



Future Events

MSWA Meetings

January 11th 2013
Annual General Meeting

February 1st 2013
Ken Allen

Other Events

Club Competitions

January

Challenge
Small Side Table (Full Size)

Premier

Vase with three wooden turned stems
of flowers

Chairman's Notes

As most of you all need to know, I have had a stroke but fortunately have been at a daughter's address and therefore looked after very well. I was taken off to the hospital at Telford and given an injection, put on the ward and two days later shipped out. Please forgive me if I occasionally slip up with names (although many of you will recognise that it's not my best point) so please forgive me if I am struggling with you or your name. I do appreciate that the club committee were happy to let me continue as your temporary chairman on the last meeting and I will again at the annual AGM. However, after that I will be stepping back in no uncertain matter. So thanks to you all for putting up with me and don't forget that we need a new chairman on the 11th of January 2013.

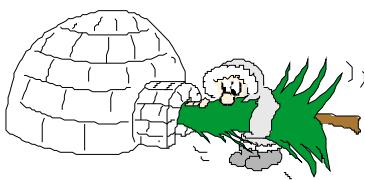
Our demonstrator this month did make something a bit different with a countryman's "liquor locker" and even with the complete set of plans on how to do it yourselves. It was a bit of a cock-up that the pencil lines popped up on the wrong side but how welcome to have a professional demonstrator who still continued and finished the job to the end. It is something of a nice meeting that ends up with a demo who makes the same article that he has duplicated a number of times but still does exactly what so many of us still manage to do so often! Added to the demo, Colin also took the time and trouble to explain the tools and uses, so an additional item for all of us.

Needless to say, I have not made any significant progress with the "drawing horse" mentioned last month, although all of the bits of wood are all to hand and ready for the off again shortly. As promised, I will bring the finished article to the club so all can assess and mark me down accordingly!! Needless to say, it may not be ready for the January meeting but will appear in due course and that's a promise.

One thing I did not need to do this month is record any notice of recently departed colleagues so please take care of yourselves and I hope you all enjoy the Christmas period and that 2013 will be a good year for all of us.

John

***A Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year
to all our members and readers***





Editor's Scribblings

I think that I have referred before to John Sainsbury's book "Guide to Woodturning Tools and Equipment" published in 1989. A section in that book dealing with lathes for miniature work referred to a wood-turning lathe that had been developed by Bonnie Klein, a leading miniaturist turner in the States. John Sainsbury described it in glowing terms "a quality lathe, precision built for long life and reliability", complimenting Bonnie Klein on how she had designed it for a purpose rather than merely scaling down a version of a larger lathe. I remember looking at it at the time rather enviously and wondering whether they ever became available on the second-hand market in the U.K.

More recently, I bought a small second-hand metal working lathe on E-bay. This had been manufactured in the States by a company called Taig, but this product is marketed in the U.K. as Peatol. Incidentally, the U.K. supplier resides nearby in Harborne, Birmingham. Birmingham U.K. that is, not Birmingham, Alabama. As I was cleaning and re-assembling it, something made me go back to Sainsbury's book and look more closely at the rather grainy illustration showing the Klein lathe. To my surprise, it became evident from this closer examination that Miss Klein had not developed the lathe completely from scratch, but rather had employed Taig components for the significant items such as the head and tail stocks and mounted them on a different bed. Thus I had without realising it bought the basic elements of a lathe that I had previously considered to be beyond my reach.

It remains to be seen whether by using this lathe I will ever match the work ascribed to Bonnie Klein.

I rather liked the story told by Colin Fisher during his demonstration this month:

"Three mathematicians were looking at a flagpole and trying to work out the height from first principles. An engineer appeared and asked them what they were trying to do. On hearing their response, he lifted the flagpole out of its socket, laid it down on the ground, pulled out a tape measure and measured the pole. "Fifteen feet". He then walked off. "Typical" said one mathematician, "You ask an engineer for the height and he goes and measures the length".

My home county is Lancashire and many of the stories there concern the Tacklers, who were the fitters that kept all the cotton mills in operation. Although semi-skilled, the stories represent them as lacking them in intelligence, to put it politely. One story is that of the Tackler who asks an Engineer to shorten a shaft by cutting two inches from each end. The Engineer suggests that instead he should remove four inches from one end. "Nay lad" was the reply, "Then it'll be too short".

Philip Watts

What do you do with all the shavings from your workshop. My wife now mixes my output with the grass cuttings in the compost heap. Others find more artistic things to do. Ron Dixon forwarded this link to me showing some amazing creations from wood shavings. Visit www.alriyadh.com to see the full range and glory.





