



Future Events

Next MSWA Meetings

August 5th

Video and Talk

Phil Watkins from Planet Tools
about Pen Mandrels

September 2nd

Ken Allen

17th Century antique pot-pourri

Local events at which MSWA will be
demonstrating

Saturday 9th July

CHADS Garden Party

Saturday 16th July

The Alrewas Show

Saturday 23rd July

The Kings Bromley Show

Also for your diary

The National Forest Wood Fair 2011
Bank Holiday Monday 29th August 2011
Beacon Hill Country Park
Leicestershire

Club Competitions

August - Novice

Salt and Pepper Shakers

September – Challenge

Plant or Cake stand

Chairman's Notes -The Chairs Chatter July 2011

“Whizz! Pop! Bang!”

I have a lovely tale that I would like to share with you all this month, that may be of some use to a lot of club members. Over the last few weeks I have been quite busy in my workshop turning a lot of items for friends and family as well as getting ready for the Kings Bromley Show. I own an old Axminster M900 lathe that I purchased second hand off E bay. It was manufactured in 1999 but has not had much use until recently.

There are a lot of other similar lathes on the market that share the same basic design as my old M900, such as the SIP 01938, the Draper WTL95 and the current Axminster AWVSL900 to name but a few. In fact, they all look so alike, that you would swear that they all come out of the same factory. I often wonder if this is indeed the case?

To carry on with my story then, I was busy turning away, trying to get an item finished in time for the Kings Bromley Show. Suddenly, there was a bright blue flash and a loud pop from inside the motor housing. Obviously everything ground to a halt and the lathe stopped working. After the initial shock (and a clean pair of knickers) I came to the conclusion that the motor must have finally given up after three days of constant use and me possibly overloading it. I therefore picked up the phone and called Axminster for some further advice. Initially they advised that it may have been a capacitor that had gone pop. This is situated under it's own small housing on the side of the motor and apparently they do have a habit of going bang. However, when I described that the flash had come from within the motor housing, they advised that the windings had probably gone and that a new motor was probably the best option. A replacement motor was in stock, and could be delivered next day at a cost of £118. However, as I had only paid £150 for the lathe and chuck and many other items in the first place, I decided to take some time to look at other options. John was away in London at the time, so I packed everything away for the day and started investigating a new lathe rather than a replacement motor.

However, a good few hours later, I just happened to spot a puddle of water in front of the freezer in the garage. I opened the door to realise that the power was off and that everything was defrosting. Panic stations! I had not thought to check the fuses! My lathe is sited in the garage which has it's own separate fuse board. Because the power had not gone off to any other sockets, I had not realised that the fuse had tripped out when my lathe went pop. Fortunately a major disaster was avoided and the only casualty was a slightly defrosted tub of ice cream that the dogs helped me to clean up.



John then came back from London and I told him my sorry tale and that I needed to buy a new lathe. He then asked if I had tried the lathe since the power had gone back on. Obviously I would not until he had tested it first, but he just boldly walked up to it and switched it on. I braced myself for another flash, bang and wallop, but instead the lathe just happily ran as normal.

To cut a long story short, the problem had been caused by a build-up of wood dust within the motor housing. This had caused a flash over onto the casing which had in turn tripped the fuse. On the end of the motor is a fan blade that draws in air to cool the motor. However, this is positioned directly in line with the Head stock, so that any stray wood dust is also drawn directly into the motor. This had slowly built up over time until my rude awakening occurred.

I spoke to Paul Bellamy about my little experience and he has come up with an excellent solution to help prevent this happening again. Rather than trying to Hoover out all of the dust, which proves to be very difficult to do indeed, maybe I should invest in a compressor. This would allow me to frequently blow the dust out of the motor and prevent the build-up. Either way, I thought it would be a good idea to share my experience with you all in case you have similar lathes with motors in similar positions.

Dawn

Editor's Scribblings

It is pleasing to see that there are a number of new members attending the MSWA meetings. Graham Lovatt's demonstration was a useful reminder that it is not necessary to have a workshop full of equipment in order to take up wood turning as a hobby.

Wood turning has not always been the province of the artisan craftsman, or the hobbyist. A recent visit to the Christiansborg Palace, one of the Royal palaces in Copenhagen, revealed a very ornate wooden cabinet in one of the living rooms. The cabinet was surmounted by some machinery. My friends, and some of the Danish visitors around us, were perplexed. I explained that it was an ornamental turning lathe and, then, for what such a lathe could be used.

