

Cheam Woodturners Association Newsletter 25

June 2006

Ashtead village fete turns out to be a hot winner for woodturners

An excellent selection of turned goods was shown by those members who attended the Ashtead fete on 10th June. And they were rewarded by superb weather, a bumper attendance and a goodly number of sales. Add to this some potential new members. Here are some pictures taken at the event. Put a date in your diaries for next time. Remember, men, attendees escape Saturday supermarket shopping!



Left: A good display. Above: Crowds jostle. Above right: Gazebo puzzle. Right: Finding answers to the hard questions from visitors



Frank Clarke competition: Anything Goes!

Subject for the next Frank Clarke Award competition — which will take place during the club evening on August 16th — is Anything Goes.

Yes, members will be able to exercise their extensive range of skills to produce

something using bowl turning, spindle turning or a combination of both.

What an opportunity. The only criteria for judging — as usual by members attending the meeting — will be shape, design and finish. Off to your workshops. *Also see page 3*

Two little boxes win a silver for Richard

by Ron Grace



Richard with his two decorated boxes produced on an 1815 ornamental turning lathe on which he spent three months refurbishing

The Worshipful Company of Turners holds various competitions and I am delighted to report that Richard Hoodless won a silver medal in the Lady Gertrude Crawford ornamental turning competition.

We have seen some of Richard's little boxes efforts before — he won the advanced class of the Frank Clarke Awards competition in March last year for three examples — and it was for two beautiful ornamental boxes in African blackwood that he received the silver award. The first is about 3in tall and 3in in diameter while the second, made from the core of the first, is just 2in tall and 2in in diameter.

Modesty himself, Richard did not intend for anybody to make a mention of it in these pages — my thanks to Gordon Cookson for bringing it to my attention.

Richard quote: "Don't make too much of it!"



Inside the lids



Lid tops detail

Hon. Secretary job vacancy

No doubt every club member has read the latest issue of *Revolutions* in which it was announced that David Buskell is taking over as secretary of the AWGB.

While he is temporarily continuing to carry out his CWA secretary duties, the search is on for somebody to assume the mantle.

So what does it involve? David's answer to that question was as follows:

"I think the time spent is variable: five committee meetings a year and the AGM — each about 2-3 hours long.

"Prepare for one AGM and co-ordinate the committee meetings.

"Occasionally deputise for the chairman on club nights.

"Maintain contact with the AWGB.

"One also needs a word processor and internet connection (broadband is preferable)."

According to chairman Andrew Griffiths, David enjoys what he does and copes with everything — no doubt some of these items can be deputised.

Interested? Contact any committee member.



In the last issue of the newsletter, was a profile of Stuart Adey who has taken over as treasurer. No photo was available at the time — here he is, so now everyone knows to whom to give their cash!

Jeff Cordery has kindly agreed to step back into his old post as events secretary — Colin Ford, elected at the AGM, has a soaring work load and says he cannot continue.

Frank Clarke Awards

Rules are being misunderstood so here is a run-down of the categories into which members can put their entries

There has been some confusion about the rules for the Frank Clarke Awards competition. To make the entry conditions clear, here are the original rules as well as the modifications applied from August last year.

From the June 2003 newsletter

There were three categories (now changed):

1. Beginner
(Guideline: up to two years' experience)
2. Intermediate
(Guideline: up to four years' experience)
3. Advanced
(Guideline: more than four years' experience)

Prizes will be awarded, with these conditions.

A first-prize winner in one category may not enter that category again and must enter the next highest level in future competitions.

Later, it was decided to modify the rules, as follows, to encourage more entries from members.

From the June 2005 newsletter

Anyone winning the same category twice in two years must then move up to the next category. The exceptions are the winners in the Advanced category. These winners may continue to enter this category.

New categories

The new categories are intended for members who feel they meet one or more of the following guidelines:

Novice/Beginner

Members who have: recently started turning; or do not turn regularly; or regard themselves as unskilled at turning.

