

Cheam Woodturners Association

Newsletter 7

December 2001

**BUMPER
CHRISTMAS
ISSUE**
**Cheam turners first
eight page newsletter**

Annual General Meeting **Wednesday 20th February 2002** **Agenda**

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To receive and adopt the minutes of the AGM held on Thursday, 15th February 2001.
3. To receive and adopt the Chairman's Report of the previous year's working.
4. To receive and adopt the Secretary's Report for the previous year.
5. To receive and adopt the Treasurer's Report and the statement of accounts covering the financial affairs of the previous year.
6. To elect a Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer and three Committee members for the following year.
7. To fix the Annual subscription for the coming year, following submission of a Committee recommendation.
8. Any other business

By order of the Committee,
David Buskell FCIS
Honourary Secretary.

Please note any items for discussion under item 8 to be forwarded in writing to the Honourary Secretary by no later than 6th February 2002.

To show or not to show?

The Committee has been discussing the year 2002 show season and have been talking about whether or not the Club should be involved in any or all of these events.

In the past, the impression may have been given that shows (such as Cheam Library and Sandown) are only for the professionals and the more experienced members of our club. As a result of this, we believe that we may not have received the support we should have liked.

The Committee feel that all members, whatever their standard at the time, should be encouraged to show and participate in these events, and for the next year, would like to actively encourage this.

There are a few very good opportunities open to Cheam, and we are exploring the possibility of an Open Day at the new venue, but, of course, first of all we need to know if this is wanted.

The Committee would very much like to know your views on this subject as this may not be what you, as members, want from the Club.

Please would you give some thought to this topic over the next few months, as it is likely that the subject will be raised at the AGM. More information can be obtained from any member of the Committee who would be delighted to help in offering further background to assist you in your decision, or to discuss any further ideas you may wish to propose.

The Committee

ShowTime

Do you know of a shop, product or service that has given you satisfaction or have you visited a show? If so, why not share this information with others - Contact the Editor now.

Two views of the Axminster Show

We were warned, it's the best show in the country, allegedly That is certainly my opinion after my first visit to the ATME Show in Shepton Mallet. I could see it was going to be a big show by the number of cars in the car park and the long queue for tickets. At this stage I was pleased to have my pre-paid two day ticket and what good value it turned out to be.

I have been going to woodwork shows for some fifteen years and this one topped them all. The whole feel of the show seemed right. A hand out of the show programme and plan for starters, no pricey catalogue to buy. Demonstrations and lectures, information centre, sales desks and cloak room. A pick up point for larger items, mobility help with wheel chairs. And plenty of food and drink, all backed up by a very helpful and enthusiastic Axminster staff, all one's needs were catered for.

Just two examples of the help I had from the staff. At one stand I asked for directions to another stand and had the offer to be escorted to the stand that I wished to find, what treatment! Later, after making a purchase I changed my mind and wanted to exchange the item I had bought and this was done without any question. It may seem a long way to go for a show (two and a half hours each way) but I think it was well worth the trip and recommend it to all woodworkers next year.

Graham Wood

This was my first visit to the Axminster Show as I had previously considered it really too far to drive. However I had been determined to purchase a decent dust extractor for some time and the show presented a good opportunity to see and feel one before I spent my pocket money.

So, with Richard Hoodless acting as navigator, we drove to the impressively named "Royal Bath and West Showground". I must say that my first impression was one of disappointment. We had driven 125 miles to what appeared to be a large cowshed in the middle of an equally large field, certainly nothing like the NEC at Birmingham.

However once inside, this cowshed transformed itself into the equivalent of Doctor Who's TARDIS, with an amazing number of stands filled with all kinds of different machines and products. In fact it was the Axminster Power Tools catalogue brought to life. I was amazed. I think Richard was pleasantly surprised as well.

Despite being the "Preview" day there were certainly a large number of people present, predominantly male, all of a "certain age", and with regional accents which showed they had travelled from all over the UK to attend. Squeezing our way to the stand selling dust extractors I was able to examine and purchase one. 5% show discount helped to pay for the petrol used on the journey and I would be able to take it home to play with on the same day!

On a stand nearby we spotted Frank Clarke demonstrating a range of machines. He cut a truly magnificent figure, dressed in a bright yellow sweatshirt. Both Richard and I were tempted to purchase one of their Radial Pillar Drills, but we both decided that neither of us had room for one in our workshops.

Whilst Richard went off to view some of the practical demonstrations, I wandered around, finally coming to the Jumble Sale table which was Axminster's end of range stand. Here was an opportunity to pick up some useful bits at real bargain prices. In fact some of the bargains I bought are so useful I am still trying to work out what they actually are and how I can use them.