It was not clear how the lathe was powered as the cabinet was closed, but my guess was that it might well have been treadle powered. Members of the Victorian well-to-do classes indulged themselves in their pursuits of certain of the arts, and ornamental wood turning was one of them. What the Queen thought about wood shavings in the Drawing Room is not recorded. Presumably, there were sufficient servants on hand to sweep up the shavings.

There may be some of us who are not cast out into exile in the garage or workshop, but the Lounge seems a step too far. It certainly would be in my household!

Philip Watts

From John Smith

John Smith can remember lending some thread chasing tools to another club member but cannot remember whom. So, if you can remember borrowing some such tools but cannot remember from whom you borrowed them then contact John Smith, and a mystery might be solved.



July Demonstration

Graham Lovatt has been almost an annual visitor to the MSWA. He has an informal style of demonstration and a wide range of projects with a wide variety of styles in his repertoire.

For this demonstration, he chose to show an example of off-centre turning to produce an ornamental figure and an earring stand. The latter covered both spindle and cross-grain work.

The start point for the first project was a square section of wood that Graham turned down to a circular section using a Roughing Gouge supplied by Phil Irons. One end of the section was then marked out with two more centre points equidistant from the base centre. The two new centres were then marked as "A" and "C", with the original centre becoming "B". For the remaining phases of the turning, the tail-stock end of the section was mounted on the initial centre, whilst the headstock end was mounted on each of the three centres as required by each phase of the project.

The first phase commenced with the section mounted on Centre A. The head and shoulders of the figure were turned in this position. Graham finishes each section of this piece of off-centre turning as it is completed using Melamine lacquer after sanding in the normal way. The section was then remounted onto centre point B in order to turn the waist section and the transition into the shoulder section. The picture below may help in visualising this.

The bustle section from the waist down was now turned before returning the section to the original centres in order to turn the spigot at the bottom end.

The hat for the figure was turned from a contrasting wood, in this case a Walnut. The wood was mounted in the lathe using a collet chuck. (Graham had previously prepared this wood to provide the correct diameter mounting section for the chuck.) After facing off the blank, the hat shape was formed and the centre bored out. The hat was then completed by parting off and reverse chucking it to finish off the top of the hat.

Finally, a simple base was prepared and a hole bored to take the figure.

The earring stand project was a useful one for new members in that it covered both spindle turning and cross grain turning in producing a functional object. Graham mounted the head of the stand on the lathe using a screwed spigot held in his collet chuck. The head piece had previously been prepared by having the centre hole bored to the correct diameter for the spigot, and twenty-four holes smaller holes of a suitable size for earring hangers drilled at equal distances around a circular path close to the edge. These had been drilled on a bench drill with the hole centres having been marked out with compasses but those with indexing chucks could perform this operation on the lathe. A standard gouge was used to shape the head section which was then sanded and finished. A simple base followed.

The central section of the stand was turned as a simple spindle between centres, sized at each end to match the bores in the top and base. Finally a finial was turned to sit on top of the project to provide a finishing touch.

It was not that, throughout both projects,, Graham only used four tools, a roughing gouge, a spindle gouge, Bedan, and a parting tool. This is an example of how a simple lathe and a small set of tools can be sufficient to turn out a wide variety of work.



July Demonstration (cont)



The two items turned by Graham during his demonstration.

Book Review

How often you can hear the question "What wood is that?". Sometimes, the only response seems to be one of "It's a piece of garden-tree wood".

Mark Baker's book aims to resolve that question. Fifty woods are dealt with in detail in the first part of the book, followed by another hundred in briefer form. Against each wood there is a cross-section of a piece of the material, a section deals with the problems of seasoning, a description of the wood follows, and finally a section on the working qualities. Inset boxes provide information on where the wood grows and hints on obtaining a fine finish.

The book is well illustrated with an example of work by Mark Baker and others alongside each of the fifty selected woods. This is a book that I use as a reference source and inspiration.

Mark's book was published by the Guild of Master Craftsmen Publications in 2004 and reprinted in 2006 so the chances of finding a new copy are perhaps slim. Mine came from Craft Supplies but I did once see a copy in a Tesco store, of all places. One to look out for in second-hand book shops.

The National Forest Wood Fair 2011

Members of the MSWA visited this show last year and I am sure that a number will go again this year. A wide range of displays are promised, ranging from commercial forestry activities through pole-lathe demonstrations to chainsaw sculpting. If the last year's show is anything to go by, this will be well worth a day out. August Bank Holiday at the Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire LE12 8SP.



Recent Events.

The club has been well represented at a number of shows as the following reports indicate.

