



## Future Events

### MSWA Meetings

April 6<sup>th</sup>

Bob Neall

A Hands-on evening on Pyrography

May 4<sup>th</sup>

Paul Bellamy  
"Our own"

June 1<sup>st</sup>

Richard Findley

A second time for Richard  
back by popular request

### Other Events

### Club Competitions

April – Novice

Paperweight

May – Challenge

A Musical Box

June – Novice

Jewellery – pendant necklace

## Chairs Chatter

### Mad March

It was a wonderful start to the month to see Mark Hancock back at the club. I think Mark last visited us in December 2007, which was around the time that I first started wood turning. I can still vividly remember him showing us some new and unusual techniques, including using a blowtorch to give a scorched effect to timber. Yet again, we were treated to some new and unusual ideas which are hopefully detailed in the article to follow. If anyone has attempted a curly-wryly goblet, or even a Staffordshire knot, then we would love to see them at the club.

March has been another busy month for me personally, and yet again I am rather late getting my monthly report written. (Apologies yet again to our wonderful editor). Woodturning has completely taken over my life for the last few weeks, with my first venture into the world of demonstrating. I was invited to go and give a talk at a small club in Penkridge, but decided to take along my small lathe and demonstrate as well. I only had 45 minutes so simple pens and key rings were the order of the day.

The club is called Pace 2000. It is a club for the over 50's that promotes health and well-being. They meet weekly at the Haling Dene centre, every Friday afternoon. I was a wonderful friendly atmosphere and I was very tempted to join. It is a shame that I am not yet old enough. Now there is something I have not been able to say for a long, long time! For further details, visit their website at the following address: [www.pace2000.org.uk](http://www.pace2000.org.uk). I had to do two short demonstrations to two separate groups. While one half took part in an exercise class, the other were entertained by me. They then swapped over after 45 minutes, so I was on a tight schedule. Things seemed to go very well and I was rewarded with some lovely comments. Lots of club leaflets were also handed out, so hopefully we may get a few new faces at our future meetings.

I am now looking forwards to our next meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup> when Bob Neill pays us another visit. Bob last visited us 2008, so it will be good to see him again. I am still trying to make something to bring along to have a go at pyrography. Last time I made a simple coaster and key fob out of the birch plywood blanks that Bob supplied. If like me you are planning to make something, make sure you use a nice pale timber such as birch, ash or sycamore so that the pyrography stands out.

See you all in April then!  
Dawn



## **Editor's Scriblings**

I have a younger sister who has made the practice of giving me a book as a Christmas Present. No problem with that, as she has the ability always to find a book that is different, interesting and one that has not been read before by me.

This year was no exception. I received a copy of "How to teach Quantum Physics to your Dog" by Chad Orzel. I decided to save it for a long plane ride down to the Canaries. I reached a point halfway through the book before deciding that I needed to return to the beginning and to start again. The dog is, as yet, no wiser. I am not sure that I am, either.

The book may contain a clue as to the nature of the problems that I have in wood turning. It all depends upon how you interpret the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle. This indicates that it is impossible to know both the position and the momentum of an object perfectly at the same time. One over-simplification suggest that we change the position of an object merely by looking at it. Applying this to wood turning suggests that one should not look at the chisel or work-piece whilst turning, as doing so changes their positions and, hence, the shape of the object being turned. From now on, I should make the final cut with my eyes closed. The result cannot be any worse than my present efforts.

Philip Watts

## **Contributions to the MSWA Newsletter.**

I am always grateful for contributions to the Newsletter and will obviously use them to the maximum extent possible. The one thing that I do have to be careful about is the issue of copyright. Whilst some authors, cartoonists and website composers may take the re-use of their material as a compliment, there are others who see it as an opportunity to seek financial compensation.

So, continue sending me your contributions but accept that there may well be occasions when I feel that I am not in a position to make use of them.

## **Pencil Tip!**

Jane Russell sent me this tip.

If you struggle to see your pencil or chalk marks as your project spins round, you might like to try a graphite pencil. These are solid graphite with no wooden casing, so they can be held at any angle. The downside is that being quite soft and without the protection of a casing they are fragile – before long you will find you have several small pencils! But then they fit easily into a pocket...

Mine came from an artists' supplier in a box of two each of 2B, 4B and 6B, but they may be available singly.





## March Demonstration - Mark Hancock

Mark is an extremely accomplished wood turner of international renown and previously visited us in 2007. He has a relaxed style and engaged well with his audience. His project was a “kinky” thin stemmed goblet with a captive ring, one of the pieces which he clearly enjoys doing. He brought two examples of ones he had made previously. (Picture 1 right).