Intermediate

Members who have turned for some years; or turn regularly and often; or consider themselves reasonably skilled at turning.

Advanced

Members who turn professionally; or consider themselves very skilled at turning.

You name it, maybe they've got it in stock

Are you looking for an unusual timber for that special project?

Westonbirt Arboretum holds timber sales (10am to 1pm) on the second Sunday of every month except August when there is the Exhibi-tree (formerly the Festival of Wood) on August 25 to 28 (bank holiday) inclusive, from 10am to 6pm.

The list of timbers is impressive: oak, chestnut, beech, cherry, ash, lime, maple, yew, holly, box and hickory in a wide range of sizes, both in board and log forms.

Westonbirt is three miles south-west of Tetbury on the A433. Nearest motorway is the M4, exit at either junction 17 or 18.

Admission charges are £5 to £7.50 for adults. More details from Tony Pearce on 01454 261 808.

Woodturning tuition

with

Gregory Moreton RPT

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5% discount to all members of CWA

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Enthusiasm for the traditional

When Ken Greenway telephoned to ask if I'd like to do a traditional woodworking demonstration, I immediately accepted his offer, keen to share my enthusiasm with others.

Ken has recently taken over management of Cemetery Park, a nature reserve in East



Mike Abbot: in demonstration traditional turning mode

London. It's a Victorian cemetery, now overgrown by trees and looking more like a woodland; one of the few green areas left in Tower Hamlets.

I've always enjoyed working wood green using traditional techniques. I gained inspiration from a course I took with Mike Abbot last summer (see photo). Working in the open air with hand tools is a fantastic experience, particularly when you see long, wet shavings slice cleanly off your work.

After some deliberation, I came up with the following

by John Stinson

activities that I felt were reasonably safe for people to do under supervision:



- Using a bar auger to drill holes in logs

- Using an axe to split logs (I hold the axe in position, they hit it on the back with a mallet)

- Using a shaving horse and drawknife

- Using an old treadle fretsaw to cut shapes in thin plywood.

I had also planned to give turning demonstrations myself when time allowed.

The day arrived and I found I'd been allocated a pitch right next to an education centre. Refreshments were being served there which helped ensure a constant stream of visitors throughout the day.



Boring: one of the activities dreamed up by John Stinson

There were a number of pleasant surprises:

I was very impressed with people's enthusiasm to give things a try. Very different from my normal experience of silent Londoners I see on my daily commute.

The participants were diverse; ages ranged from

five to 75. An Estonian fretsaw enthusiast came to visit, followed by an Indian lady who had watched her father woodworking when she was younger, but had never had a chance to give it a go herself; then a middle class family where the father ended up spending more time



Cutting initials: this fretsaw activity was very popular

on the treadle fretsaw than his two kids!

It was also great to see how creative the children were. One of the girls set off a trend of using the fretsaw to cut out her initial. I soon had a steady stream of people asking me to drill holes in the initials they'd made, so they could make necklaces.

Finally, one item which turned out to be an unplanned success with the children, was simply sawing logs!

All in all it turned out to be a fantastic day. Well worth doing again next year.

Pleasant to both eye and nose

by Andrew Griffiths

The new programme for 2006 was kicked off in March by Gary Rance, a familiar face at our club. Gary started with a synopsis of his woodturning career, moving on to some health and safety tips before starting on the demonstration.

bottom of the finished piece (on the lathe, to ensure concentricity). This hole would take the lower finial. The finished piece was sanded from 180 to 600 grit, ensuring the paper was kept moving to



Gary makes the shavings fly as he starts work on one of the finials for his banksia pomander.

Gary's favourite woods are yew, laburnum and box. About 40% of his work is faceplate and his objective to make a pomander with a banksia body and yew finials top and bottom would use both faceplate and spindle turning.

He began with a 3in long piece of banksia nut between centres, roughed it down and formed a spigot at one end. This was then placed in a chuck and he used a Forstner bit to remove the core.