CHADS Garden Party

The club in the form of Dawn, Terry, Peter, Jane, Margaret and John Smith attended this event on the 9th July to put on a display of members work, (which was all for sale) and to demonstrate turning on Dawn's lathe. Turning on the day amounted to the items that could be produced fairly quickly and further mushrooms, spinning tops and dibbers were added to the sales table.

Visitor numbers were a little down on last year but we did have the chairman of Staffordshire County Council, and Chris Gibb look us up amongst others, and we managed to raise £61 for CHADS. Apart from this we had a very pleasant afternoon with several cups of tea and coffee plus scones thickly spread with whipped cream and strawberries on top. As ever, a most enjoyable event and the satisfaction of our club being able to help them out again.



John Smith

Kings Bromley Show

As well as demonstrating at the Kings Bromley Show, the stand being suspiciously close to the bar tent, members of the MSWA enjoyed almost a clean sweep of the prizes in the wood working area of the competition tent.





Wood 'n' things



In the "Under 7 inches in diameter" class:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1 st prize | Terry Gray | Bowl |
| 2 nd prize | Dawn Hopley | Bottles |
| 3 rd prize | Geoff Payne | Egg cup and egg |



"Over 7 inches in diameter" class

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1 st prize | Vance Lupton | Bowl with flowers |
| 2 nd prize | Terry Gray | Bowl |
| 3 rd prize | Geoff Payne | Bowl |



"Useful Article"

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 2 nd prize | Geoff Payne | Biscuit barrel |
| 3 rd prize | Dawn Hopley | Mortar and Pestle |



Terry Gray also entered his locomotive model in a general class and received a further 2nd prize and a commendation for the most overall points in the wood working area.

The only pity is that it is not possible to identify the individual items to the general public as being from members of the MSWA.



Seighford Church

Every member of MSWA must, at some time, have been asked to use their skills to make something . Ron Dixon was asked to make a pair of gates to fill a gap between two existing pieces of balustrade in Seighford Church. He recalls that the aperture was out of level and not square, making life just that bit more difficult.

The spindles, top and bottom rails came out of 3" by 3" oak, stained to resemble Jacobean Oak and finished with an acrylic varnish.





Using 'Peel Offs' to add decoration to turned work.



At a recent craft fair I attended some club members took an interest in the decoration on a few of my small bowls and platters so I thought I'd put together a short article to briefly explain this quite simple process which, if memory serves me right, I first saw at a demonstrated by Steve Heeley. (Apologies if I've got that wrong!)

In the example explained here they have been used to decorate the rim of a small bowl but the idea could also be used in many other projects.

Peel offs are sold in sheet form and are available from many art/craft suppliers e.g. 'Hobbycraft' shops (Stafford and Tamworth I think are most local) and online e.g. <http://www.rainbowcrafts.eu/peel-off-stickers-for-card-making-4087-0.html> . They come in many styles or themes. Look for those with cut out detail within the main shape of the peel off – sadly ordering on-line doesn't always give enough detail to check this out.

The Process:

Turn and finish the outer/base of the bowl as normal.

Reverse the bowl, skim the top and define the width and shape of the rim by removing a little of the waste wood from the centre area. The width of the rim will to some extent be dictated by the largest peel off you intend to use – see example below.

Sand the rim to a fine finish and seal. (I used Chestnut Products Acrylic Sanding Sealer in spray form.)

Rub back with fine wire wool or very fine abrasive and repeat the sealing and rubbing back.

Carefully remove the peel offs from the backing sheet making sure all cut out bits are left behind on the sheet.

Place the peel offs onto a fine cloth - I use my woodturning smock. This is to 'de-nib' them and remove a little of the 'stickiness' that might otherwise make it more difficult to remove the peel offs from the rim later. Make sure the cloth you are using doesn't end up leaving the peel off with a hairy finish!! Try a test piece if in doubt.

Now remove a peel off from the cloth and apply it carefully to the rim

Repeat the process with the other peel offs being mindful of orientation and layout.

Rub the peel offs down to make sure they are stuck firmly to the rim.

Next apply the paint all over the rim and over the peel offs in the process. I used Chestnut Products Ebonising Lacquer spray but other colours and methods of application, e.g. stippling/foam texture pads etc I've used to varying success.

Check the back of the bowl for any paint spatter and remove before it dries.

Allow the paint to dry – about twenty minutes if you're using the ebonising spray.

Once dry the peel offs are now carefully removed. I use a pair of pointed end tweezers to lift a corner and then peel away the peel off. If you're careful (and lucky) the peel off will come away in one piece and will not be too distorted. If so they can be reused by storing them on the glossy side of a sheet of photo printer paper. That appeases the Scottish ancestry I have!

