

# Cheam Woodturners Association

# Newsletter<sup>4</sup>

March 2001

## *Editor's comments*

*Articles and comments are now flowing in to me more regularly but there is always space for more. Just a few words can often help fill space and provide interest- perhaps your thoughts on a speaker or on other articles. Tim Lawson's views on art versus craft (with which I personally agreed) are responded to in this issue.*

*It must be difficult to find demonstrators who have both the practical skills and the ability to put them into words whilst in action. I found Dave Moore's January talk on the pedestal clock very good in both respects and Frank Clarke is always good.*

*Roger Marsden Editor*

## *Also in this issue:*

### *Art versus Craft*

A reply from Peter Westerman

### *Hints & Tips*

more from Richard Hoodless

### *Dust Management*

A personal view from Frank Clarke

### *One Year On*

A beginner reports on his progress

### *plus Picture Supplement*

on the big beech

*Members who submit articles will be given the opportunity by telephone call or a proof copy in order that they may give their consent/approval of any editing that has been carried out on the original article, before it is published.*

## BIG FRANK GOBSMACKED

At the 15th February AGM, Frank Clarke reported that he was gobsmacked at the first year's success. With membership up to 68 by the year end, the honour of an invitation to exhibit at the Sandown Show and another exhibition at Cheam Library, he said he had found his year as Chairman a rewarding time. The club had been able to purchase both a lathe and a 'dust' extractor and he thanked Len Saunderson for his work on the store room and for making a trolley on which to transport the lathe. He also thanked the other members of the committee for their support, other club members who had provided camera/video support and newsletter articles and editing, and all other members for joining and supporting the club. He also thanked Audrey for the catering at our meetings.

Colin Simpson, Treasurer presented the accounts and was pleased that we were able to buy both the lathe and extractor out of first year income and still show a slight profit for the year. The accounts had not been audited by the time of the meeting but will be represented when they have been.

Len Saunderson, Secretary thanked Frank for his work on both the last year and current year programmes and explained what the committee had been up to in their five meetings of the year. Average attendance at club meetings had been 34, around 60%, which is a healthy proportion.

The meeting approved two changes to their constitution. One requires that subscriptions are now due by the time of the AGM and the other now allows the committee to have three officers and three other member (rather than two).

The meeting elected the new committee (see back) and also the President, Rev Michael Whelton BTh. After discussing other topics the meeting closed, but not before the members thanked Frank and his committee for all the efforts they had put in to providing an interesting programme and making the club so successful.

We were rewarded later by a talk on dust management by Frank - an article on this subject is included in the newsletter.

*Reported by Roger Marsden*

*- official AGM minutes will be published*

# Art versus Craft

*A reply to Tim Lawson by Peter Westermann*

I recently invited a friend to choose a bowl of mine for Christmas. In the kitchen there were half a dozen finished bowls for him to choose from. He paid polite attention to my offering but his eye was drawn to a number of rough turned bowls that were drying above the boiler. He liked the movement and emphasis on grain that the drying had produced and also the thickness of the rough turnings. He chose a rough turned ash bowl that was just over an inch thick, which he said would look beautiful when filled with apples. I had not consciously thought about the shape of the bowl. It was largely dictated by the half log from which it was turned. I could see that it had a simple pleasing line and fortuitously the finish was reasonably good. He did not want the bowl sanded or oiled. There were some green/brown stains on the wood where it had come in contact with bark or grass or mud. All he wanted was the spigot removing. The rim was straight across.

There are two possible explanations.

1. My finished bowls were so dreadful that anything else however unlikely was preferably.
2. The friend who is an artist really did like the rough turned bowl.

The bowl ended up in his cottage in St Ives so you can draw your own conclusions. In this instance I am in agreement with Tim. The apparent value of the bowl bears no relation to the time or skill or lack of skill in making it.

I do not entirely agree with Tim's apparently dismissive view of technique. For a beginner technique is everything. It influences what you can and cannot make. For me part of the enjoyment of making something is in cutting the wood nicely, getting a pleasing shape easily and producing the best finish I can. I do not make hollow forms precisely because it feels as if I am taking the wood out with a knife and fork. I also cannot hollow in end-grain efficiently so I avoid doing it. In my case lack of technique is limiting what I make.

I would like to have seen how Picasso painted, I think it would have added to the understanding of the picture and more importantly, I could have seen the model.

In some Chinese art, technique is an integral part of the process. The picture has to be accomplished with a few simple brush strokes that capture the essence of the subject.