The outside was shaped with a skew chisel before moving on to a BCT hollowing tool to remove the inside, following the external profile.

Using a drill bit and chuck, a hole was drilled through the

prevent heat build-up.

The finials were each turned between centres using a skew and spindle gouge to create beads and sweeping curves. Gary explained how to keep the tool to the hip and move his body, transferring



Yew box with Corian onlay

his weight on to either foot.

He said that he found it better to think of the curve he was trying to produce and take a positive, flowing cut, rather than small sequential ones; this technique is less likely to result in dig-ins and therefore good for the less experienced to build up confidence. Sanding was done as above.

Each finial was made to fit into bottom and top holes in the banksia body, the lower



Finishing off the top finial

being a friction fit, the upper being loose to allow removal for refilling with spices. A hole was drilled through the stub — this is to thread and secure the length of cord that will be used to hang the finished product.

Once assembled, Gary used a spray lacquer to create a pleasing finish. He would have normally used sanding sealer first and denibbed prior to spraying.

For production work, Gary described production fingers — mechanical devices set at intervals along the length of the work. They are adjusted to be in contact with the work so that when the correct diameter is reached for each

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finger, it drops down with a click.

After the interval, in the short space of time remaining, Gary turned an onlay lidded box from yew and Corian. If you blinked you missed it! I've seen him do these at exhibitions in the 15-minute turn competitions — which

are then auctioned for charity. I was lucky enough to be the highest bidder so I have one of his boxes (having outbid Colin Simpson — something he has not forgiven me for!)



Putting the finishing touches to a finial

Gary mentioned his new DVD once or twice (!) during the evening. He described its contents and, running at three hours, he said it was great for insomniacs! The evening was

very enjoyable, with additional entertainment being provided by Gary's son, Luke; at one point, the TV monitors giving close-ups of the demo switched themselves to ITV and Luke shouted "there's something good on TV now!".

I always enjoy Gary's demonstrations. They are interesting, factual, entertaining and it's always a pleasure to welcome him to our club.

I look forward to his next visit.

Cherry picking with a chainsaw

On a cold January day this year*, Fred Cannings, Richard Hoodless, David Buskell and I went to Solom Wood, just south of Woodmansterne, to harvest a large, wind-blown cherry tree. The wood is managed by Anne Regan, for the benefit of the local community.

On the way there, snow started to cover my windscreen and I was wondering whether the day might have to be called off. Fortunately, it soon slowed down and David set to work with his chainsaw.

The cherry was thick; around 18in in diameter. It had been felled for some time and the outer layer of sapwood was quite rotten. The heartwood, however was extremely tough and sawing it proved hard work for both chainsaw and operator.

David persisted though and, by the end of the morning, we

by John Stinson



had 10 or so large cherry logs ready to be taken home for seasoning.

Many thanks to Fred and Richard for organising the event, to David for persisting

with his chainsaw and to Anne for hosting us.

** Yes, I know it is now mid-summer, but pressure on space forced me to hold this piece over. And a cool story may help in this hot weather!*

Editor



Almost unrecognisable in this getup, David Buskell with his trusty chainsaw



Fred Cannings wheels away a load of precious cherry for seasoning

Mission accomplished

by David Buskell

“Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to do a 1½-hour demonstration..... in two 45-minute slots. Within each slot you must cover personal introductions, health and safety, and demonstrate the turning of one item, leaving time to deal with any questions your audience may have.”

Having accepted the challenge, Colin Simpson and six colleagues from CWA made their way to City of London Freeman’s School in Ashted, Surrey, one bleak Thursday in April.

Cheam has been active in trying to boost interest in woodturning among young people and has been in contact with various educational establishments in its catchment area.

City of London Freeman’s School students already do some woodturning as part of their projects and so were happy to allow us to provide a professional demonstrator to give hints and tips. The AWGB had kindly supplied a grant to sponsor the demonstration.

