



Future Events

MSWA Meetings

3rd August

Video Evening and talk from Mel Dowding of Dallow Toys on making Wooden Toys

Other Events

Alrewas Show
Cancelled due to poor weather

Kings Bromley Show

28th July

Club Competitions

August - Novice

Cup and Saucer

September – Challenge

Cabriole Leg

October – Novice

Pot-pourri Bowl with piercing

With or without lid

November – Challenge

Decorated Acorn Box

Minimum 2 ½ inches diameter

Chairs July Chatter 2012

As Mad as a Hatter

So where did July go? In my mind it is still June, and yet it will be August in just two days. They say time flies when you are having fun but the truth is that I have been so busy this month that days, dates and months have all blurred together. I certainly have not been having fun but dashing from one panic job to another and it is a wonder that I am not a dribbling mess in a padded cell right now. But that is life after all, and it is the bad days that make the good ones seem all the more worthwhile.

July has not been completely all doom and gloom. The highlight had to be the Kings Bromley Show on Saturday 28th. After having to work till midnight the day before and missing the Olympic Opening Ceremony, at least Kings Bromley lived up to its reputation as one of the best traditional village shows in the country. So many other villages were forced to cancel their events with the heavy rain at the start of the month, but the sun shone as normal on Kings Bromley and the event organisers delivered yet another fantastic array of stands, demonstrations and competitions.

The event was quiet to begin with, possibly because most people were up late watching the Olympics. However, the sunshine eventually lured them out of their beds and the afternoon was very busy indeed. We had a few enquiries from some possible new members, but best of all, we took £130 in charity sales from items donated by club members. I would just like to thank everyone who donated items for the sales table and made this all possible. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the money will be donated to The Woodlands Trust and will pay for more trees to be planted in Staffordshire.

Unfortunately I do have to end my chatter on a sad note and an appeal for a new club secretary. Will Rose has had to resign from the post due to growing demands on his time with unforeseen family commitments. Will saved the day when he stepped into the vacant role when no other volunteers could be found. I have to say that he has done an absolutely sterling job and that I shall certainly miss his input and advice. He has done a lot of unseen work for the club in the background and will certainly leave a large gap to fill. On behalf of all club members I would like to send our sincere thanks to Will for his dedication to the club.

Until next month then ... Happy Turning!

Dawn

Note

Will's resignation leaves the post of Secretary vacant. Will anybody willing to volunteer to take on this important job, please contact Dawn.



Editor's Scribblings

I made a donation to a local hospice charity the other day. At least, that is what I told my wife as an excuse/reason for buying yet another second-hand book on wood turning from the local charity bookshop. The book? The Craftsman Woodturner by Peter Childs, claimed to be the first real teaching manual on the craft. Note that, craft not art!.. First published in 1971 and reprinted on a number of occasions up until 1981.

It is a fascinating glimpse into the way that wood turning has evolved over the years. Take the turning of bowls. Peter Childs recommends turning them on the outboard end of a lathe with the blank mounted on a faceplate. Both sides of the bowl are turned in one operation without reversing to avoid the problem of re-centring the blank on the lathe. The photographs illustrating this practice appear strange at first to one used to turning bowls over the bed in the more usual way. The turner appears to holding the tool to the upward moving part of the bowl, until it is realised that the lathe is rotating in the normal way and the location of the bowl on the outboard end of the headstock reverses the rotation of the lathe relative to the turner. The holes left by the screws used to attach the blank to the faceplate are dealt with by filling with stopping, or by covering the base of the bowl with green baize, possibly second hand from a billiard table. Although Peter does mention the possibility of using a glue and paper joint to a piece of wood itself screwed to the faceplate to avoid having screw holes in the base of the bowl.

The range of projects described is also entirely traditional, starting with the inevitable eggcup. Fitting cigarette lighters into table stands is possibly less acceptable in these health-conscious days and an automatic tea dispenser has probably been rendered redundant by the advent of tea bags. Coopered turning is covered, showing that there is nothing new here.

