

BY HAND & EYE



The official newsletter of the Sydney Woodturners Guild Inc.

September 2013 Close off dates for articles for November
B H & E will be Friday 8th November 2013 Edited by Scott Rollo

NEWSFLASH!!!

Timber and working
with wood show

Beginning Woodturning
- a primer

30 years of the Sydney
Woodturning Guild

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****Views expressed by contributors are
not necessarily those of the guild****

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Another two months have passed and so quickly.

The Sydney Woodturners Guild Inc will be holding a 30 year anniversary function for financial members and their spouses/partners. There will be a \$20.00 per person charge

The function is to be held at the "Cubby House" the meeting place of our Southern group, the address is 88A Como Road Oyster Bay NSW.

There is a limited number of places - **100** due to the size of the venue.

The date is **Sunday 13th October 2013** beginning at around 11:00am and finish around 3:00pm (the guild committee checked with all regions and no one has a meeting or maxi/turning on that date so all have the same opportunity to attend)

To book your place, contact you region's representative and give them your \$20.

We have secured a Keynote speaker who should be entertaining and he is not a Woodturner so I hope you will be entertained. We also have another guest who will give us some helpful hints tips and a demonstration on Chainsaws. We are not exactly sure what he intends to do with the saw but, I expect it will be entertaining.

We have also secured a catering company to provide what we hope will be a sumptuous meal (I have had food provided by this company before and it is quite good and plenty of it).

The Guild is hopeful that as many life members as possible can attend. Life members will not be charged the \$20:00 fee.

I personally intend to question our older/life members on how the Guild was started, why it was started and how they see it going forward into the future.

By the time this gets to you there will be only a short time before the actual anniversary so I hope I will have sourced answers to my following request:

The Guild intends to give our Keynote speaker and our Chainsaw demonstrator a couple of gifts each for their time and to remember the Guild, its members who attended and the craft we dearly love.

We have one gift for each so far (an individual inlay pen), what I am seeking is two additional turned items made from rare type timber (Australian timber) . If you have an item or are prepared to make one before the 12th October, please contact your regional representative who will then contact Greg Croker or John Jewell .

In closing, keep those lathes spinning, send shavings flying but most of all do it safely, you are important to others.

Hasso Constantin.



The Guilds 30th Anniversary will be held at the Cubby house on the 13th October 2013 - speak to your guild rep to book a ticket - strictly 100 available.

The Cubby House is located at:

**88a Como Road
Oyster Bay N.S.W**

**Plenty of parking on the premises
and in the streets around the area.**

So where do we think the future of Woodturning lies? I guess this is a question that can be interpreted two ways... This month let's deal with the first interpretation of "future".

Firstly what is the future of the people doing the turning? Do our clubs have enough training in place to educate and skill up the young folk coming through our club? Do you have a team of "official trainers" that oversee and supervise the education and training of new/young/beginning turners? If you don't already, best you get busy and tap some of your senior and skilled turners on the shoulder to get them involved.

It no real newsflash to our clubs that we are working off a fairly senior base as far as age goes – most of the Guild members, it is fair to say, are of the senior variety and they are only getting older. What we have to do is somehow "re-image" ourselves and make it more appealing to the younger members of the public...we need some fresh injection of youths into our clubs. Not to put too fine a point on it, at the very least we need to be replacing the members we lose throughout the year. This not cruel or mean, but a simple inescapable reality. We need to be replenishing our membership on an ongoing basis and it would be of benefit to all clubs to get some "younger" members into the memberships. Now younger is a relative term – at Southern I am a young whipper-snapper majorly dragging down the average age...and I am just under 50. At Southern they have so many members over 80 that they have an award for it...they call it an O.B.E – Over Bloody Eighty!!! So Southern, along with all member clubs, needs to be recruiting younger folks into the club to freshen the Gene-Pool of turners. If for nothing else, so that those senior turners with years of experience, can pass those skill sets on to the next generation!

We can start by bringing along sons and grandsons along with Granddad to the "Maxi Days" or similar that most of the clubs run. It might not happen overnight and it might take a while for that seed that you plant to bear some fruit, it could be a friend of a Grandson that ends up joining and getting involved. Bringing in an entire class of students from a local school is a great one – you might find in a class of 20 students two or three might want to follow up and do some more. We simply need to get Turning in front of more people, but in a controlled environment of our clubs so that we can give "directed advice" to guide our blossoming potential new members. We have seen from years of doing Timber and working with wood shows that dropping brochures really does little to convert people stopping by to look to actual paid up members.