Overall I would describe the show as well worth the effort to get there, certainly one of the best shows that I have attended, but a place where tight control of the wallet is required if one is not to become bankrupted buying lots of wonderful toys.

Jeff Cordery

***Cheam Woodturners
go from strength
to strength***

***We welcomed 23 new members
during 2001 - a 25% increase.***

***As part of our membership
recruitment we have introduced
our own Association leaflet.***

Brian Ash, Membership Secretary

Banksia Cob Candlesticks

by Gregory Moreton RPT



I first made a pair of these candlesticks as a Christmas present for my sister-in-law some nine years ago and have made literally hundreds of pairs since. They are each made from a banksia cob (sometimes called nuts in this country although in fact they are not) on a jarrah burr base with a 3 inch brass candle dish. Although I usually use jarrah in order to keep the Australian theme, any darkish wood is ok. Burry or more characterful woods look better with the holey appearance of banksia cobs.



Cut a disc, of your chosen wood, about 4 inches in diameter and about 1 to 1.5 inches thick. This can then be mounted directly into the 4 inch jaws of your chuck (if you don't have a suitable set of jaws then a small screw can be used instead. But be careful not to drill the pilot hole more than 0.5 inch deep. If your screw is too long you can shorten it with a series of thin plywood discs between your chuck and the wood).

Now turn a suitable recess for some smaller jaws in what will be the bottom of your base. It should be slightly concave to prevent your finished candlestick from wobbling. (Again if you have no suitable jaws then turn a flat surface for attaching to a scrap wood chuck with a paper and glue joint) As this is one of the few items that I regularly make without removing the chucking mark, I put a couple of decorative rings in to tidy it up a bit. Sand and finish with sanding sealer and then wax. The sanding sealer I use is a pre-catalysed lacquer from Mylands that I thin 50/50 with thinners and I apply the wax with 1500 grit Webrax to de-nib the surface.



If you plan to make a pair of these holders then at this point you should repeat the first few steps with a second base. It is only a very small detail but, with anything that is intended to be part of a pair, having even the undersides not the same tends to stand out like a sore thumb when pieces are picked up and admired.

Now mount your base onto your chuck and turn your lathe's speed down to about 300 revs. With a 1 inch saw tooth bit, or similar, mounted in your tailstock, drill to a depth of about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Be careful not to drill so deep that the guide point of your bit breaks through the bottom of you base!



With a bowl gouge round off the edge of the disc. I find too complex a shape here, especially with burr, will distract from the shape of the stem.



To finish the base power sanding produces an excellent surface. Whether by hand or under power on hardwoods, I always end up with 1500 grit Webrax to give a burnished finish.

Once again apply sanding sealer and wax but be careful not to allow any wax into the hole.



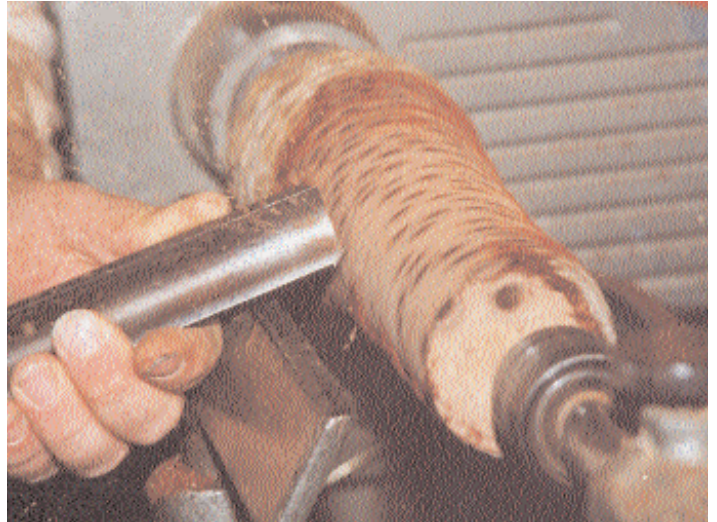
Now you should have 1 or 2 bases ready for their stems which are turned between centres from banksia cobs.

The secret to working with these pods is to first cut off their ends on a band saw or by hand, in order to give



a flat and sound surface for your drive and tail centres. Then, once topped and tailed, mount the pod between centres and turn away the outer layers.

