



## Future Events

Next MSWA Meetings

13<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Annual General Meeting

February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012

Demonstration by Ken Allen

Other Events

### Club Competitions

January – Challenge

A Christmas Lantern

Premium

A goblet with a barley twist stem

February – Novice

Honey set for breakfast (Lid, stand and dipper)

## Chair's Chunter & Chat November 2011

Well December is finally upon us and the usual Christmas chaos is now in full swing. Everyone seems to be asking me to make last minute gifts this year, which has meant another busy week in the workshop. It also means that I had to urgently purchase some timber to keep up with the demand. Fortunately E-bay came to my rescue and I was able to purchase some Idigbo off-cuts from a company in Eccleshall called Sherwin Woodwork. I was even able to collect them the very same day; which not only saved delivery costs, but valuable time.

So why Idigbo you may ask. Well, it just happened to be the right size for the job in hand as well as the right price. I had originally planned to use Ash or Sycamore, but getting hold of these at short notice was proving far too expensive. I spotted the Idigbo on E-bay, but had not heard of it yet alone worked with it before. I was desperate though, so decided to take a gamble. Fortunately my gamble paid off and it has proved to be a very nice timber to work with.

I was quite nervous about using an unknown timber, especially as it is African in origin and some other exotic species have a reputation for being hazardous to health or even carcinogenic. I therefore took all the suitable precautions with full dust extraction as well as donning my trusty Trend Airshield face shield. However, after turning for a couple of hours, I started to get a terrible headache and started to feel sick. I had to stop working and take a break, but the headache returned as soon as I started turning again. I initially put this down to either the noise of the dust extractor or even the pressure of the Airshield on my head.

The next day, I had exactly the same problem and had to stop turning after just a couple of hours. Having heard of similar allergic reactions to wood dust, I decided I had better do some research on the Internet, just in case it was the Idigbo.

In short, I came across the following information leaflet published by the HSE, which highlights the hidden dangers of wood dust and the importance of good dust management. It also opened my eyes to some more familiar timbers that I never had previous concerns about. Although the Idigbo is indeed listed as one of the more common toxic woods, its possible effects are quite minor when compared to some of our indigenous species. Idigbo is only listed as a "possible irritant", whereas Beech is listed as causing "dermatitis, asthma, a decrease in lung function and eye irritation".

Yew is also a disturbing read for those that have often questioned if the shavings are toxic. We all know that the berries and leaves are



poisonous, but did you know that the dust is very toxic as well? According to the HSE, it can cause "dermatitis, systemic effects such as headache, blood pressure drop and cardiac effects".

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wis30.pdf>

This is all very sobering and makes you realise the importance of good dust extraction when turning. As I am asthmatic, I have always tended to be over cautious, but still cut corners on occasions or forget to switch on the dust extractor and start coughing or sneezing before I remember. Maybe now I will think twice.

By the way; the headaches stopped when I realised that it was the Trend Airshield causing my problems. I was simply wearing it too tight around my head! I can also recommend Idigbo for turning. It is a lovely mellow colour, similar to light oak or Ash, and produces a good finish. There is a downside though! If you get the dust wet, it will stain yellow. I was daft enough to wear a white T-shirt the other day and step outside in the rain. Interesting results to say the least! Looks like I need a new white T-shirt for Christmas!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Dawn

## **Editor's Scribblings**

Many of us, cast in the mould of grumpy old men (and women) bemoan the fact that the teaching of handicrafts in school today "isn't what it used to be". My daughter -in-law, teaching in a school in one of the less prime spots in a Northern city, held up a piece of aluminium to a CDT class. "Does anybody know what this is?" she asked. "That's scrap" replied one young lad, "You can get a good price for that".

Philip Watts





## December Demonstration – Simon Hope

Simon Hope has been wood turning from the age of 11 and at the age of 26, was one of the youngest to be on the register of professional turners. Eleven years on, Simon has vast experience in demonstrating to wood turning clubs across the UK, including being a full presenter for the UK premier seminar at Loughborough University and tutor for Craft Supplies in France. A speciality is the manufacture of Scottish small pipes and the inclusion of pewter in turned items. Pierced rim bowls and “onion” shaped items with boxes hidden in the base are also featured in his work.