Some things carry onto the present day. Paul Bellamy's recipe for preparing a finish from beeswax seems remarkably similar to that described in Peter Childs' book. I turned out a spoon recently using a process described by Phil Irons in his book, only to find a very similar jig described in this earlier book.

A complete chapter is devoted to Safety in the Workshop. The usual precautions are described but Peter suggests that when anything is ejected from the lathe, that it is usually deflected by the tool rest away from the operator. Those who sit in the front row at demonstrations, take note. From bitter experience, I am not sure that I entirely agree with his hypothesis.

Philip Watts

This and That

Two items arising from a recent Committee meeting. It has been suggested that members would be interested in compiling a list of the equipment owned and used by members. This would allow members to contact others using the same lathes, etc and share information/advice on any problems encountered.

The club sells small items at its displays, usually in aid of a nominated charity. This relies on a few members donating small items such as light pulls, mushrooms, spinning tops, etc. If every member donated a single item to the stock, this would provide the basis for future displays.

Would you be willing/interested in either of the above? E-mails to the editor@mswa.co.uk.



Bowl turning with Paul Jones

Paul Jones Demonstration

Paul Jones is a newcomer to the MSWA. According to his website, he has always felt a close affinity for wood, a relationship that began in his school workshops and has stayed with him ever since. He now writes that he is now fortunate enough to be able to develop that relationship and explore the creative potential offered by the native hard-woods of the UK.

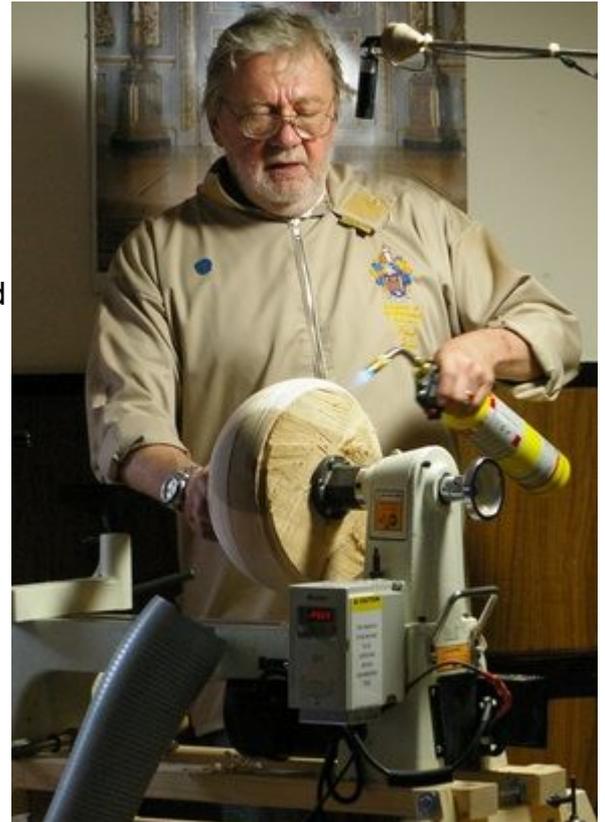
He has been a full-time Wood-turner/Artist since 2007. In that time he has trained with 3 of the UK's best known and most accomplished turners/artists, Mark Hancock, Tracy Owen and most recently Nick Agar. In 2011 he won a bursary from the Worshipful Company of turners to further develop his skills, particularly in the area of large diameter and sculptural turnings. These Bursaries are only given out every 2 years and in 2011 only 4 were awarded. He began selling his work in 2008, mainly on private commissions and now exhibits in Galleries throughout the North West. He is on the Register of Professional Turners.

The demonstration almost did not take place. The inclement weather over the days prior to the meeting had taken their toll on the Village Hall electrics, rendering the hall sockets unusable. Fortunately the kitchen sockets are on a separate circuit and an extension lead through the hatch provided a solution.