I can remember an article by Dave Register where he advocated creating the curve of a bowl in one continuous sweep as this was likely to look better than a series of small cuts.

I agree that design should be the most important consideration for any woodturner and that it is often sadly overlooked in magazines, but for me technique is an integral part of the process and often produces shapes that I have not actively designed. I think my approach may be summed up as :- When it looks good to me I stop before I mess it up.

## Hints & Tips

### *A little trick*

When making washers out of thin copper sheet for the headstock spindle, sandwich the sheet between two pieces of 3-6mm wood or plywood using double sided tape both sides. Drill and fretcut the hole and around the diameter, carefully separate the sandwich, remove the tape and only a minimum deburring with a file will be necessary. This technique is also useful for cutting other shapes in thin sheet.

### *38mm jaws*

One shortcoming of the Axminster 4 jaw chuck is that there are no 38mm (1.5in) jaws available in compression mode except the middle of the O'Donnell jaws. With nylon jaws the cut occurs where the fixing bolts are.

If, like me you prefer to keep the workpiece close to the headstock bearings one solution is to make a set of jaws from 1/4in perspex to fit the 100mm wood jaw plates. The holes in the wood jaw plates can be tapped to fix the jaws with 1/4in BSF bolts.

Detailed instructions can be provided to anyone interested and I can supply 1/4in perspex to a few people for free.

### *Indexing a Graduate*

If you have an old graduate lathe and want to index it, I have had the experience and can give you some notes as well as offering to show you what I achieved.

*Richard Hoodless*

### **Don't forget**

**Club members get 15% discount at both Roberts Tools in Sutton and Crown Tools in Hackbridge** see their adverts in the last issue for details

# *Dust Management in Woodturning*

*A personal overview  
by Frank Clarke*

Much has been said and written about dust management over the past few years and it is a subject that should be viewed seriously whatever the financial cost, it is a sad fact that spare sets of lungs are not a readily available item.

Unfortunately though, cost is the overriding factor. Most people see woodturning as a hobby, and once they have paid out for the myriad of items required, feel unwilling to spend that little bit more to protect their health. Some people even get an allergy from turning Yew and when you start using some of the exotic timbers the risk increases. I am not going to go into the specifics of using individual woods, but if you have any concern then check, much has been written on the adverse effects of particular types of wood dust.

The cost to protect your lungs need not be expensive, although it has been said the more you spend the greater the safety. From a pack of disposable masks, which cost a few pounds from your local DIY store, to as much as a thousand pounds for a professional extraction and filtration system, it is all relative. Which ever type you use please ensure that any items you use are CE approved.

**Respirators / Dust Masks** Everybody knows about the disposable type of respirators that can be cheaply obtained as I said from DIY stores, however the choice is limited. The disposable masks with the valve or panel in front are thought to be the best to use, as it prevents your glasses steaming up and allows you to breath easier. A quick look at the label will give you some indication of the effectiveness of the mask. P2 is felt to be the minimum you should use, this gives 92% efficiency against particles down to 0.5 microns, and P3 will yield 98% down to 0.5 microns.

Where this type of protection fails is that if worn for long periods they become uncomfortable and dust can collect around the face seal. It has to be remembered that combination of dust and perspiration can irritate the skin. One American made mask, the Dust-be-Gone, although expensive is however washable, and is available through Turners Retreat. Some types of disposable masks are not recommended for users with beards or facial hair.

**Helmets** There is a range of manufacturers' making respirator helmets, 3M (formally Racal), Record, Purelite and others. However these are not cheap, prices range between £110 & £300. These work by pumping filtered air into a face shield, thus eliminating any dust from your immediate environment. These come with a P2 filter as standard with P3 filters as an optional extra, and conform to COSHH regulations. But it is always preferable to check the specification. Quickly while we are on the subject of safety, you should also use some kind of eye or face protection. This is where the helmet type of respirators come into their own, giving dual protection with the addition of an impact resistant face shield.

**Dust Extractors** These are wrongly named, as they are more chip collectors. While they will extract any dust particles in the immediate flow of air, there is an awful lot of fine dust that escapes. They come in many forms, hard plumbed or permanently fitted or the trolley kind, these are quiet good as they can be used in a variety of locations. They are great for clearing up the workshop when used in Hoover mode. Even an old vacuum cleaner will be of some use, however limited. One important thing you have to remember is that the extractor should not be in the actual workshop, as fine particles will escape through the weave of the bag. If you have no place to locate the extractor outside the workshop, then it should be encased in an enclosed cupboard, but make sure this has vents to the open air.