The surface of these pods is made up of stone like nodules beneath which is a layer of soft brown fur, and it is these that gives banksia a reputation for being hard to turn. If you turn the lathe speed up to about 1800 revs and use a sharp roughing gouge these layers should turn away quite easily. Do wear a full face shield and



possibly a leather glove on your tool hand if you turn with your hand over the tool, as the stone like nodules are hard and can really sting on impact. This is one of the rare occasions I would suggest that wearing a glove was acceptable and, if you do, be very careful as loose clothing near moving machinery can be very dangerous. Although leaving these pods partly natural, with furry bits showing, sounds good I find that on these candlesticks or on table or standard lamps it doesn't work. I find that if natural areas are left the wax finish goes white and lumpy on the fur. I also found they did not sell as well as those without.

If you intend turn many banksias it is worth repeating this process with all the pods you propose to turn. Once the outer layers are removed and the pod is a rough cylinder it is much easier to decide which pods work best as a pair, which are better suited for fruit (the short fat ones) or other projects you have in mind. The colours and pattern of holes can vary quite a lot and you only see them when the inside is revealed. It is also not apparent how thick the workable part of the pod is until it is turned to a cylinder.

Once you have one or two banksia blanks ready for the stems, mount the first (or only) between centres. Using a parting tool, size the tenon that will join the stem to the base. If you have a four prong drive that is the same size as the hole that was drilled in the base, the need for callipers is removed as you can see the correct size.



After you have turned the tenon put a little recess in it to help stop any excess glue being squeezed out during assembly.

Next turn the stem to your desired profile (see picture at top of page for some examples). The shape is partly influenced by the nature and size of your roughed cylinder, so take account of any fur inclusions (like bark inclusions but fuzzy).

If you are making a pair then turn the shorter and smaller of the two first and copy the second from the first. If you don't there is a danger of making one and then finding you don't quite have enough material to make its match.



The actual turning of the now "nodule-less" nuts is relatively straight forward as long as your tools are sharp and your lathe is running fast. Do bear in mind that the grain is running from the centre out so in theory the cleanest cuts will come by cutting uphill. If the speed is too slow or your tools blunt you will find that this holds true, but as it is totally contrary to normal turning techniques it is not the easiest thing to do. Most of our tools are really not designed to cut this way so by cranking up the speed and using sharp tools we can get round this very successfully.



Once you have turned your desired profile slightly indent the top so that the brass dish will seat well and won't rock. Before you



go any further pick out any old seeds, fluff, dead spiders etc. with a pair of tweezers. Now sand down through the grits to 320 and finish with 1500 Webrax or 0000 wire wool to burnish the surface. Apply a cellulose based sanding

sealer and wax. Inevitably wax will get into the holes of the cob so a quick bash with a brush before you buff the wax off will get the excess out.



All that now remains is to assemble your candlestick use an epoxy rather than super glue because where you attach the brass dish to the banksia cob needs to be a good bond. Drill a small pilot hole for the reverse end of the spike which should screw very slightly into it.



Finally wrap and present to your spouse, in-laws etc. and sit back and enjoy the admiration. If however this all seems like too much hard work then I charge £26.00 each or £48.00 a pair and I even offer a gift wrapping service!

All photos by the author, Gregory Moreton (who offers tuition, see advert on right)

Turners at Wisley

As you walked into the plant centre at the RHS Wisley, you were immediately confronted with an array of wood. Examples of the work of Tim Lawson, Mac Kemp and Dave Reeks were laid out before your eyes on three podia and a display area around the left hand edge of the entranceway.

All three turners have put on a show and sale at Wisley for a few years now, but this year, the RHS had provided an excellent sales and display area – just inside the door! The demonstrations are still held outside in the Plant area.

One nice idea was to have signs inviting the people to touch the displays. I think it made people appreciate the items even more, and some, I am sure, purchase. Other shows and sales please copy!

People were picking up the turnings to view and admire them. Judging by the “sold” stickers, there were quite a few pleased owners of new pieces during the week that the sale has been on.

David Buskell

A Useful Tip

Do you have a car? Do you check your oil to make sure the engine runs smoothly? You probably do. Now, have you thought about checking your lathe?

I've had my Axminster M900 for about 18 months and thought it felt a bit sluggish. I managed to get hold of some Teflon spray at the Axminster show, and when I got back, gave the lathe, chuck and anything else I could find, a liberal spraying!

I found the lathe worked a lot smoother after that.

David Buskell

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 or e-mail gregory@moreton.co.uk

www.moreton.co.uk

Who's Who

The Events Secretary

My name is Jeff Cordery and I am currently the Events Secretary for the club.

My first experience of woodturning was, like many others, at school in our weekly woodwork lessons. There I turned a set of 3 egg cups which my Mother valiantly shared between the 4 members of the family at breakfast time.