We set up a small instant gallery from work brought along by Colin’s helpers plus an array of *Revolutions* and *Woodturning* magazines plus books.

We had little knowledge of the level of student expertise but had been asked to prepare some items which

they could turn for themselves during the school lunch break. I’m pleased to say that Colin came up with five or so and, for the first



Colin in happy mood as he demonstrates a coloured bowl

session, asked the 15 or so students for their choice of demonstration item. They chose a candlestick.

Half the students had some turning experience, but seeing Colin swiftly turn a



Work by students: laminated pepper mills (by Hannah); and a futuristic lamp using different materials (by Joseph)

blank into a base for the candlestick held their attention. He then turned to the candlestick itself and

roughed down a blank before shaping the stick. Next was to cut the spigot to match the pre-drilled hole in the base, stressing the importance of a good fit. The students were keen to know more about their demonstrator and asked many questions.

For the second session, Colin had been asked to turn a small bowl and colour it.

This demonstration covered shaping, use of scraper, holding techniques and then colouring. Colin uses spirit based stains and with three brushes of different colour stains, he coloured the bowl.

A hectic 1½ hours’ turning but we had reached out to some 35 potential turners, their teachers and, maybe, even their parents!

We saw some of the course work by the students and we were all impressed by the high standard and use of all media (wood, metal, acrylic). Our congratulations to City of London Freeman’s School for encouraging this.

We hope everyone enjoyed themselves — certainly the informal feedback we got indicated that they did and we hope to be able to move the opportunity forward.

Our thanks to Colin for his time, the AWGB for financial support and most of all to Alex Kew,

his colleagues and the students in the Design and Technology Department for allowing us to visit them.

Fine threads are easier to chase

by Geoffrey Vicars

For our May club meeting, John Berkeley tackled chasing threads on workpieces and he started by giving some tips: it is easier to produce a fine thread (say 20tpi) than a coarse one (say 6tpi); he recommends a lathe speed of 450rpm; finally he urges us to hold the tool LIGHTLY in one hand and use the other under the toolrest supporting the tool between thumb and forefinger.

On the subject of safety John strongly recommends a respirator to catch the dust rather than our lungs.

To save knuckles he had two tips: round off the sharp corners on chucks (result, bruises rather than stitches); mount Jacobs chucks in

jaws, not the headstock.

“Thread chasing is as simple as any other type of woodturning” said the sage — and went on to prove his point.

For the female thread the series of operations is: rough out, undercut the base where the thread goes, slightly chamfer the entry to the piece and finally with an armrest and 20tpi chaser, start one-third of the way along and at 45 degrees to the lathe bed using slow circular movements as the teeth engage, automatically moving along the object. Repeat gradually, allowing the chaser to move parallel with the bed.

For the mating half, the

work is roughed OVERSIZE with a slight taper. Again make a recess where the end of the thread goes, chamfer slightly at the front and with the toolrest slightly above centre start the chaser at 45 degrees and work in the same manner as for the female thread. Check for fit!

During the course of his demonstration John made a screw-top box which he included as an additional raffle prize.

After the interval he showed how he uses bone as decoration: for more details see *Woodturning* 161/162.

Editor's note: As I was unable to attend this meeting, nobody took any pictures (that I am aware of). Sorry but it was out of my control.

Making the most of special timbers

by Gordon Cookson

When you have a special piece of timber, because of age, provenance, rarity or grain figure, have you considered putting $\frac{1}{4}$ in slices on top of a plain piece of the same type or contrasting one?

The pattern could be an abstract one if only small pieces are available. The turning of the special wood side should then be a minimum to avoid wasting it.

This makes the most of the special wood and means more people can enjoy a piece of history or whatever.

I got this great idea from David Burton at the Chiltern

Craft Show at Stonor Park over the August Bank Holiday 2005. He uses it very effectively on his decorative platters, galleried trays, coasters, small tables and stools, and as a trim ring on bowls using pieces of HMS Victory oak and copper. I liked one of his small platters so much I bought it!