So how do we get the general public to think that woodturning is "nothing more than old men making furniture legs"... The existing members have the enviable position of being able to shape the future of woodturning by something as simple as turning – yes that's right folks – you read it here first. As long as we continue to turn and promote turning we have an excellent chance of...well...promoting turning...

That's good, right? It is!!! But it's not enough. We have been awfully good at what I call required turning – making something for a specific purpose – chair leg, rolling pin, tool handle etc. where the area we really need to excel in is the artistic form of turning. It is these Artistic turnings that really capture the imagination of the buying public. Now we are getting good at it and there is a core of 2-3 dozen turners in the Sydney Woodturning Guild pushing the envelope and doing some amazing turnings, be that heavily segmented or just a brilliant execution of something someone saw in an overseas magazine. If we look to The US of A they have literally thousands of turners doing work that could only be described as amazing!!! Whether it's skills, drive or confidence, this is what we need to be moving towards to see the future of Turning in this country move past the current generation of turners and on to future generations – and PLEASE – Stop referring to it as a trade and sell it as a SKILL!!!

Timber and working with wood show

As far as the show goes I feel it is dwindling and fear it will soon be reduced to an annual glorified craft market. I believe there has never been good advertising of this event and the last few years have become worse than ever. Last year before the show I was asked "What ever happened to that wood show at Moore Park?"

"Why isn't it on any more?"

The bloke was shocked when I told him that the show was still on. I'm a regular listener to 2GB and I hadn't noticed any adds this year as I had in previous years, and friends a few years ago would ask me if I was going a month or so in advance but not so anymore. I'm a regular on Facebook and a fan of the shows page and I truly believe I advertised it more on the Macarthur Woodturners page than they did on their own page, I also contacted them via Facebook and didn't receive a reply. Being a member of "club woodie" I did receive a few promo emails but nothing with any real info or anything to get excited about. Each year I see less and less vendors and clubs coming, I remember when it took 15 minutes to buy lunch or a cup of coffee. Don't get me wrong I did enjoy the show and fully intend going again next year, I just sincerely hope that this year was the worst it's going to get.

Steve McGrady.

Sam's thoughts....

Without any doubt, Sydney Timber & Working with Wood show (TWWWS) is the Mecca of all woodies who are interested in woodwork in general. Because it is almost the only show in the town and comes only once a year, I attended all three days of the last six shows and ushered for each of them. I worked for Sydney Woodturners Guild and tried to sell my woodturning stuff that I had not enough room to keep at home. In some years I sold things for nearly \$2000. But, it was obvious the show was shrinking year after year, with this and the past year I hardly managed to make \$500.

Knowing the main purpose of the show organizers is business, I have no complaint with them, but I think the economical situation has a lot to do with this negative outcome.

Now, my worries are this show will get smaller if not completely close down in few years to come. I think the organizers are trying to save the show by reducing the cost to run it. If you visited the show in the last five years, you would have definitely noticed these reductions. I missed those free complimentary tickets that they used to give for people who participated in the competitions to give away to friends and family members, not mentioning they cut the competition altogether.

Undeniably, they kept all safety and security measures in place starting from Thursday, 25th of July to the end of the show.

After all of this, I enjoyed the show and looking forward for the next one with a hope of some improvement in the near future.

Anyway, I will keep turning wood as my beloved hobby, with or without the show.

Sam Shakouri



INTRODUCTION

"Which lathe should I buy?"

This is a frequently asked question on woodturning discussion forums. As you should expect, there is no single answer that works for everyone's needs. Woodturning also involves much more than simply choosing a lathe.

Getting started in woodturning can be a confusing and frustrating task. There are literally hundreds of tools and accessories available. Turning is often referred to as "The Vortex" or "Slippery Slope", and for good reason. If you get too carried away you can quickly find yourself at the bottom of that slope wondering what happened! But with good research and wise buying you should be able to get started with the right tools for your needs at a reasonable cost.

How much, you ask? That depends on what your needs are.

This article won't choose your gear for you but perhaps it can offer a few pointers, pitfalls, and things to look for in choosing the right lathe, tools, and accessories for you. Turning is very much a "personal preference" endeavor; there are few hard-and-fast rules that apply to all. The information presented here is only intended to aid you in your research. It remains up to you to do that research based on your specific needs.