He introduced his demonstration by stating his preference of classifying different types of turning not by descriptions such as “spindle”, “bowl”, “box”, etc, but, because he feels that grain direction is more important than what is actually being made, or the method of holding it, that either they are “parallel grain” (i.e. grain parallel with the headstock spindle axis) or “cross grain” (i.e. grain at right angles to the spindle axis). Clearly there can be grain directions in between these two, but he feels that these two classifications mean that the techniques required for producing the project are more clearly defined. For example a bowl could be in either classification but each might dictate a different technique.

Safety is clearly an important factor in Mark’s work ethic and he believes that only a polycarbonate facemask, with metal edge, provides adequate protection that safety glasses or goggles do not as they can only protect the eyes. Stern warnings were issued against using a spindle roughing gouge for anything other than parallel grain turning as the thin tang is not designed to take the stresses of cross grain work and the consequences could be serious if the tool should break. I noted he made a point of moving the control box for the lathe to a more convenient location using its magnetic attachment and habitually turned the spindle speed down between each stage of the work.

For this project he had chosen a piece of “slightly wet” parallel grain cherry. The thin stem requires a close-grained dense wood; holly is possibly a better alternative but less readily available. For this project the wood had been selected as being cut entirely from the outer part of the trunk, well away from the heartwood, i.e. the growth rings were wide; the reason for this was to become clear later in the demonstration.

Mark commenced by marking the centres and knocking in the drive centre off the lathe (to protect the headstock bearings and ensure a positive drive, and he favours a tailstock live ring centre rather than a point, as it is less likely to split the end grain.

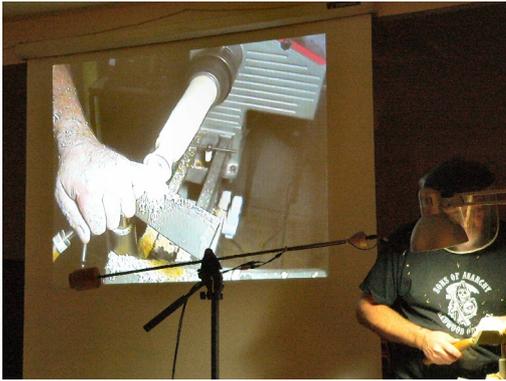
The most dangerous stage is the start of the project and Mark emphasised the importance of checking that everything is tight, that the spindle speed is set low, visor is in place, etc., but most importantly – keep out of the “line of fire”.

Having started the lathe he wound up the speed and rough turned the blank with the spindle roughing gouge and then created a long parallel spigot, with slight undercut, to suit his Mick O’Donnell gripper jaws. He does not advocate the use of chucking recesses and chooses to fit his work to the chuck off the lathe, allowing gravity to locate it before finally fitting the chuck to the spindle and finally tightening it. He always mounts a dead centre (or scrap taper drill shank) in the spindle taper before fitting the chuck in order to give additional stiffness. This is probably unnecessary for small projects but is an interesting point.

The end face having been cleaned up to remove the centre mark, the outside of the goblet cup was roughed out and then hollowed using a long grind spindle gouge. (Picture 2) Mark suggested that although hollowing from inside to outside is theoretically the correct procedure (being with the grain) it is possible to achieve better results by cutting from the outside to inside and suggests experimenting to find what works best.



# Wood 'n' things



Picture 2



Picture 3

The inside was finished using a curved scraper in shear mode at 30 to 40 degrees. He would normally at this stage sand and finish the inside. (Picture 3)

The familiar practice of a light source for completing the outside of the cup and assessing the evenness of the thickness by colour was used, but with a warning that grain colour can affect the light intensity. (Picture 4)



Picture 4 (left)



Picture 5 (right)

Mark then established the final stem diameter of about 5 – 6mm using a spindle gouge, at which stage the outside of the cup would normally be finish sanded, etc. (Picture 5).

