



Future Events

MSWA Meetings

October 4th
Joey Richardson
Decorations and Piercing

October 25th
NOTE CHANGE OF DATE
Melvyn Firmager

Other Events

November 16/17th
Christmas Fair
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

Club Competitions

October

Novice

A lidded box with a square or
rectangular profile

November

Challenge

A piece of involuted turning

December

Novice

A natural edged bowl or platter

January

Challenge – A tea light or candle
holder

Premier Cup – An abstract piece
based on turning

Chairman's Notes

The last three meetings have covered an incredibly wide range of topics thanks to the combined efforts of Geoff Payne and Ted Gill as Events Secretary.

We started with wood carving , moved on to segmented turning and concluded with a demonstration of pole lathe turning. The first a demonstration of free hand work although I suspect that Stephen White's lettering skills can be remarkably precise, the second a display of precision working in wood from Curt Theobald, and the final one from Peter Wood who may well possess a pair of callipers in his tool box but never produced them whilst making a chair leg. I had seen him previously in a log to leg competition producing two identical legs and measuring instruments were not visible on that occasion either.

Feedback from those present at the meetings, although few in number, were extremely positive. We continue the programme with a visit from Joey Richardson, much acclaimed for her work in piercing turned objects. See the flyer that has been circulated to see some examples of her work. Then come to the meeting and see how it is produced at first hand, and bring all your wood-turning friends as well. They will be made more than welcome.

Philip Watts

Chairman



Editor's Scribblings

I picked up one of Terry Gray's books on sale at the last meeting. It was one of the series produced by GMC Publications on Tips for Woodturners and Woodcarvers.

I have seen more than one of these publications. The tips contained within them range from designs for superbly engineered tooling to some more simple, well almost crude, ideas. Most of them involve the use of whatever scrap material has been to hand in the tipster's workshop. Now, I will admit to being somebody who hoards all sorts of material on the basis that it will be useful someday. I will also admit to occasionally having been out and bought items that I have subsequently located as already amongst the aforesaid hoard. The moral being to always root through the cupboards and boxes before rushing out to the stores to purchase more.

Having said all that, my breath was somewhat taken away metaphorically when the first tip in the book started off "I picked up the 65mm (2 1/4") piece of uVPC that I had.....". Now hands up anybody who has even seen a piece of plastic that thick never mind having such an item just lying around the workshop waiting to be made into a chuck for holding coasters in the lathe.

It is a fact that, within wood turning these days, half the challenge can be in working out how to hold the work-piece in the lathe at every stage of the turning process. Incorrect planning can result in a half finished item with no conceivable way of placing it back on the lathe for the turning to be completed.

Philip Watts

Change of date

For various reasons we moved the November meeting forward to Friday October 25th when the demonstrator will be Melvyn Firmager.. Please place this date in your diaries now.

Newsletter

The Newsletter is for your and the club's benefit. If you have something to say then write it and send it to me for inclusion. I can accept text in almost any format, although simple text files are the best. Similarly, image files as .jpeg, .tiff or .bmp files. In the extreme, I can even scan or re photograph prints or negatives.

I will be looking for volunteers to write up the Demonstration Reports so the budding journalists amongst you should sharpen your pencils and charge the batteries on your digital cameras.

Programme for 2014

Ted Gill is already working on this. Any suggestions that you might have, or recommendations about demonstrators that you have seen elsewhere will be welcomed. The success of the Open and Hands-on Evening will probably lead to a repetition next year. Watch this space.



The Additional August Demonstration- Curt Theobald – Segmented Turner

Curt Theobald was a guest speaker at the AWGB Seminar. We seized the opportunity to hear this turner with an International reputation and held this extra meeting In August.

It would be impossible in a couple of pages to cover in an adequate manner the content of a presentation lasting over two hours and involving more than a hundred slides. I will not even attempt to do this. There may have been some disappointment that it was a presentation rather than a demonstration such as is the normal format of our meetings; but the truth is that the process of building a segmented piece of work is one that takes weeks rather than hours and a sequence of well composed pictures with a commentary is by far the better method.

Curt has been a full-time segmented wood turner since 2002. He lives and works in rural Wyoming. He began turning in the early 1990's while working in a production cabinet shop. He later owned his own custom cabinet business from 1996-2002.