Let's start off with three simple questions:

- 1) Will I enjoy turning enough to invest the money?
- 2) What types of projects do I want/need to turn?
- 3) What is my total turning budget?

Only you can answer these questions but let's discuss each one separately.

QUESTION 1: WILL I ENJOY TURNING?

Before you buy anything...

The first question you should ask yourself is, "Will I enjoy woodturning enough to be worth the investment?"

Good question! The only way to know is to learn as much about the sport as possible before investing your hard-earned money. Only then can you begin to judge whether turning is for you. More than likely the last thing you need is another unused tool taking up valuable shop space.

Fortunately, there are several good options available to you:

- 1) Take a turning class** - Many woodworking retail stores offer or sponsor classes in woodturning. Check to see if there are any such opportunities in your area.
- 2) Attend a club meeting** - The Sydney Woodturning Guild has affiliates all over Sydney. Chances are good that there is a club within driving distance of you. Attend a meeting or two and talk to the members. More than likely you'll meet someone who is willing to help you with the decision process.
- 3) Visit a local turner** - Post a message on an on-line woodturning discussion forum or two and inquire whether there are any turners in your local area. Odds are you'll find someone within driving distance who is willing to help.

QUESTION 2: WHAT DO I WANT TO TURN?

Not surprisingly, this is a question many prospective turners fail to ask themselves. Perhaps you were lured to turning by those beautiful pens in the display case at your local woodworking store. Or maybe you have a specific project in mind (i.e. table legs, balusters, etc.). For some it is simply a case of the infamous and dreaded YAPT ("Yet-Another-Power-Tool") syndrome.

So what types of projects can you do with turning?

All woodturning can be broken down into two basic categories:

Spindle Turning - Spindle turning generally involves turning a cylindrical object where no hollowing is done. Spindles are usually turned "between centers", simply meaning you mount the piece between the headstock and tailstock. Turning is done at higher RPMs than used on face plate work.

Common spindle projects include pens/pencils, candlesticks, bottle stoppers, table legs, balusters, wands, telephone poles, knitting needles, finials, pedestals, Christmas ornaments, etc.

Just to keep things confusing, note that chucks are sometimes used in spindle turning. Also, some forms of spindle turning are done without use of the tailstock. Clear as mud?

Most lathes on the market are suitable for spindle turning with the limiting factor being the length of the bed.

Face Plate/Chuck Turning - This category involves using a face plate or chuck to mount your blank directly to the headstock spindle (although the tailstock is still often used for safety and support). Many forms of face plate work involve some form of hollowing.

Common face plate / chuck projects include bowls, hollow forms, urns, vases, platters, wall hangings, goblets, etc.

"Swing is King" to face plate turners. A lathe's "swing" is defined as the maximum diameter you can turn (i.e. distance from bed to center x 2). Work pieces in face plate turning are generally larger in diameter and must be turned at much lower speeds than used in spindle work.

Unfortunately, not all lathes on the market today are suitable for face plate work due to their speed range (more on this later). This is also true for many older used lathes, most of which were made specifically for spindle work before bowl turning came into fashion.

If you don't have anything specific in mind but are simply looking for fun projects to get started, I recommend browsing the project pages at [Woodturning Online](#). Another fun resource is the online catalog at [CraftUSA](#). Both have great projects for turners of all levels.

QUESTION 3: WHAT IS MY TOTAL TURNING BUDGET?

Notice the word "total" in that question? As you are probably aware, the cost of the lathe itself is only part of the picture. Most first-time lathe buyers don't realize how quickly the other "essentials" can add up. But with some preliminary research you can know up-front what other items are required, allocate your budget wisely, and avoid the "I didn't know I needed that" game. We'll discuss each of those "essential" items on the next page. We'll also discuss a few optional items in a later section.

Another frequently asked question related to budget is, "Do I need to buy quality gear?"

Yes, and no. For some items, the old adage "buy cheap, buy twice" applies. For these items you can save money in the long-run by spending a bit extra up front. In other areas the quality of a given item is not

that important. These are the areas you should try to stretch your dollar. I'll share a few thoughts on item quality as we go through each of the item categories.

But always keep the following in mind:

Your hand and eye are THE most important tools in your arsenal.