Simon had chosen to turn a box for his demonstration and to incorporate a textured pewter ring into the lid. An elm blank was placed between centres and roughly turned with a spigot at each end. A parting tool separated the lid from the body of the box. Reversing the lid and gripping the spigot in the chuck, Simon opened out the interior of the lid using a small bowl gouge swapping to a carbide tipped tool to take the final cleaning up cut. It is his preference to use as high a speed as the lathe can safely provide. A small recess was turned in the lid to provide the matching point for the lid/box junction. Simon described two tools that he was using as shaped like parting tools but with one having a square cross-section and the other a round one. A trick of using something like an Allen key to project the turned surface of the recess was demonstrated as a means of ensuring that the recess has sides parallel to the longitudinal centre line of the work piece.

Work on the box body then commenced with the blank mounted in the chuck in the normal manner. The matching section of the lid/box junction was turned down but only after some of the interior of the box had been removed. This reduced the tendency for the work to change in diameter as some of the internal stresses within the wood are relieved. A vernier gauge is a useful item at this stage to transfer the internal diameter of the lid to become the outside diameter of the box body. A slight taper was left on the body to ensure a good jam fit with the lid.

The lid was now fitted to the body to permit the outside shape of the box to be refined and the upper surface of the lid prepared to take the pewter ornamentation. The position of the box in relation to the chuck jaws was then marked before removing the box from the chuck. This is a useful tip that assists in ensuring that the box is replaced in the chuck at a later stage.

A mould for the pewter ring was prepared by turning a void in scrap piece of wood. This could be any wood, the only requirement is that it must be totally dry to avoid the hot pewter reacting with any moisture and being ejected from the mould. Pewter has a low melting point, typically between 170-230 degrees Centigrade, and is comprised of tin and other elements such as antimony and copper. Whilst lead would have been one of the constituents in the past, lead-free pewter is now available and this is what Simon uses, sourcing it from Carn Metals in Cornwall. One kilo bars now cost around £26, significantly higher than a few years ago. The low melting point allows the pewter to be brought to a liquid state over a small gas burner. The correct temperature for casting is when the metal has just turned into the liquid state.

The molten pewter was poured into the mould and allowed to cool (over the tea break). Still in the mould, the face and edges of the cast ring were turned using standard wood turning tools. Super-glue was used to reinforce the hold of the cast ring on the mould. A check that the turned edges were parallel was made before the ring, about 6mm thick, was released.

The box together with its lid was now remounted in the lathe and the turned face of the ring used to glue it to the lid. Both the surface of the lid and the turned surface of the ring were roughened to improve the



## Wood 'n' things



quality of the bond. The outer face of the ring could now be turned using a gouge with swept back wings and finishing in skew scraping mode with a small skew, the skew having been dressed with a diamond slip to raise a fine burr capable of cutting well into the end grain of the wood.

Simon then demonstrated a texturing technique utilising a Proxxon angle grinder with an edge saw. The combination of the rotary motion of the cutter and a slow speed on the lathe producing a spiral pattern.

Wire wool cleaned out the dirt from the grooves in the texturing. Simon commented that if abrasives were used then it would be better to finish the pewter ring on a separate spigot to avoid the metal debris being carried across and impregnated into the wooden areas of the lid. The exterior of the box was sanded with a rotary sander. A technique developed by Mick Hanbury to reduce dust was described in which a paste wax, typically made from beeswax and liquid paraffin is applied to the abrasive. The slurry formed during sanding falls away from the work rather than becoming air-borne dust and also tends to fill the grain producing a better finish. Simon also described a few sanding aids that he had developed ranging from a squash ball to a wooden finger having a tape glued to the end to attach scraps of hook and XXXX abrasive that could be used to finish the interior of bowls and boxes.