Once removed the remainder of the bowl can be turned out and finished in the normal way.



Vance Lupton

If you want any further help/detail/advice I can be contacted on either of these two numbers:

Home:01922457159 or mobile: 07941069444



July Competition

This month's competition was for the greatest number of things that you could turn from a pen blank, being a piece of wood 15mm x 15mm by 150mm long. There was some discussion that the words should have been chosen more carefully, to avoid somebody turning multitudinous washers identical in size and thickness. In the event, the entries reflected a variety of ideas.

Hugh Field gained the most votes with a wide variety of items, Terry Gray came second along with Tom Young. The former with a bowl of dibbers, egg cups and napkin rings, the latter with some miniature vegetables.





Back to Basics

There have been a welcome number of new faces at MSWA Club meetings recently amongst the more experienced members of the club. Perhaps it is time, therefore, to cover some of the more basic techniques of wood turning as distinct from some of the more sophisticated techniques and equipment demonstrated recently. More importantly, to dispel any ideas that a large budget is necessary to enjoy the hobby.

The visit by Graham Lovatt was opportune in that he sets an example of what can be achieved with very basic equipment. He used a lathe at the recent demonstration which could be obtained for a little over £100 not so long ago and employed only four different chisels in the course of his demonstration. The only addition to the standard equipment supplied with the lathe was a small collet chuck, and even this could have been dispensed with aided by a small amount of ingenuity. Graham mounts his on an ordinary portable workbench bringing it up to the right height with a simple wooden superstructure.

His Charnwood lathe is a typical Chinese-manufactured one with a cast iron bed and a relatively low-powered motor controlled by a variable speed drive offering speeds up to 3000 r.p.m. This lathe is normally supplied with a drive centre for the headstock and a live centre for the tail-stock, both being IMT tapers. The head stock spindle is threaded $\frac{3}{4}$ inch by 16, a thread commonly used on Record lathes and a six-inch diameter faceplate is provided to mount on the drive spindle. He employed only four different chisels, a roughing gouge, spindle gouge, Bedan, and parting tool. Any other tools used such as an auger had been home-produced (or shop-built as they say in America) from cheap tools bought from well known bargain stores. New chisels range from £20-30 in price but can occasionally be located at car-boot sales or in antique/junk shops.

The other potential cost area of the hobby is tool sharpening with the plethora of expensive grinding and sharpening equipment of offer. However, John Sainsbury's book on Woodturning Tools describes the "poor man's sharpening equipment" and identifies how abrasive discs may be held in a conventional power drill mounted in a bench clamp and used to sharpen chisels. Care must be taken not to overheat the chisels but otherwise this is an acceptable approach.

Chucks are another area of cost that can be avoided. They are not a modern invention and an early example of one used to appear in the Birmingham City Museum exhibit showing the contents of an early 20th Century wood-turners workshop. Bill Jones, an old wood turner who used to write in magazines such as Woodturning, has described how turners used to shape the end of a piece of wood or ivory and hammer it into the bore of the drive spindle in the headstock. One would not recommend such a practice today! The earlier lathes had plain bearings that were perhaps more tolerant of such practices. Instead, the use of jam chucks, screw chucks, or simple split chucks mounted on face plate can all play their part.

On the basis of the above it is thus possible to start turning with a budget of about £250. This is a lot less than the cost of many lathes and there are inevitably limitations on what can be achieved but if the budget is the limitation, then that is how to go about it. The only other way of getting started even cheaper is to build a pole lathe, but that will have to be the subject of another article.

Philip Watts



Club information

Your club committee for 2011 is:-

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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!

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Paul Bellamy

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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.

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, 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

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.

The following are worth a look :-

Boiling wood

Some information on this alternative wood treatment.
<http://www.woodturningvideosplus.com/boiling-green-wood.html>
www.woodturners.org/tech_tips/misc-pages/boiling.pdf

General

www.turningwood.com/artists.htm

There is an entry on this site for Darrel Feltmate with lots of useful information.

Ideas for ornaments can be found on
<http://woodcentral.com/newforum/ornaments>

Marquetry

It is well worthwhile looking at the website for the Staffordshire Marquetry Society. There is an excellent gallery of work by members.

www.staffsmarq.freeserve.co.uk

Questions and answers

This section is an opportunity for members to ask questions for other members to answer, primarily about woodturning 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

Due to ill health I have for sale a Myford lathe (36" centers). It comes with a Coronet chuck set with bearing centers, new Super Nova No. 2 chuck, hollow center with 36" auger and 19 assorted turning tools. I am selling the lot for £300 if anyone in your group is interested please call Graham on (Evesham) 01386871083.