



## Future Events

Next MSWA Meetings  
July 1<sup>st</sup>  
Village Hall  
Etching Mill  
Graham Lovett

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July  
CHADS Garden Party  
This is the corrected date for this event

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July  
The Alrewas Show

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July  
The Kings Bromley Show

## Club Competitions

July – Challenge

A Miniature Turning Challenge: How many items can you turn from a single standard pen blank sized 18 x 18 x 25 mm (5/8 x 5/8 x 5 inches)

August – Novice

Salt and Pepper Shakers

## Chairman's Notes – June 2011

Summer Blues

It's June and summertime at last! At least that is what the calendar tells me, but the view out of the window says otherwise. It looks like we are in for a wet one! At least that gives us all an excuse to stay indoors and do some more woodturning.

Talking of which, I must admit that I have not been able to spend much time in front of my lathe just recently with so many other commitments. However, July is going to be a busy month indeed with all of the forthcoming shows and events, so I hope to be able to spend more time in my workshop over the next few weeks. I also have a backlog of projects for forthcoming birthday and retirement parties, so will no doubt be very glad of the extra daylight hours.

I would just like to take this opportunity to send a big THANK YOU to Steve Heeley for saving the show this month. Not only did he step up to the challenge at very short notice, but he also gave us an amazing demonstration that had us all on the edge of our seats and holding our breaths. Steve has come to our rescue on a number of occasions and he has always given a first class demonstration. For those of you who are new to the club, Steve also gives private tuition at his workshop in Cheslyn Hay. For further details, please visit his website at the following address:  
[www.steveheeley.co.uk](http://www.steveheeley.co.uk).

Finally, I would just like to remind you all about the forthcoming shows in July. We are going to be busy for three weekends in a row at the CHADS Garden Party, the Alrewas Show and the Kings Bromley Show. Don't forget we will have a sales table at each event, so you are all invited to submit items to sell. I would also like to encourage you all to enter the competitions at the Kings Bromley Show. There is a woodwork section that includes the following classes:

Class 91 **Nest Box** – plan available from Section Organiser.

Class 92 **Hand Carving** – article that includes or is exclusively hand carved.

Class 93 **Turning** – article under 7" diameter.

Class 94 **Turning** – article over 7" diameter.

Class 95 **Useful article for home or garden.**

For full details of all the other classes and how to enter, please visit their website at the following address: [www.kingsbromleyshow.co.uk](http://www.kingsbromleyshow.co.uk)

Until next month then ... happy turning!

Dawn

Editor:

Your Chairman has been putting herself about this last month. Picture in the Express and Star and an appearance on ITV. Where will it all end?



## Editor's scriblings

Your Editor accompanied HIWMBO (Her indoors who must be obeyed) to the National Marquetry Exhibition at Markyate near St Albans. No great fortune on her part but the Staffordshire Marquetry Group, to which she belongs, took the overall shield for the best most points earned in the show.

Two things might impress members of the MSWA. The first is the high quality of finish obtained on the pieces. The most favoured finish is a gloss one obtained by the use of several coats of a Rustin's two-pack varnish and much hand finishing. Photographs cannot do much justice but a visit to the site of the Marquetry Society will show some well lit examples. The second, and one that intrigues me most, is the application of marquetry to turned objects. There were only two examples this year and these were not the most curvaceous ones that I have seen.

They attract my interest because I have tried using commercial banding around the necks of bud vases but with no great success. The banding tends to change length and move in relation to the turned wood. The marquetarians manage to produce pictures in veneer that conform to the wood despite the curved shape. This is an exercise in geometry as well as one in matching wood characteristics. I for one would be interested to hear a talk from one of the Staffordshire Group on how to do this. So there is one suggestion for the Events Secretary. Anybody else interested should register their vote with Geoff Payne.

Here are the two examples from the St Albans show.



The first is a box from Alan Townsend, a prolific worker from the Chelmsford Group. The second a more modest miniature clock by Janet McBain of the Harrow group. The latter started life as a pair of napkin rings.