Much of Curt's work is directly related to his life experiences and the passion for assembly he learned at an early age. His creative process begins with putting ideas into drawings. The drawings help him to define the work and show any complexities that may happen during construction. The more technically challenging the project gets, the more passionate Curt becomes about the work. Solving the inherent challenges provide great satisfaction. Usually he will work through several design changes before going into the studio to begin production. Once satisfied with the design Curt will construct a prototype. This process allows him to modify any aspects of the piece and work out any design challenges or changes before he begins actual construction of an intended piece.

Curt has demonstrated segmented turning both nationally and internationally at woodturning symposia and woodturning clubs. Curt also has taught at art and craft schools across the USA in addition to private classes in his studio in Wyoming. Curt's segmented works have been exhibited in numerous museum and gallery events nationwide and his pieces reside in public and private art collections worldwide.

Curt's background as a cabinet maker and his knowledge of wood properties and precision in segmentation characterise his work. Indeed, the first hour of his presentation dealt with the methods that he uses to set up his workshop equipment, predominantly a chop saw and disc sander. Not content with the traditional methods of using a set square, he makes the initial set-up in that manner before refining it by making a test piece and checking the accuracy with vernier and dial gauges. This is a woodworker who works in thousandths of an inch, normally the province of a metal worker. His maxim is "Aim for Perfection, and you may get "close enough", aim for close enough and you will probably be nowhere near".

There used to be a saying in the Engineering Industry that went "P*** Poor Planning produces P*** Poor Performance". Curt's philosophy is certainly in line with that. His projects are designed on paper, although they may be refined during the making of them. His drawings are full scale so that he can pick dimensions directly from the paper. He builds prototypes so that he can view the projected piece in the flesh before he commences the painstaking process of cutting the individual pieces.

The initial cutting of the segments is done on the chop saw with the saw table supplemented by a top plate made to provide almost zero tolerance to the cutting blade. The size of some of the segments that Curt uses dictates this or they would just disappear down the slot! The refinement and making sure that the segments are precisely the right size and shape are performed on the belt sander with a purpose



Wood 'n' things



built sled sliding in the key-way of the standard table. Guides and limit stops are clamped to the sled to ensure accuracy and repeatability between segments. The cutting of segments that are repeated within layers of a piece is always done with the same set-up, a further aid in this quest for perfection.

Curt emphasised time and time again the need to plan ahead. Two key aspects were ensuring that the direction of the grain ran around each individual layer and staggering the joints in consecutive layers provide strength to the assembly. Earlier pieces had failed after a few months because of the movement of the wood as the humidity changed.

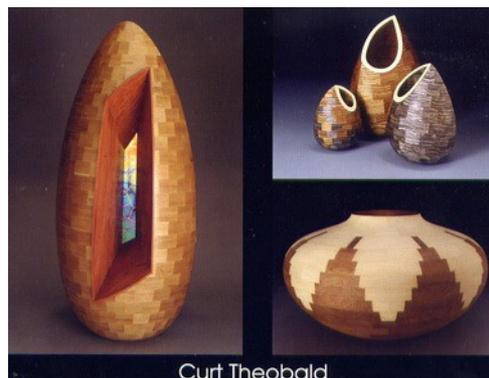
The latter half of the presentation illustrated Curt's methods by outlining the construction of a wooden teapot as an exhibition piece. The design was inspired by a ceramic version that Curt had seen. Whilst turning played a relatively minor part in the production of this piece, the process, from design through prototyping, through production and design modifications, was consistent with the techniques developed and taught by Curt Theobald.



The members present were attentive throughout with questions and responses, aware that they were listening to somebody who was an expert in his field. How many will be inspired to tackle a segmented piece remains to be seen. A segmented item could well figure in next year's competitions to act as an incentive.

Further information on Curt and his work can be obtained from his website at

www.CurtTheobald.com



Curt Theobald



September Demonstration – Peter Wood

Peter Wood describes himself as a Chair-maker rather than a wood tuner, although turning is a large part of the process. More specifically, he specialises in greenwood work in the traditional manner. Based in a hundred acre wood near Staunton Harold, he runs a series of courses under an organisation called Greenwood Days covering all aspects of that work from bow making to chairs.