Paul had chosen to demonstrate one of his favourite pieces, being a textured bowl with an undercut rim. He had brought his own lathe, one smaller than the club lathe and almost dwarfed by the size of the ash log that he proposed to use as the basis of his project. He mounted this for the first stage of the work on a small faceplate. Roughing down commenced with the lathe set at its lowest speed and using a 3/8 inch bowl gouge. Paul used a full face mask during this operation because of the likelihood of pieces of bark being ejected from the lathe. Control of the bowl gouge using the hip as a fulcrum as an alternative to the more conventional hold into the waist featured here with the gouge being used in a pull mode. Paul commented that he had experienced in the past instances of the spigot that he had turned in the base as a chucking point for the hollowing operation pulling out. He put this down to very green wood.

The initial phase of the design commenced here with the base of the bowl being sized in relation to the overall diameter of the blank after the roughing out operation. An old rule of thumb of the being no more than one third of the overall diameter was quoted. Paul continued to form the shape of the bowl and took the opportunity to demonstrate an alternative underhand grip on the gouge that he found effective in providing an increased level of control.

Paul continued to look at the bowl design form as he further turned the outside, emphasising the benefits of looking "across the horizon", possibly looking down at the shape rather than across the bowl. With the bowl blank now in balance the speed of the lathe could be increased. A bowl gouge conventionally ground at an angle of 50-55 degrees was used at this point with the final cuts being sheer scraped with the same tool. A brief power sand employing 150 grit paper and with the club's dust extractor in use cleaned up the outside of the bowl before the next operation.





Wood 'n' things



The next aspect of the design featured a band of beads around the rim of the bowl. Paul used a 3-point tool that is actually one attributed to Bill Jones who used to provide “Notes from the Turning Shop” to the Woodturning magazine. Cutting in the first bead provided the baseline for the other beads. The other beads were stepped out with a pair of dividers set their minimum. Having cut the initial groove, the 3-point tool is rolled in from each side to form the shape of each bead. The beads were then cleaned up with 240 grit.

Highlighting of the beads came next with arrival of the gas torch to scorch the grain, making it more prominent in that area. Any consequent ignition of the surface timber was quenched with the aid of a water spray from a squeezable bottle. A spirit stain was then applied using a simple human lung powered spray gun, finishing off with an application of tung oil. An alternative treatment to tung oil is manufactured under the brand name Osmo.

(Out of interest, I looked up the ingredients of this alternative and found them to be: Sunflower oil, soybean oil, thistle oil, carnauba wax, candelilla wax, paraffin, siccatives (drying agents and water repellents), solvent (de-aromatised white spirit, benzene free and complying with the purity demands of the European Pharmacopoeia)

Paul buys his spirit stain in concentrate form and dilutes it 5 to 1 with methylated spirits. Chestnut apparently make similar stains.

He would normally apply a highlight to the base of the beads using a piece of Formica rather than the more traditional length of copper wire. This was the only area where the small lathe in use proved inadequate as a high enough speed proved unobtainable. The over-spray of the stain was now cleaned back on either side of the banding bead to reveal the base colour of the wood. Paul emphasised that what he was trying to achieve in the design was for the curve of the bowl to flow though the banding bead. Power sanding through the grits down to 400 and an application of tung oil finished the exterior of the bowl.

An old saying came to mind here about the application of oil finishes. It goes:

“Every day for the first week,
Every week for the first month,
Every month for the first year,
Once a year thereafter.”

Reference was made to Calabash bowls being an inspiration for the design of the bowl, these being made from half-gourds that are often decorated on the outside.

The bowl was now reversed onto a chuck with Paul demonstrating one of those little techniques that seem so obvious but are often not followed. He placed the bowl into the chuck with the chuck lying on its back on a bench, rather than trying to insert the bowl into a chuck already mounted on the lathe. Gravity assists in locating the bowl accurately in the chuck and avoids that moment when it seems that three hands are required to hold the blank and tighten the chuck at the same time.