Despite the missing egg cup, or because of it, I always had fond memories of woodturning. When I took early retirement from my job as an Operational Manager with BT, I decided that I would like to take up woodturning as a hobby, and possibly make that final egg cup. I have now been hobby turning for about 3 years and find it very relaxing and frustrating in equal measures, as I don't yet have the skill to produce the item which I see in my mind's eye. Hopefully I will get there one day.

The club has had a few events in the past where members have had the opportunity to sell some of their produce to the public. I would like to see more of these in the future, if possible, and with greater participation from the "non professional" members of the club.

Having sold 2 pieces of my own work at our event at Cheam Library, I can testify to the thrill it gives one when someone not only admires your work, but is prepared to pay real cash money to own it. I would like other members to experience this thrill, so please participate in any future events, I am sure you will enjoy it!

PS. I have still yet to make the final egg cup!

Jeff Cordery

ShopTalk

New Look Yandle's

Yandle & Sons Ltd, Hurst Works, Martock, Somerset TA 12 6JU
Tel: 01935 822207 Fax: 824484

After a disastrous drive on the A303 (what is up with that road?), we arrive at the pretty village of Martock and turned into Yandle's. "Well, there had better be something here, after coming all this way" we said. When we got to the third overflow carpark, we realised that there were quite a few people there! The free entrance and car parking may have had something to do with it.

The Yandle's show is usually held in the spring, but as the car parks are the local farmer's fields, the show was put back due to foot & mouth restrictions.

The show is based in and around the Yandle's Sawmill complex, with various marquees holding trade stands and demonstrations. The wood store held a good selection of blanks, planks and offcuts.

The number of people there gave it a busy, friendly atmosphere. Well worth the trip, but if you can find a way to get there avoiding the A303, so much the better.

David Buskell

Thankyou from The Editor

More members this month have shared their views and news with you. Have you considered sending me something?

Unwanted Hand Tools

You may be aware that John Forehead and I support the charity Tools for Self Reliance. Its simple objective is to place restored tools into the hands of desperately poor but skilled workmen and ladies in Africa. It has well established connections in six countries and ensures that proper distribution takes place.

We are very grateful if you have already given but perhaps there are a few more members who have surplus or unwanted tools lying about in their workshop, shed or garage. If you can spare them, no matter what condition, they will be put to very good use. Tools from any trade are acceptable but because of the lack of electricity in the areas we send to, they should only be *hand* tools.

For the ladies, we send fully overhauled Singer *hand* machines (only this make sent due to the lack of available spares). We use the spaces in the covers and crates to infill supplies of haberdashery (scissors, pins, buttons, etc) to assist in making clothes for themselves and to sell. Please speak to your wife or partner - they may have a manual Singer sewing machine tucked away in a cupboard and some haberdashery.

Any donations can be brought to the club meetings but check with me beforehand in case I may be away. Lastly, should you have the love of tools that John and I share and can spare a couple of hours on a Tues or Thurs morning at our workshop near Carshalton Ponds or even work at home, you would be made very welcome. Do give me a call.

David Dawson
020 8647 1718

Thanks to Frank

Woodworking therapy continues apace at the Hospital and woodturning continues to grow in popularity.

We are grateful to our Chairman Frank Clarke for providing our second lathe and a set of Perform turning tools (see issue 5).

We had some help from Machine Mart and Clarke International to sort out teething troubles with the lathe and all now seems well.

A new set of prayer mats is on order just in case.

Harry Bell

Robert

- World's premier manufacturer of woodturning tools
- Extensive selection
- Plenty of innovative new products
- Full technical support
- See us at one of our many product demonstrations

Robert Sorby

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NEXT NEWSLETTER - MARCH

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

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.

CLUB MEETINGS

held on the third wednesday of each month starting at 7.45pm at

North Cheam Sports & Social Club
658 London Road (A24)
North Cheam, Surrey
next to Sainsbury's supermarket

Wednesday 16th January
Mark Baker Woodturning Masterclass

Wednesday 20th February
Annual General Meeting
followed by Problem Solving Clinic

Wednesday 20th March
Colwyn Way demonstrating
Turning Fruit with Wooden Chucks

17th April - Practical Evening, Timber Conversion

15th May - Robert Sorbey Tools

19th June - Roy Childs, Turning Wet Wood

17th July - Bob French, Lidded Boxes

21st August - Practical Evening, Shape, Form & Design

18th September - Dave Moore, Craft Items for Christmas

16th October - Jennie Starbuck, Decorated Platters

20th November - Stuart King, Rural Crafts

8th December - Christmas Social

COMMITTEE

Chairman: Frank Clarke

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