like saying a cello is nothing more than a wooden box with string stretched over it. No, as George was soon to discover, there is far more to it than that. For example, the wood has to be of a particular density, of a specific stiffness and the stick must be carefully balanced and ideally tailored to suit the user’s individual technique. So, after due consultation, George set to work on the piece of ash supplied by the client, and the result was a fine set of sticks. (*See photo, courtesy of George*). And, as it so happens, I can confirm that the client was delighted with George’s efforts because, last week I had the pleasure of performing a piece of music under his baton, for although very busy he still finds time to get involved with amateur groups like ours where his experience and musicality are an invaluable inspiration to us all. Woodturning is not the only discipline where inspiration can be obtained by watching experts in action!



Do you have any turning-related experiences that you would like to share with members? If so, don’t keep them to yourself - Turnings is YOUR gateway to fame, if not fortune. Don’t be shy - we’re waiting to hear from you. Ed

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

As announced at the last club night we need somebody with room to store the club lathe. Ideally also to bring it (tow-bar needed) to club nights.

If you can just store the lathe but are unable to transport it we can get get around that problem.

If you can help please contact a committee member

Club events calendar

Venue - St Teresa's, Filton @ 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated	Event	Monthly themes (Advanced and Intermediate single theme)
2017		
January 19th	Colin Fulbrook	Pen pot
February 16th	Andy Mason & Dave Smith	Spiral-stemmed goblet
March 16th	Les Thorne	Coloured and textured platter
April 20th	AGM	Wind chimes
May 18th	Paul Hannaby	Surprise us!
June 15th	Dave Register	Earring or jewellery stand
July 20th	Andrew Hall	Afternoon tea - ie, jam pot, cup, plate
August 17th	Stephen Long	Bud vase
September 21st	Keith Fenton	Not just wood
October 19th	Gerry Marlow	A bowl
November 16th	Roger Gubbin	Wood turner of the Year
December 14th	Christmas Social	TBC
2018		
January 18th	Martin Saban-Smith	A pair of.....
February 15th	Nigel Maddocks	Textured, coloured or pierced... or all three
March 15th	Richard Findlay	Anything you fancy, as long as it's turned in wood (and legal!)
April 19th	AGM	TBC
May 17th	Keith Woollacott	TBC
June 21st	TBC	TBC
July 19th	Liz Kent	TBC



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