The lower portion of the box was hollowed out in the conventional way before parting off and being reversed on the lathe to face off the bottom and finish with a couple of ornamental rings. Holding the box bottom by chucking on the outside would reduce the possibility of splitting the box.

Final finish could be by a lacquer, this being what Mick Hanbury uses, but Simon prefers to use oils.



### **Musical Footnote**

Simon described the bagpipes that he makes as the "Scottish small pipes". This intrigued me as I am more familiar with the Northumbrian small pipes, having lived in the North East for several years. I quizzed him at the tea break and he explained that the pipes that we are most accustomed to hear are the great Highland pipes. The Scottish small pipes also described as the Border or Lowland pipes share many common features with their cross-border cousins, being powered by bellows rather than by straight lung power. The smaller pipes are more melodious and softer better suited for being played indoors, rather than the Highland bagpipes best heard outdoors as at the end of the Edinburgh Tattoo when the lone piper plays a lament high on the castle ramparts.



## What you shouldn't do

Most of the articles appearing in this Newsletter, and indeed in wood-turning magazines in general, concentrate on telling you how to do it, with descriptions of the best and recognised techniques. So here for a change is an article telling you definitely how not to do it. The offending articles shown in the photograph below were recovered from a shed by one of the MSWA members.



These lethal looking items are scrapers made from old files. Dangerous for two reasons. Files are heat treated to be hard so that they will cut softer metal, but this process makes them brittle. The tangs are also short as the forces applied to files when used for their intended purpose are predominantly along the axis of the tool.

Wood-turning applies shock loads at right-angles to the tool and could cause these home-made tools to fracture, with possibly lethal results.

The answer is simple. Do not use this approach unless you really know what you are doing and how to heat treat these materials to provide the appropriate quality.

Philip Watts



## November Competition

Only two entries this month but both of high quality.



Hugh Field had a ball making this delightful hollow sphere but is not taking repeat orders.



Brian Smith turned every item in this rotund Santa Claus, with the exception of the scarf.

## The MSWA Website Gallery

The website gallery is woefully understocked at the moment. I could add to it by posting pictures of the competition winners but the photographs snatched during the normal MSWA meeting do not always do justice to the pieces. I have received some pictures and these will be uploaded to the website shortly but more will be welcome.

So my request is the one that I have made before. Please send pictures to me by e-mail to the [Editor@mswa.co.uk](mailto:Editor@mswa.co.uk) or give them to me on a CD at the meeting, or failing that give me good prints that I can photograph or rescan. I reserve the right to crop and adjust resolutions to suit the requirements of the website. Give me also a title and a brief description of the piece and any notes that you want to attach.

The website is a showcase for the MSWA. So here is your opportunity to assist in the presentation.

Philip Watts



## Club information

Your club committee for 2011 is:-

### **Chairman - Dawn Hopley**

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### **Treasurer - Roy Fallows**

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**Assistant treasurer – We urgently need someone to take this on, ready to take over next year!**

Tel.

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### **Events secretary - Geoff Payne**

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#### **Maurice Partington**

Tel:

Email

#### **Paul Bellamy**

Tel:

Email:

#### **Albert Heath**

Tel:

Email:

#### **Brian Garratt**

Tel:

Email:

Please only use phone numbers if absolutely necessary.

## Merchandise



### Clothing

The club has a selection of items for sale, all featuring the club name on a blue background.

<b>Sweatshirts (dark blue)</b>	<b>£12.00</b>
<b>T-shirts (light blue)</b>	<b>£7.00</b>
<b>Baseball caps</b>	<b>£6.00</b>

The sweatshirts are ideal for the workshop at this time of year; nice and warm, but they are also smart enough to wear down the high street, to woodturning shows, and to AWGB seminars.

See John Smith at the club meetings if you would like to purchase any item of club clothing.



### Abrasives

If you need that finishing touch, Terry Gray has packs of Abranet, recommended by demonstrators and other club members, at £2.20 for a set of 7 sheets - 120 -600 grit.