**Air Filters** These are a great addition to any workshop, as they constantly filter or scrub and then re-circulate the air. The main manufacturer of these at the moment is Microclene, at present they produce about six different models. The model type is governed by the size of your workshop. However if you use a larger Air filter than the minimum size your workshop requires the more often the air will be cleaned. They are said to be noisy, but when you have the lathe running, the radio blaring away the noise is not that noticeable. Models are also available from other companies, it is always best to shop around for the correct model to suit your workshop..

In my own workshop I use an expensive helmet respirator together with an industrial dust extraction system and air filtration. One thing you should always remember is that it is no good wearing protection while you are turning and then removing it while you are still in a workshop full of dust. Woodturning is fun, but please make sure that is safe fun.

Some joker once said 'the only way to eliminate dust completely is to turn in a wind tunnel' - best of luck.

# January 2001 One Year On

It all began in November 1999. My wife and I had our fifteen month old granddaughter for the day and decided that as it was so nice (yes, one of those rare warm and sunny November days) we would go to the RHS garden at Wisley. After a pleasant walk in the late autumn sun we ended up in the plant sales area and there, stuck in a corner, was an indoor marquee with a notice detailing an exhibition of woodturning. We wandered around and were amazed at the beauty of the items on view and very much appreciated the invitation to touch them. The exhibition was of the work of David Reeks and Tim Lawson and is a regular event.

By Christmas I had more or less forgotten about the visit to Wisley so I was overjoyed to find that my wife had arranged for me to have a couple of days lessons with David Reeks. These took place at the end of January last year when I spent two days with David at his house in Kent and had a thoroughly enjoyable time, achieving much more than I had ever thought possible in such a short time. So much was covered in those two days that it was not until I finally bought a lathe in March that I realised how much I had already forgotten.

Buying the lathe was the result of a visit to the Woodworking Exhibition at Wembley where I finally decided on an Axminster M900, which at least came complete with a decent chuck. I also chose a selection of Hamlet tools to give me something to start with. The only other purchase at the show was a magnet on an extendable telescopic arm that has proved very useful for finding the metallic objects that seem to disappear into the pile of wood shavings on the floor. I also visited the AWGB stand and discovered that there was a newly founded group in Cheam but, unfortunately, there was nobody from there on the stand at that time. However, someone gave me Len's name and number and so I joined the Cheam Woodturners Association last April.

Generally progress with turning has been good since then and I have been pleased with most of the pieces that I have turned out to date but the more I do the more I realise that there is a lot to learn, particularly about the wood itself. I particularly enjoyed Tim Lawson's talk about timber a few months ago and if anyone can recommend a good book on the subject please let me know about it. I look forward to the third Thursday of the month meetings and regret the occasions when I cannot make it (why do so many things happen on Thursdays?).

It has been a good year and I look forward to learning more and more about this wonderfully therapeutic pastime. I hear rumours that there's a tree needs dealing with in Fetcham, perhaps this could be part of the learning curve.

*John White*

## NEXT 3 CLUB MEETINGS

**19th April** Practical evening  
**17th May** Mark Baker Master Class  
**21st June** Multistar Chucks

## **Hands On Session Sat 7th April**

1.30-5.30, Cheam Church Hall.  
£5 per head including refreshments.  
Contact Frank Clarke on 020 8942 5463

## OTHER CLUB MEETINGS

**19th Jul** Tool Manufacture **16th August** Practical  
**20th Sept** Spindle Turning **18th Oct** Gary Rance  
**15th Nov** Furniture Restoration/ Table Lamps  
**20th Dec** Christmas Social

## DIARY DATES

**6th - 7th April** Yandle's Spring Show  
**12th -13th May** Poolewood Spring Show  
**20th May** Surrey Ass. of Woodturners Open Day  
**10th - 12th August** AWGB International  
Woodturning Seminar, Loughborough University

## THE NEW COMMITTEE

**Frank Clarke** Chairman Tel 020 8942 5463  
**Len Saunderson** Secretary 105 Abbots Road, Cheam, Surrey  
SM3 9ST Tel 020 8644 6911  
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## NEXT NEWSLETTER JUNE

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*Any views expressed in the newsletter are those of the people  
submitting the material and not necessarily of the committee.*

## *Gregory Moreton RPT*

Professional wood turner Gregory Moreton offers tuition for one or two students in his Claygate workshop

Two day beginners courses and one day advanced or refresher courses are available or hourly tuition can be tailored to your own needs

Gregory is registered with the Worshipful Company of Turners and is a full member of the Surrey Guild of Craftsmen

Please call 01372 467692 for more details  
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