Your equipment, by itself, will not make you a good turner. Proper technique and an eye for form will carry you much further than a \$100 gouge. Richard Raffan or Nick Cook could turn beautiful work on a 50 year old tube lathe if they had to. By the same token, a top-of-the-line lathe with all the attachments and highest quality tools does not make you a professional turner, or even a good one for that matter. It simply makes you another turner with a nice lathe. What you produce with the tool is up to you.

WHAT IS MY TOTAL TURNING BUDGET? (Continued)

So aside from the lathe, what are the absolute basic "essentials" you'll need to get started in turning?

1 - Safety Equipment

Safety equipment should be your first priority and purchase. If you are willing to skip these then you should seriously consider taking up another hobby (like basket weaving).

First and foremost: A **face shield** is an absolute **MUST** in woodturning.

Turning may seem like a relatively safe endeavor (as far as shop tools are concerned) but you are still working with a power tool and dealing with spinning objects that can potentially turn into a ballistic missile or explode into shrapnel in the blink of an eye. This may not happen to you often but it only takes once to receive a serious injury.

So, with the above in mind, everyone repeat after me: "I will always wear a face shield!"

Good.

Next, give careful thought to **dust protection**. Why? Woodturning creates fine dust; you want to live to be a little old turner. Simple as that.

Don't scrimp here. This is an area where you will want to invest in decent equipment. Adequate dust protection is a hotly debated topic but all sources agree that paper dust masks are not sufficient protection from fine wood dust. The best approach is a multi-level attack that collects dust at the source, filters the air in your shop, and provides you personal protection. The commercial market abounds with air scrubbers, filters, half-mask respirators, full-face respirators, dust collectors, etc. Do some research on the topic and decide what is best for you and your turning environment.

Other important safety concerns include **good lighting** and a comfortable **floor covering** (or at least good shoes). Be sure your turning environment is well illuminated and don't stand on bare concrete for long periods at a time unless you enjoy back problems.

2 - Tools

You are obviously going to need turning tools (or chisels as they are sometimes called). These can range anywhere from \$30 for a 6-piece entry-level set to as much as several hundred dollars for a single high-quality tool. Your tastes and pocketbook should be the determining factors in your choice but once again, high-dollar tools are **NOT** going to make you a better turner.

Opinions vary widely on which tools make the best "starter set" for a new turner but the following usually receive a consensus:

Spindle Turning Tools

- 3/8" or 1/2" spindle gouge
- 3/4" skew (or larger)
- 3/4" spindle roughing gouge
- 1/8" or 3/16" parting tool

Bowl Turning Tools

- 3/8" or 1/2" bowl gouge
- 1/2" round-nose scraper

With the tools listed above you would be well equipped to tackle most beginner-level to intermediate-level turning projects.

Most turners prefer tools made of High-Speed Steel (HSS) or better. These purportedly hold an edge longer than carbon steel but there's nothing wrong with either. If it cuts wood it will work.

You will also want to put some thought into whether you should purchase individual tools or buy them as a set. There are pros and cons to both approaches. Buying individual tools allows you more flexibility in choosing size, brand, quality, etc. for each tool you purchase. The most common criticism of buying a set is that you may end up purchasing tools you don't need or use. I tend to agree with this but there is merit in buying a basic budget set to start out with (see next paragraph).

Next, consider your level of sharpening skills before putting money into high-quality, high-dollar tools. Unless you are already proficient at sharpening it makes more sense to start with a basic low-grade set until you have developed some rudimentary sharpening skills. Trust me, tools are like rabbits - you'll accumulate more (and better quality) tools as time goes along. Learning to sharpen on a \$100 gouge can be an expensive lesson.

Last, don't think that a particular tool must always be better simply because it has a famous name attached to it. In some cases there may be valid reasons why they are worth the extra cost (e.g. unique design, better steel, etc). But paying extra for a particular turner's "signature grind", for example, makes no sense. You can put any grind on any tool you like. After all, they're your tools.

3 - Sharpening System

One of the most frequently asked questions from new turners is, "How often will I have to sharpen?"

Very often. A regular sharpening schedule quickly becomes routine to a turner. You'll probably want to touch up your tools before at least every other pen. I rarely start turning a bowl without a trip to the grinder. Even those new tools you just bought will probably need sharpening before they are fully ready for use.

Sharpening systems are a matter of personal preference and budget. There is no "right" way to sharpen your tools (but there are plenty of "wrong" ways). As long as your system is capable of *quickly* putting a fine edge on your tool it will work. Many turners use a standard bench grinder with aluminum oxide wheels (or better). Others prefer more esoteric systems such as the Jet or Tormek. Such high-end systems work very well if you have the budget or already own one. If this is the case you may want to look into special attachments for turning tools.