December Demonstration by Colin Fisher

This was Colin Fisher's first visit to Mid-Stiffs. Hailing from Chester-le Street in County Durham, Colin describes himself as a Craft and Artistic Turner, but one who would turn anything promising a payment. He sells at craft Fairs as well as teaching and fulfilling commissions. Apprenticed as a cabinet maker, Colin took a Maths degree after being made redundant, following this with a degree in Psychology before teaching for 22 years.

He defines the various styles of turning as:

Craft – anything functional

Art – functional items with decoration

Fine Art – decorated items with no apparent functional use

His chosen project for the night's demonstration was described as a Scottish Water Flask. This would demonstrate a number of different ways of holding work on a lathe and produce a decorative item of a truly functional nature. Colin provided a detailed set of notes at the end of the evening and a copy of this may be obtained on request from the Editor of this Newsletter. The following description is based on the notes that I made during the evening.



A blank had been prepared of beech, but any hardwood such as sycamore could be used provided that it could be sealed to be liquid tight at a later stage. The blank had been sandwiched between pine slabs; these would be considered as sacrificial and would be turned away at different stages of the project. A hole had been drilled down the end grain of the blank and centrelines marked on. All these were offset from the true centre by 3mm (1/8 inch) for a reason that will become apparent later.

The blank was first held lengthways between centres and turned down to a round profile before the top neck and the bottom stand were formed. Colin used a bowl gouge at this point even though the direction of the grain made this a spindle turning exercise, explaining that the greater rigidity of the tool was preferable, although a spindle gouge was used for the final finishing cut. A quick finish with an abrasive, this being during a demonstration, and Colin turned the concave entry into the neck of the flask using a skew chisel.

A glue chuck was now prepared to hold the cover or side-plate and also to provide a jam chuck that will hold the work at a later stage fitting into the recess that will be turned in the flask. Colin provided hints about warming wood blanks in a microwave before using a hot glue gun to ensure a better bond. The loose side-plate was then turned and a note of he dimensions made such that when turned the fixed side-plate integral with the flask could present an identical appearance. When partially turned the side plate was removed from the jam chuck.

The original blank was now mounted on a face plate with the screws being driven into the side mounted sacrificial pine block. The sacrificial block on the outer side could now be turned away and one side of the flask shaped. The interior hollowing was now commenced by turning a recess sized to accept the chuck jaws. Using a bowl gouge and later a scraper, the interior of the flask was turned out. The scraper was a composite tool marrying a Henry Taylor head to a Robert Sorby handle. Finally the loose side plate already turned was fitted into the recess and the outside turning completed.



The flask could now be reversed and held on the jam chuck formed earlier in the presentation. This allowed the remaining sacrificial pine block to be turned away and the outside of the flask formed to match the first side, making an appropriate adjustment for the extra thickness of the fixed side plate and turning this side plate to match the profile, size and pattern as the loose side plate.

Sanding and sealing of all the exposed surfaces was now completed. Colin seals the inside of his flask to make them waterproof using either Rustins Plastic Coating or Chestnut Melamine Lacquer, including the inside face of the loose side plate. This was finally fitted and glued into the recess turned for it.

The final touch was the turning of a small stopper. This was attached to the flask neck with a leather thong.





No chuck, no problem - Part 1

The MSWA membership hopefully covers a wide spectrum of membership, from beginners to very experienced. This article is aimed at the less experienced although it is hoped that the more experienced might find it useful as a review of techniques available.

The purchase of a wood turning lathe still represents a significant purchase even though prices have come down in real terms over the years. Also, the majority of lathes only come equipped with drive centres and tail-stock centres, some with a single faceplate threaded to fit directly on the headstock spindle. These combinations permit basic lathe work to be undertaken but have their limitations. The addition of a chuck to the purchase can constitute an extra 50% to the initial outlay so it is worth considering whether the additional cost is absolutely necessary. So what are the alternatives for the impecunious turner?

The early turners would not have faced this question. Whilst chucks were available, and an example used to be on display in one of the galleries in the Birmingham Central Museum, they were somewhat crude consisting of a bowl shaped iron casting threaded to fit the lathe headstock spindle, and drilled and tapped at four points symmetrically around the rim to take four bolts by which the work is held. Instead, Bill Jones, in his notes from a Wood-turning shop, describes how he used to roughly shape the end of a blank before hammering it into the hollow centre of the headstock spindle. This practice might have been acceptable on an old lathe with plain bearings but is certainly not a recommended one for a modern lathe with ball bearings.