We occasionally have demonstrators who bring their own lathes rather than use the club one, but we have not had one before who proceeded to assemble a lathe from its component parts. That done, Peter commenced by talking about the history of the chair leg makers traditionally given the name “bodgers”.



Their work formed part of a chair design termed “stick and slab”, so called because the elements comprise the slab forming the seat and the sticks making up the legs, stile and backs. Whilst chairs would initially have been made by a single person, the movement into mass production brought about the separation of the overall production into individual tasks. The bodgers made the legs. The term “bodge” used to apply to an unfinished rather than a poorly executed job, hence the application of the term to the leg makers.

The production of legs commenced by splitting down a length of straight grained wood such as ash into blanks of suitable cross-section. Peter was using a piece of oak, perhaps slightly drier than he would have liked. Further work with a draw knife and a shaving horse produced an almost round blank ready for placing between centres on the lathe. New terms for power wood turners appeared here with the head and tail stocks being universally called “poppets”. The centres themselves had been manufactured from steel bolts threaded into holes in the poppets and with the ends filed to points.

Peter's turning tools were limited in number. A large roughing gouge of conventional form but flatter in cross section did most of the work. His skew chisel was a conventional pattern maker's one with a single bevel, not one to be used on a power lathe! A smaller gouge was used for the final detail. Finishing of the leg used shavings rather than any abrasive paper. Final shaping of the dowel ends of the legs would have taken place after the wood has dried out further.

Turning a dibber and a children's rattle compete with captive rings showed off further what could be done on a pole lathe. What impressed most people was the sheer speed with which such work could be accomplished. It has to be admitted that the bodgers worked long hours but a production rate of between 100 and 150 legs per day, possibly with the help of a lad or apprentice on the initial splitting and shaving of the legs, is by any standard an impressive one.

An evening with a combination of a demonstration of a different branch of wood turning combined with a touch of social history made for an entertaining evening. Details of the courses available at Greenwood Days can be found at www.greenwooddays.co.uk.

Further information on the practice of Pole Lathe Turning and Greenwood Work may be found on their website at www.bodgers.org.uk.



September Competition

The challenge this month was to turn an item on two axes at right angles. Three entries were received with Ted Gill taking the honours, Hugh Field in second place with your Chairman and Editor trailing in in third place.



From the display table, a pierced and coloured bowl from Hugh Field. One can see who will be playing a close attention to Joey Richardson next month.





Club information

Your club committee for 2013 is:-

Chairman - Philip Watts

Email: chairman@mswa.co.uk

Tel. 0121 308 7838

Secretary – John McElroy

Email: secretary@mswa.co.uk

Treasurer – Vance Lupton

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Assistant Treasurer – Hugh Field

Events Secretary – Ted Gill

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Abrasives -

Newsletter editor – Philip Watts

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Webmanager – Philip Watts

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Committee Members

Albert Heath
Dawn Hopley
Peter Worrall

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.



Abrasives

If you need that finishing touch, the club has packs of Abranet, recommended by demonstrators and other club members, at £2.20 for a set of 7 sheets - 120 -600 grit.



Books and DVDs The club has the following DVDs amongst others for hire.

MSWA DVD List

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

Dawn Hopley has taken over the responsibility for these items and may be seen at Club Meetings



Turning tips

This section is for any tips or advice you would like to pass on to other members. It doesn't matter what it is, if you discovered something you found useful, that you think may benefit others, please pass it on.



Useful websites and suppliers

There is a lot of information available on the internet but some is better than others. If you come across any useful sites, please let me know and I will publish them here.

Questions and answers

This section is an opportunity for members to ask questions for other members to answer, primarily about wood-turning but I see no reason why this couldn't be extended further. There is a lot of knowledge in the club on many subjects and this should be an easy way to get answers.

Items for sale or wanted

If you have any items for sale, or if you are trying to find something, send me the details and I will put it in the next issue.

For Sale

1 Glue Pot Cast Interior and Exterior	£15.00
1 Draw Knife	£15.00
2 12" Record G Clamps	£30.00

Ring Albert Heath on 01785 661851

For Sale

Axminster Jet Bench Top Circular Saw JTS-10
Assembled and complete with stand
Little used and taking up room £150

Ring Philip Watts on 0121 308 7838

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 on 01283 229072

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, e-mail him at paul.bellamy@mswa.co.uk