He also uses smaller pieces of Victory wood and copper to make paper knives, and small pieces of wood for wine bottle stoppers and corkscrews. He gives a signed certificate of provenance with each piece sold.



David's work can be seen at The Victory Oak Collection, Lees Yard off Bull Street, Holt, North Norfolk NR25 6HS (telephone 01263 711174) or on his website www.victoryoak.co.uk.

Other ways of making the most of timber are bowl-saving tools or the Stewart/Sorby slicer; making bracelets, decorative trim rings, jewellery and small finials/knobs from pieces out of the centre of bowls; or rings made from around narrow bases of bowls and vases or their long, narrow necks.

Of course, one must not forget careful cutting out in the first place.

Alan Hazel makes bobbins and bowls

by Richard Hoodless

For the first half of his demonstration at the April meeting, Alan Hazel turned a lace bobbin in snakewood — a rare and



Wing bowl with natural edge

expensive wood — and then showed how to cut a twist and do some off-centre turning on bobbins.

He explained the various parts of a bobbin — head, neck, body, weight — and the importance of getting the proportions correct for the lace maker. He gave details of the different types of bobbins — English, Continental, mother and baby, Honiton bobbins — and showed the different ways of ornamenting the bobbins.

The ways of holding the wood in the lathe to make bobbins were explained together with the importance of a high speed of 6000rpm in order to get a good finish.

To make the most of expensive wood he turned a dolls house bobbin and dolls house apple and pear together with a small fruit bowl.

Alan sells the bobbins for an average of £1.60 depending on the wood used and showed how an expensive piece of pink ivory 2.5in square by about 12in long can be used to make a large number of bobbins together with dolls house items and get a return of 2000% on the cost of the wood.

After the tea break Alan showed us a bowl turned from Sterling board and his experiments with decorating the rims of bowls and platters



Making a spiral with a hacksaw

with epoxy resin containing various substances to enhance the effect.

Then he turned a natural edge wing bowl from a log of yew about 4in diameter by 12in long. He mounted the log crosswise on the lathe using a screw chuck in the middle of the log together with tailstock support.

He turned the outside of the bowl feeding the gouge in carefully to get a good even surface and formed a spigot on the bottom. Holding the piece in a chuck he removed the inside to form a smooth wing bowl.



Club shop on the up

Ideas for new items welcome say Alec and Don

This is a thank you to all members who have supported the club shop in 2005. It is now some 12 months since Don Cording and I took over the



Some of the items available via Alec and Don

running of the shop and we are looking at ways to increase the products that we offer for sale.

We hope to have limited supplies of some new items at every club evening. Examples include clamps and adhesives as well as the normal range of abrasives, safety glasses, gloves and dust masks.

If anyone has any ideas of items they would like to be available at reasonable prices please contact me, Alec Gibson, on 0208 642 5890 or e-mail at monalec.gibson@btinternet.com.

Of course, we shall be at every club night to receive your suggestions and money!

2006 Programme

Date	Demonstrator/Event	Details/Subject
July 19	Dave Reeks	How to handle a burr
August 16	Practical evening and Frank Clarke competition	
September 20	Tony Walton	Bowls and platters
October 18	Colin Simpson	Design – members bring in problematic pieces for discussion
November 15	Greg Moreton	Turning large monkey puzzle bowl
December 20	Christmas Social	Details to follow

Club website: www.cheamturners.co.uk

In addition there may also be ad hoc tree harvests, hands-on mornings and exhibitions. Changes to the above programme may be necessary at short notice owing to unforeseen circumstances. Check our website for further information.

Meetings start at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month at:
North Cheam Sports and Social Club, 658 London Road (A24), North Cheam, Surrey
(adjacent to Sainsbury's supermarket).

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Next newsletter

September

Copy deadline

August 30

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