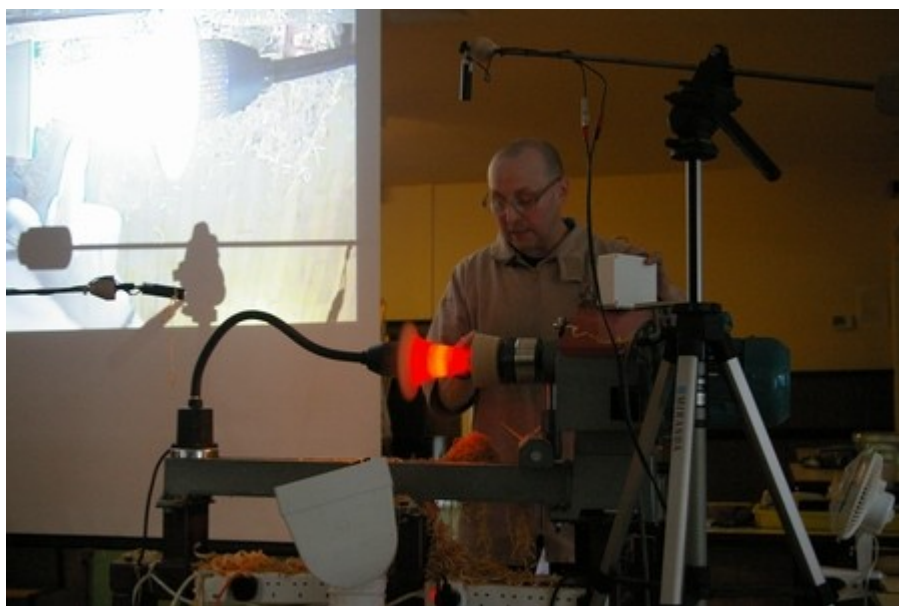
For the technophiles amongst you, the photograph on Page 3 of Steve Heeley at work during his demonstration was taken hand-held, no flash, by winding the nominal film speed of my digital SLR up to 1600ASA, giving an exposure of 1/10 sec at F4. The effect is that it looks as though he is playing with fire.

Thanks to those submitting articles to me. They may not have been used in this edition but will surely find a space in the following ones. Please keep them coming.

Philip Watts



## Demonstration Report – June – Philip Watts



As noted elsewhere in this Newsletter, Bert Marsh died a week before the June meeting. Mark Hancock had been the booked demonstrator but asked to be excused as he wished to attend the funeral. Mark had regarded Bert Marsh as his mentor during his early days as a professional wood turner, later became a close friend, and obviously wished to pay his respects. Steve Heeley kindly stepped in at very short notice to replace Mark, whom we expect to see later in the year.

The short notice gave Steve very little time to prepare for the meeting and he chose to demonstrate the turning of a natural edge bowl. There were a number of new members in the audience and they, along with the regular members, were treated to a presentation well up to Steve's usual standard.

The chosen wood was a piece of Yew still green about ten inches long and six inches in diameter. This was placed between centres on the club lathe and turned down with a long-grind bowl gouge, leaving a ring of bark at the end remote from the chuck. The other end was squared off and turned down to a short tenon sized to fit the chuck, Steve emphasising the need to ensure that the diameter of the tenon matched the internal diameter of the chuck jaws to ensure that the maximum holding power could be achieved.

The wood was then transferred to the chuck but with the tailstock retained in use for additional support. The outside of the vase had the bulk of wood removed although the final shape would not be achieved until the inside was fully turned. The lip of the vase was formed with the tailstock still in position using a standard ground bowl gouge. Once Steve was satisfied with both the external and internal shape of the lip, he removed the tailstock and switched to using a Woodcut boring tool to shape the inside of the vase. Some turners opt to form the external shape first, some the internal and some use a mixture of the techniques, all are equally valid.

The bottom of the vase was taken down to about an inch in thickness. This is an important point when working with green wood, as will be made clear later. Steve worked down the vase reducing the wall thickness and sanding as he went. Sanding was done with the lathe at a higher speed than would be normal for this operation, but Steve wanted to create friction and thus dry the wood out as work progressed.



For many, the most spectacular part of the demonstration was the use of a spot light to monitor wall thickness. From a dull grey, the light shining through the wood turns to an orange, then a yellow colour. The humorous advice given for this technique is that when you can read the wattage of the lamp bulb, you will have gone too far! From personal experience, this technique is very sensitive and allows thicker areas to be seen quite easily. The photograph at the head of this article shows the effect quite clearly. Use of lighter woods such as ash, maple or sycamore makes the technique easier than the darker hard woods such as yew.

Steve turns these vases down to just under 1/8 inch in thickness (2-2,5mm) and would sand down to 2000 grit, finishing with either Chestnut or Liberon oils. The former has the lighter colour of the two.