Pull cuts with a bowl gouge now faced off the face of the work-piece with push cuts being used at the rim. The need to get the rim detail correct before hollowing out the bowl was emphasised here. It was suggested that having a slight curve on the rim rather than absolutely flat provided a more aesthetic look. Paul also likes to ensure that this area has a high degree of polish providing a contrast to the rest of the piece.





Wood 'n' things



We now moved onto the undercutting of the rim using a range of bowl gouges with differing angles of grind. A 45 degree angle gouge to form the undercut and bowl gouges with 40 and 45 degree angle grinds to continue the hollowing of the bowl. This was done in stages to reduce the possibility of the wood moving as the core of the bowl is removed, and the internal stresses of the wood are relieved. The need for constant checking of the wall thickness was a feature emphasised by Paul throughout this process.

A discussion on the best placement of the tool rest considered the relative merits of keeping the rest parallel to the face of the bowl as against the use of a curved rest protruding into the interior. Paul favoured the former believing that the rest then provided a fulcrum for sweeping the curve within the bowl, the position of the hand on the rest providing a natural curve.

A comment by Paul that the only criticism that he had of the small lathe that he was using was that the rest was too short, and also that many tool rests were too bulky to permit the technique of crooking a figure underneath as is often advocated, provided the opportunity for Paul Bellamy to produce a bar type rest as has been advertised in the small ads of this Newsletter.

An example of Paul's work from his website and typical of the demonstration piece.



The following are notes provided by Vance Lupton after the demo by Paul Jones.

Regarding the spray diffusers he uses - though I do have a few (<http://www.turnersartshop.co.uk/loxley-spray-diffuser-2mm-1827-p.asp>), and have used them, I generally use small plastic spray top bottles which I fill with the Chestnut spirit stains. Though not as controllable I find them less exhausting to use!!

(Check out <https://www.icklebockles.co.uk/products/category/travel-bottles.html>) I use the 100ml Spray Top type at £1.80. He failed to mention that to use the spray diffusers correctly you have to open the two 'arms' fully to create the spray. Anything less and they don't work!

Secondly regarding the 'Rhynogrip' velcro backed abrasives that he used. I think Paul informed us that it is available from Simon Hope (www.hopewoodturning.co.uk) in 1 metre lengths in six grit sizes from 120 to 600 at £18 for a set plus 1.50 p&p. Richard Findlay (<http://www.turnersworkshop.co.uk/>) provides them in six grit sizes from but from 80 grit to 400 grit at £15 plus £3 p&p.

Turners Retreat (<http://www.turners-retreat.co.uk/>) also sell them in grit sizes 80 to 400 any length but more expensive at £21 for a set of six x 1 metre lengths plus p&P at about £4.50!

Currently Richard Findlay is the cheapest option if you don't want the 600 grit.

Vance



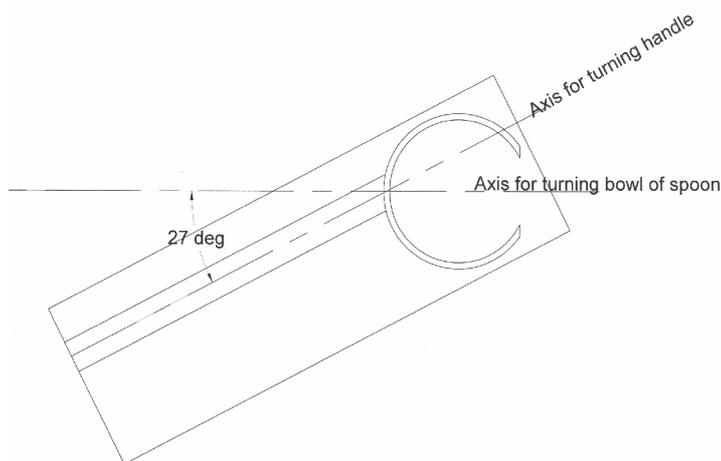
How to turn a spoon.

(A lot of interest was generated by the spoon that Hugh turned for the July competition so I obviously chased him for an article)

OK! So the July challenge said “Sugar bowl and scoop”. But isn’t a spoon just another type of scoop? Also, I don’t think scoops are always very practical (especially if they are small and used in small containers) and we do expect to dispense a fairly accurate measured amount of sugar, don’t we? So, a spoon it had to be!