The stem was then progressively formed about 40mm at a time using the spindle roughing gouge, with lighter final cuts using the gauge rather like a skew, finally finishing with a small skew chisel. He mentioned that he always hones the cutting edge of his skew chisels to a razor sharpness and rarely regrinds them on the bench grinder. Mark made good use of his left hand to support the material at this stage. This is a useful way of giving extra support and in reducing vibration and is safe if practised with care (warnings about rotating objects and loose clothing, etc. are taken as read! Mark was wearing a tee shirt for this demonstration; this can certainly focus the mind if you touch the moving chuck with your bare forearm!). He warned that the goblet can start to whip as the stem becomes longer and used the variable speed to enable the optimum speed to be “tuned”. He advised against using tailstock support as this can induce enough end load to bend the stem. A small cabinet scraper (sharpened on the bench grinder to raise a good burr) was used “freehand” to finish the stem by using it in trailing (negative rake) mode whilst supporting the stem with his left hand. Using the cabinet scraper gives a good finish enabling subsequent sanding to start at 240 grit. (Picture 6)



Picture 6



Picture 7



The base and captive ring diameters were then roughed down and the captive ring width established using a parting tool and the outside of the ring rolled as a bead. It is important to leave the cutting of the captive ring as late as possible. Mark ensured that there was adequate room between the goblet base and the position of the ring for the final undercut operation. (Picture 7).

Mark is not a great believer in buying what he described as “gimmicky” tools, preferring to use existing tools (for example a skew can be used to scrape internal and external chucking dovetails), conventional scrapers can be used in shear mode by rotating the blade at an angle (although it may be beneficial to grind a radius on the lower edge of the blade to make it easier to move on the tool-rest) and makes other special tools from old chisels and HSS stock. He used homemade undercut scrapers (made from bent forged nails, or Allen keys as an alternative) to undercut the captive ring from each side using light cuts until the ring separated. (Picture 8).



Picture 9

Picture 8

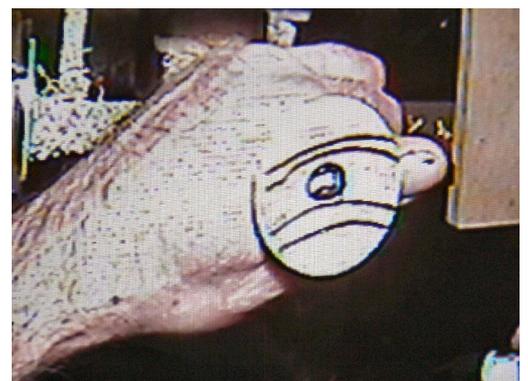


The inside of the ring would then normally be sanded (this can be done by hand, or the stem can be used as a sanding mandrel by wrapping abrasive paper round it (note spindle direction!). The base end of the stem and the base were then finish turned. Mark didn't attempt to restrain the ring by taping it to the cup as this can induce enough out of balance to cause the stem to whip. After this stage he moved the tool rest as clear of the cup as he could (just in case!) prior to carefully parting off the goblet. (Picture 9)

He formed a recess in the base as he parted off and removed the small “pip” in the base using a spoon shaped carving gouge.

Now came the interesting bit!

In order to bend the stem to the degree intended it is necessary to not only make it more pliable but to reduce the section to make it oval. This was illustrated by drawing lines on the bottom of the goblet showing the direction of the growth rings and the direction of the thinning operation on the stem. (Picture 10 right)



The thinning was done using the small cabinet scraper, with the stem supported on a piece of MDF, until it was about 3mm thick. I presume that that Mark would normally have finish sanded the stem at this stage. (Picture 11 left).



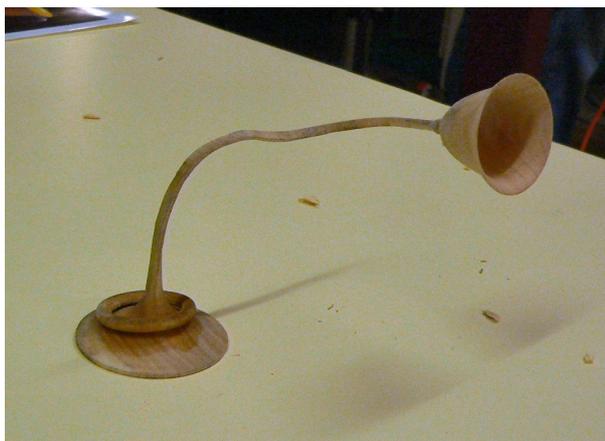
## Wood 'n' things



The method of bending was similar to that used by manufacturers of musical instruments such as violins and guitars which involves wetting the wood and then carefully forming it around a heated aluminium ovoid section mandrel. In effect steam bending. The process involves multiple wetting and bending stages to gradually achieve the desired shape. The stem can be twisted whilst bending depending on what shape is required. It may be necessary to carry out additional thinning of the stem as this process continues. ( Picture 12 right.)