Finally, Steve finished off the foot. Leaving the foot solid would render it liable to crack as the wood dried out so it is important to hollow out the foot to the same order of thickness as the rest of the vase. This was achieved with the use of a skew chisel and gouge, retaining the work on the lathe until the very last minute to ensure that the pith section did not pull out. A slow lathe speed and a steady hand facilitate the exercise, but still left many club members holding their breath.

The key messages from Steve Heeley on green wood turning are:

1. Turn it quickly, preferably in one session, otherwise cover the work piece with a plastic bag containing shavings. This approach will work for two to three days, but not for longer.
2. Turn it thin, to avoid cracking.
3. Expect, and allow the wood to move. This cannot be avoided with green wood and adds to the charm of the finished piece. If the base distorts after removal from the lathe, hand sand it flat on a piece of abrasive paper held flat on a board.



For an encore, Steve turned an acorn from a piece of oak, holding it between centres throughout. The cup and acorn were shaped with a skew and the whole piece finished and sanded before the cup portion was textured with a Sorby texturing tool.



## Bert Marsh – Wood Turner 1932-2011

I have never met Bert Marsh and have only seen one of his pieces of work, a small bowl for sale in a local Gallery. Most of my knowledge comes from his book which is simply entitled “ Bert Marsh Woodturner”. His name has, however, figured frequently in the wood turning periodicals and he was obviously well respected within the wood turning community in the U.K. and elsewhere.

Bert served his apprenticeship within the furniture business before becoming a lecturer at the Brighton College of Art. Until that time, he had done some wood turning in the early years of his working life but his new employment gave him the opportunity to develop his skills over a wide range of work. Bert had a heart attack and underwent open-heart surgery in 1979. He subsequently retired from the college and this was the start of his career as a professional wood turner.

Entries in the 1981 Woodworker Show at Wembley in London earned Bert two gold and two silver medals and also the overall prize for the best piece of wood turning in the show. This at his first time of entering such a competition. By 1985, Bert was well established as a turner of merit with exhibitions in various locations within the U.K. By 1995, these exhibitions had spread throughout the world and Bert's work is sold in many countries.

Although Bert Marsh did not follow some of the trends seen in wood turning today where work is not complete unless it has been carved, textured, or coloured, or some combination of all three, some of his early work is very intricate. His book shows samples of bowls constructed from seven or more identical bowls, combined around turned centres to produce highly scalloped designs. There are examples of laminated and coopered work as well.

Bert then started to explore the world of forms and even confesses to be so obsessed with form at one time that he finished his work with black lacquer specifically to obscure the grain. His later work however relies on the use of a wide varieties of wood in bowl, vase and box forms. A lot of this work is surprisingly small with many items being under six inches in height and diameter. The finish is always superb and bowl feet on even small bowls are well detailed. His signature piece is a natural edged vase in Laburnum, with the heart of the log running across the vase.

Those wanting to learn more about his work could do little better than obtaining a copy of his book “Bert Marsh – Woodturner” published by the Guild of Master Craftsman Publications Ltd in 1995 and reprinted in 1997.



Natural edged bowl in the style of Bert Marsh



## June Competition

This month's competition was for a candle holder. Five entries were received.



The winning entry was from Hugh Field, a pair of candlesticks complete with wooden candles turned on multi-centres. Dave Neal produced the second and Tom Young the third.



The competition for the Challenge Cup next month is for miniature turning. The Editor will obviously have to remember to add the close-up lenses to his camera kit for the night.



## Club information

Your club committee for 2011 is:-

### **Chairman - Dawn Hopley**

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### **Secretary - Will Rose**

Email: [secretary@mswa.co.uk](mailto:secretary@mswa.co.uk)

### **Treasurer - Roy Fallows**

Tel. 01543 491826

Email: [treasurer@mswa.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@mswa.co.uk)

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

Tel.

Email:

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

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### **Abrasives - Terry Gray**

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#### **Jane Russell**

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#### **Maurice Partington**

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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 wood turning 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! Involuting 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 :-

### **General**

Two interesting sites:

[www.woodturners.co.uk/tradelinks.htm](http://www.woodturners.co.uk/tradelinks.htm)

[www.sofasandsectionals.com/wood-turning-resources](http://www.sofasandsectionals.com/wood-turning-resources)

[www.turningwood.com/artists.htm](http://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](http://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 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**