Now we have most likely all made the odd scoop or two and with a bit of careful parting off and hand finishing they can be made in just one set up. A spoon however differs from a scoop in one important way – the “bowl” projects past the axis of the handle making it impossible to turn it in one set up. Just the sort of challenge I like!

Firstly I studied and measured a teaspoon and found that the “bowl” approximated to part of a 50mm diameter sphere and that the handle was at an angle of about 20 degrees to the “line” of the “bowl”. A bit of sketching established that the sphere which would be trimmed to make the bowl needed to be turned on an axis at about 25 degrees to that on which the handle would be turned. In the event I set it at 27 degrees as it looked right! (see drawing below).



This method is quite wasteful of wood. I used a blank (maple) of about 60mm x 45mm x 180mm set up on an angled jig (see Figure 1 below) to enable the sphere to be turned. You will note that the set up was such that there was insufficient stock to produce a full sphere and this helped with establishing an even thickness (see Figure 2 below). The outside was turned using a 10mm swept grind spindle gouge and the inside hollowed using a combination of spindle gauge, small bowl gouge and a rounded scraper. I didn’t bother sanding the inside as this was to be largely cut away later and would allow hand sanding as required. The piece was then removed from the jig and the position of the intended handle axis marked on the end opposite to the bowl. The easiest way to mount the piece for turning the handle was by means of a screw chuck; not a method I usually favour in end grain with no ability to use tailstock support, but by using the minimum size pilot hole it produced a surprisingly strong set up.



Wood 'n' things



Figure 1



Figure 2

To make the now offset bowl more visible whilst turning the handle I wrapped it with blue masking tape (see Figure 3 below). Because of the offset, it was impossible to totally produce the interface between handle and bowl by turning so some hand carving would be required later (see Figure 4 below).



Figure 3

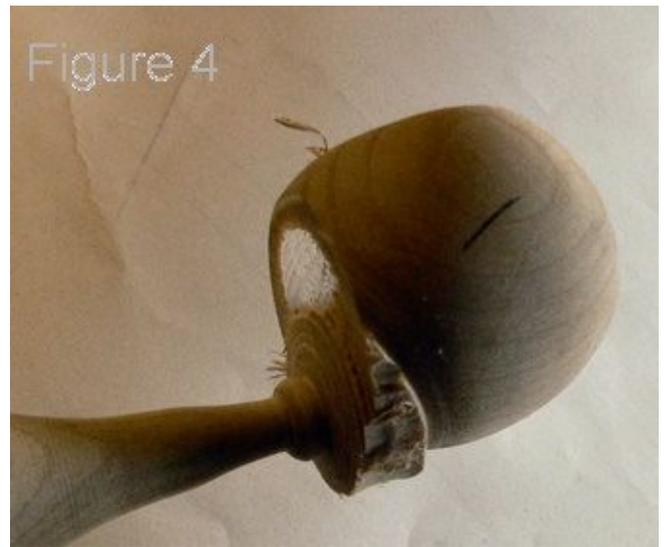


Figure 4

The finish turned, tapered handle and roughly shaped bowl are shown in Figure 5 below.



Figure 5



Before parting off, the guidelines for the spiral were marked using the (home-made) indexing plate on my headstock spindle. The first part of this involved setting the plane of the bowl vertical (the index pin on my lathe is mounted on an arm which is adjustable in length so that the start point can be set, rather than being restricted to the basic hole positions) so that a pencil line could be marked along the handle and along the bowl. A few cross lines enabled the bowl shape to be trimmed so that it was symmetrical.

Three more lines at 90 degrees were marked along the handle and then the spiral was marked out.

Figure 6 shows this marking out and the first spiral cut made with a chain-saw sharpening file, using a flat tool-rest for support.