In the initial stages of bending Mark compared the goblet with just a single bend in the stem with “the one he had made earlier, just in case” and it was notable how much more interesting it made it look. In his words, “straight is boring!” Part of the interest for Mark in producing these “kinky” goblets is, perversely, that depending where the captive ring sits, they do not actually necessarily stand up. He has a number of interesting ideas including embedding a coin in the underside of the base or inserting a large nail, possibly made of lead, to counterbalance it.



Picture 13 The finished goblet

The bending iron used by Mark was purchased in America. They appear to be readily available in the UK but priced at about £180. There are on the Internet, however, many examples of relatively simple home made devices using either electric or gas blowtorch heat sources. Mark also wondered if a large soldering iron might work. Now then, I just happen to have in the workshop a very ancient, large, electric soldering iron that just needs a new cable.....

Hugh Field



## March Competitions

The brief for the March Challenge Competition was for a table lamp not less than eight inches high (excluding the lampshade).

## Competition Winners

A fantastic 9 entries in total. It was very difficult to choose a winner as all entries were very well made and unique. However, Hugh's combination of inverse turning and a barley twist stem was an outstanding entry that would grace any table. Geoff had even turned a wooden lamp shade that looked amazing when lit.



1<sup>st</sup> = Hugh Field    2<sup>nd</sup> = Geoff Payne    3<sup>rd</sup> = Albert Heath

Other entries from:

Philip Watt

Dawn Hopley

Brian Smith

Ted Gill

Terry Gray

John Smith



## The Forest Stations.

Each September my wife and I celebrate our wedding anniversary by visiting, for a few days, a town or city in the UK new to us. In 2011 it was the turn of Lincoln. Approaching Lincoln from almost any direction you cannot fail to see the cathedral perched high above the city and when up close, to marvel at the skill of its medieval builders. Once inside we found along the north wall of the nave aisle a collection of fifteen of the most marvellous examples of low relief carving and marquetry in a wide variety of woods.

They depict the Stations of the Cross and whether you are a believer or not to just marvel at the skill of the craftsman, William Fairbank, and enjoy the beauty of the wood is sufficient in itself.

“The drama, feeling and spirituality expressed in this amazing art form captures something of the depth and passion of Easter”.

I said a variety of woods....there are 139 different woods used. Each work consists of a large background slab of either cedar of Lebanon; English elm; European ash; European oak; sweet chestnut; tiger oak; yew; or rimu.

I am sure I am not alone in trying to identify the different woods that I come across. Here the craftsman has thought ahead and each work has been drawn in outline with a reference to each wood...no more guessing! The example on the right for consists of a background of Sweet Chestnut with the hand in brown oak, the sleeve in European ash and the figures in silky oak; avodire; silver ash; castelo; kevasingo; makore; rock maple (birdseye) and birdseye sapele. ”.

What is more the visitor is encouraged to touch each piece!

In the introduction to the excellent guide book William Fairbank writes... *“From a timber perspective, if we wish to hand on fine timbers to our children and beyond, we must nurture an understanding and an appreciation of the value of trees, both while they are living and after they have been milled. The fact that we have to plant a tree today for it to become workable timber in 50 or 100 years time is becoming a harder and harder idea to grasp as we head into the new millennium. Forests are casualties to the ever growing demand for land space”*

Fortunately we have far thinking people in our midst:

The Forest of Mercia.

As they say in Parliament ....I commend The Forest Stations to you.

Will Rose

Footnote

This is unfortunately an example of where I could not use the pictures that Will supplied to me. Photography in the cathedral is not permitted and the images were all copyrighted by the cathedral authorities.

What I can say, from viewing the examples is that the carvings are as impressive and dramatic as Will says. You can see the range on the sculptor's website at

[www.williamfairbanks.com/stations/stationindex.htm](http://www.williamfairbanks.com/stations/stationindex.htm)



## Club information

Your club committee for 2012 is:-

**Chairman - Dawn Hopley**

Tel. 01543 878714      Mob. 07860 501379

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

**Secretary - Will Rose**

Tel 01543 490424

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

**Treasurer – Vance Lupton**

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

Tel 01922 457159

**Assistant treasurer – Roy Fallows**

Tel. 01543 491826

Email:

**Events secretary - Geoff Payne**

Tel. 01543 480744      Mob. 07775 518769

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

**Abrasives - Terry Gray**

Tel. 01889 576921

Email: [tgray268@gmail.com](mailto:tgray268@gmail.com)

**Newsletter editor – Philip Watts**

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

**Webmanager – Philip Watts**

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

## **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.

<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

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](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

### 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.