### Books and DVDs

The club has the following DVDs for hire.

AWGB Instant Gallery -1991 to 2003

Sharpening - GMC

Turning Projects with Richard Raffan

Turning Wood with Alan Holtham – Table Lamp

Colouring Wood – Jan Sanders

The Skew Chisel – Alan Batty

Bowls for Beginners – Ray Jones

Course on Spindle Turning – Ray Jones

Making and Decorating Platters – Mick Hanbury

Making and Decorating Boxes - Mick Hanbury

Turn it On – Volume 1 – Jimmy Clewes

Turn it On – Volume 2 – Jimmy Clewes

Turn it On – Volume 3 – Jimmy Clewes

All Glued Up! Open Segment Turning – Sue Harker

Turned Out Nice Again! Involuted Turning – Sue Harker

Wood Turning with Steve Heeley – Steve Heeley

**See John Smith at any club meeting if you want to borrow one of these.**



## Turning tips

This section is for any tips or advice you would like to pass on to other members. It doesn't matter what it is, if you discovered something you found useful, that you think may benefit others, please pass it on.



## Useful websites and suppliers

There is a lot of information available on the internet but some is better than others. If you come across any useful sites, please let me know and I will publish them here.

Timber Supplier - Capricorn Eco Timber  
Unit D  
Ladfordfields Industrial Estate  
Seighford  
Stafford St18 9QE

Website [www.capricornecotimber.co.uk](http://www.capricornecotimber.co.uk)

## Questions and answers

This section is an opportunity for members to ask questions for other members to answer, primarily about wood-turning but I see no reason why this couldn't be extended further. There is a lot of knowledge in the club on many subjects and this should be an easy way to get answers.

## Items for sale or wanted

If you have any items for sale, or if you are trying to find something, send me the details and I will put it in the next issue.

## For Sale

Tony Chapman, email address 'tonychapman5@btinternet.com' and phone number 01335 300 259 and that's in Ashbourne has contacted Paul Bellamy to say he has a Union Jubilee lathe, chucking attachments and turning tools for sale. He would like £500 for the whole lot but would break it into 3 lots if necessary at £250 for the lathe, and £125 each for the chucking and the tools.



## Custom toolrests – David Fields

David's grandson is able to make tool-rests, similar to the Robert Sorby system, out of round steel bar. These can be tailored to suit your requirements i.e. tool-post stem and length of the actual tool-rest. At the moment he is only doing straight tool-rests but bowl rests may be feasible in the future.

And if you have a Record lathe and do small spindles, he has developed a cranked tool-post, allowing the tool-rest to get close to the work, without the banjo dropping off the front bed bar.

If you would like to see one, or want to discuss your requirements, please have a chat with David at the club meetings.

## Carnauba wax polishes – Paul Bellamy

Following the favourable reaction to the polishing kits Paul started earlier this year, he has established a supply of carnauba wax flakes. These can be used to make your own 'sticks' or mixed with other components to make a range of polishes. He is selling these in 250g bags but could do larger quantities if you need it. He also has some ready-made wax blocks, comprising 60% beeswax/ 40% carnauba. These are softer than most 'wood-turning sticks' but he prefers this as it doesn't score your work.

He also has more of his 'Buffing kits', similar to Chestnut's system. For more details, see him at the club meetings.

## Teknatool Nova 3000 lathe, upgraded to 1Hp full electronic speed control, with remote and reversing switches, complete with stand, outboard bowl turning attachment and Supernova chuck - Paul Bellamy

This lathe is the same as the club lathe but was upgraded for a customer who has since pulled out of the purchase. It is an excellent lathe and I am only selling it as I now have a Nova DVR. The lathe also has the outboard turning attachment allowing you to turn bowls up to 29" diameter – big stuff! If you want more information, or want to see the lathe, please get in touch. I can also deliver and help set it up for you, as it is a bit big to go in a car.