Figure 6

After final sanding, the spoon was parted off, and the finished piece is shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7

Was it all worth it? Probably not, in terms of time taken; but presumably those of you who voted for it with my "take" on a sugar bowl as the winner at the July meeting liked it, so that justified it!

Hugh Field



July Competition

The competition this month was in the Challenge series and called for a sugar bowl and spoon. From the modest four entries, two reigned supreme with Geoff Payne fighting back and almost beating Hugh Field in the final reckoning.

Hugh's entry included a delicate spoon with a twisted stem, a series of pictures gave some clues as to how it had been made, hopefully to be expanded into an article by Hugh.



Geoff Payne produced a beautifully decorated bowl with carved feet and with decorative features on the base as well as on the visible sides.





The Pottery Industry and the Lathe

The Wedgwood Museum at Barleston in the Potteries has been in the news recently because of problems associated with its future. Hopefully, these will be overcome and the museum will be secured for the foreseeable future. A visit was the obvious choice for a February day when the weather ruled out the alternative of a long walk on the Chase.

I was certainly aware of the long reputation of Wedgwood in the field of pottery. I was not aware of the width of the range of the pottery produced by him and his successors, and I was certainly not aware of the use of lathes made by his industry.

A first visit to Wedgwood should take in the two major attractions, the museum itself containing examples of all the ranges produced over the years, and the Visitor Centre which holds demonstrations of the techniques and skills employed in the production of Wedgwood pottery. There is an option available between March and October to undertake factory tours.

The first instance of turning occurs in the Visitor Centre where a very conventional looking lathe missing only a tail stock is in use. Pre-formed clay mugs were being placed on a jam chuck, being patted into place with what looked like a reasonable degree of force. The clay at this stage is unfired, but evidently has the consistency of a very firm cheese, has even been compared to leather, and can therefore withstand this apparently rough treatment. The turning tools are all home made and generally looked to have their origin in old hacksaw blades. The slivers of clay are peeled off and drop down to hopper, to be recycled and reused. After turning, the items are painted whilst still on the lathe and before firing.



That is a very conventional lathe and one that would be very familiar to all in the MSWA. Not so familiar would be the use of various forms of ornamental turning lathes that have been and are still in use within the pottery industry. Articles by historical researchers show that Wedgwood was aware of the existence of ornamental turning lathes as long ago as 1763 and was actively researching their possible use in the pottery industry. A couple of years later Wedgwood was investigating the use of lathes with two distinct movements described as rosing or pumping. But after six years Wedgwood was admitting that he was unable to manufacture a commercial product on a regular basis. The reason for this, it is suggested, was that Wedgwood lacked a teacher and was self taught in the art and mystery of ornamental turning, and his workmen could only turn simple engine-turned products.

This was a period where the ownership of an ornamental turning lathe was the prerogative of the rich and was often regarded as a toy rather than a serious manufacturing tool.

Wedgwood persevered and examples of both lathes and products can be seen in the museum at Barleston. It is well worth a visit.

Philip Watts



Club information

Your club committee for 2012 is:-

Chairman - Dawn Hopley

Tel. 01543 878714 Mob. 07860 501379

Email: chairman@mswa.co.uk

Position vacant protom

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

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Member's representatives

John Smith

Tel. 01889 577380 Mob. 07976 913811

Jane Russell

Terry Gray

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, 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 amongst others 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

Wet turning with a difference – Stuart Mortimer

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

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.

For Sale: Clarke CDS300 - 300mm Disc Sander

Lightly used, in excellent working order - and with spare sanding disc.

- 305mm dia. backing plate for 300mm abrasive discs
- 750 Watt (1hp), 230v motor
- 1420rpm no load disc speed
- 400x133mm sanding table tilts from 0 to 45°
- Table mounted 120° mitre guide fitted as standard
- 52mm (2") dia. dust port.

Currently on sale at Machine Mart (see advert in June edition of Woodturning) for £143.98.

FOR SALE AT £100 ono

Interested?

Contact VANCE LUPTON on 01922 457159 or 07941069444 or email

vancelupton@hotmail.com