It is paradoxical that one of the older alternatives, a screw chuck, is normally offered these days as an accessory to be held in a chuck. Record appear to be one of the relatively few manufacturers to offer a screw chuck designed to fit directly onto the headstock spindle. It comprises a short length of steel bar stock drilled and tapped to fit on the spindle with a hole bored along the centreline to take a wood screw. A lateral hole is also drilled and tapped to take a clamping screw to prevent the central screw from revolving. See Picture. In use, the wood blank is drilled to accept the screw and the blank is thus held on the lathe. Reg Slack promotes the use of a standard No.14 wood screw for this work but these do not seem to be readily available any longer so other forms of machine screw can suffice.



It would be relatively easy to make one of these if access is available to a lathe with screw cutting facilities or with the use of an appropriate tap. If metal working facilities are not available, it is still worthwhile to scout e-bay looking for such taps and an alternative approach is to employ a small piece of hardwood. Drill a hole of the appropriate size in the wood before forming the thread with a tap. Mount it on the headstock spindle, clean off the outside and turn the front face before drilling a central hole to take a wood screw. Fix the wood screw in place with one of the super-glues available in the market. The alternative to threading the piece of hard wood to fit the headstock spindle is to turn one end to the correct Morse taper of your particular lathe, insert it in the headstock before turning the end square and drilling the central hole. Turning the Morse taper is not as difficult as it sounds and the correct dimensions may be found from tables or by measuring one of your existing centres.



December Competition

Two accomplished entries of decorated platters in the Novice competition. John McElroy provided the first place piece.



David Neil produced the second placed item. With hindsight, I should have photographed the rear of this platter to show the chatter work on the base.





Wood 'n' things



Club information

Your club committee for 2012 is:-

Chairman -

Email: chairman@mswa.co.uk

Position vacant protem

Secretary

Email: secretary@mswa.co.uk

Treasurer – Vance Lupton

Email: treasurer@mswa.co.uk

Tel 01922 457159

Assistant treasurer – Roy Fallows

Tel. 01543 491826

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Events secretary - Geoff Payne

Tel. 01543 480744 Mob. 07775 518769

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Abrasives -

Newsletter editor – Philip Watts

Email: editor@mswa.co.uk

Webmanager – Philip Watts

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Member's representatives

John Smith

Tel. 01889 577380

Mob. 07976 913811

Jane Russell

Albert Heath

Health and Safety Advisor

Hugh Field

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.

Sweatshirts (dark blue)	£12.00
T-shirts (light blue)	£7.00
Baseball caps	£6.00

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, the club 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 amongst others for hire.

MSWA DVD List

- 1 AWGB Instant Gallery 1991-2003
- 2 Sharpening GMC
- 3 Turning Projects with Richard Raffan
- 4 Turning Wood with Alan Holtham – Table lamp
- 5 Colouring wood – Jan Sanders
- 6 3 Disc collection – Trent Bosch
- 7 Bowls for Beginners – Ray Jones
- 8 Course on Spindle Turning – Ray Jones
- 9 Making and Decorating Platters – Mick Hanbury
- 10 Making and Decorating Boxes – Mick Hanbury
- 11 Turn It On – Vol 1 – Jimmy Clewes
- 12 Turn It On – Vol 2 – Jimmy Clewes
- 13 Turn It On – Vol 3 – Jimmy Clewes
- 14 All Glued Up No1 – Sue Harker
- 15 Turned Out Nice Again – Sue Harker
- 16 Wood Turning with Steve Heeley – Steve Heeley
- 17 Woodcut Turning Tools
- 18 Robert Sorby Specialist Tools
- 19 Inlaid and Novelty Boxes – Chris Stott
- 20 Hope for us all – Simon Hope
- 21 Hope for us all – Vol2 – Simon Hope
- 22 Wet Turning With a Difference – Stuart Mortimer
- 23 AWGB Seminar 2011
- 24 Turning Green Wood – Michael O'DonnellID
- 25 Woodturning, a craftsman's guide. - Mark Baker

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.

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

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.

Charnwood Mini Lathe for Sale

A variable speed mini lathe with a cast iron bed, 250 Watt Motor, speeds from 650-3150 r.p.m..

!2 inches capacity between centres

Maximum turning diameter 8 inches

Complete with centres and faceplate.

Plus a set of Stormont turning tools comprising gouge, skew and parting tool.

£75

Reason for sale - Space required in workshop

Philip Watts. See me at a club meeting or via e-mail at Editor@mswa.co.uk