Bench grinders are one of the more common methods of sharpening, and the least expensive (other than sandpaper or hand stones - both of which can be made to work but are extremely slow and therefore less practicable). Grinders generally come in three flavors: high-speed (3450 RPMs), low-speed (1725 RPMs), and variable-speed. Regardless of what anyone tells you, it doesn't matter what speed grinder you use for sharpening HSS tools. Any of the above will work just fine.

Another grinder choice you'll be faced with is wheel size. 8" grinders are often touted as putting less of a concave on the tool bevel than a 6" grinder. I always laugh when I hear this. Again, it doesn't really matter. The wood is not going to know the difference. The best argument for an 8" wheels is that it offers widths up to 1" giving you a bit more sharpening surface to work with. 6" wheels are generally 3/4" wide. Again, the difference is a matter of convenience and personal preference. Either will work just fine.

As mentioned above, aluminum oxide wheels (or better) are well suited for sharpening HSS steel. Wheel color is not important. Wheels between 80 to 120 grit are generally considered good for sharpening. 60 grit wheels (or lower) are best for reshaping but could also be used for sharpening with a light enough touch. Seek out a skilled fellow club member to assist you in sharpening techniques.

4 - Sanding/Finishing Supplies

The last "essential" to consider is basic supplies. These include sanding supplies, finishes, etc. As consumable items you'll be surprised at how quickly the cost of these items can add up.

For spindle projects (such as pens, bottlestoppers, etc.) you'll probably want sandpaper in standard sheet form. For larger projects (such as bowls) you may want to look into 2" or 3" Hook & Loop (H&L) sanding disks and either an inertial sander (for sanding on the lathe - e.g. Sorby Sandmaster or similar) or a power sander (for off-lathe sanding).

Wood finishes are an entire topic in themselves and well beyond the scope of this article. For a good introduction into sanding and finishing I highly recommend Russ Fairfield's article, "[Finishing Secrets](#)".

Is that all?

Not by a long shot. But the items shown above are the bare-bone "essentials" for getting started in *general* woodturning. Some specific types of turning require other items. Here's two worth mentioning:

Chainsaw / Band saw - A chainsaw and/or band saw is indispensable for face plate/chuck turners. When working with large pieces such as bowl blanks, platters, vases, etc. you will need a way to round off your blank in preparation for mounting it on the lathe. Rounding off the blank prior to mounting keeps you from having to turn away appendages, corners, etc. and brings the piece into better balance thus making it safer to work with.

Pen turning - Pen turning requires a few specialized items not typically used in other types of turning. To start off in pen turning you will need at least the following:

- Drill press (or method for drilling on the lathe)
- Pen vice (i.e. drill press vice)
- Mandrel
- Bushings
- Pen kits
- Pen press/assembler (e.g. "bench vice" or "pipe clamp")
- Micromesh (i.e. fine sand paper)
- Glues (e.g. CA, epoxy, etc)

Pen turning is an entire subject in itself. For a great introduction I highly recommend you visit the website of [Russ Fairfield](#). Russ has forgotten more about pen turning than I'll ever know (and I've turned hundreds of pens).

[Editor's note: The turning community lost a good friend and teacher when Russ left us in January 2011. Luckily his website is still maintained by friends. RIP Russ.]

Spend some time researching each of the categories above to get a realistic idea of what your initial accessory costs will be. Knowing this figure up front will help you avoid surprises when the time comes to put down your hard-earned money.

Side note: Be sure and read Jerry Hall's excellent [article](#) for a few suggestions on specific items.

WHICH LATHE SHOULD I BUY?

So, let's assume you've done your research on the items presented to this point. You've made up your mind that woodturning is definitely in your future, you hopefully have some idea of what you'd like to turn, and you understand the associated costs and have a realistic budget in mind. Now it's finally time to return to our original question:

"Which lathe should I buy?"

We'll start with a simple fact: there is no such thing as "The Perfect Lathe". Whichever lathe you eventually choose will be a compromise in one area or another - be it in price, size, features, quality, etc. I don't say this to discourage you, I'm just stating a fact. The secret to choosing the perfect lathe *for you* is in deciding what is important to you. We've already mentioned two important factors: budget and project requirements.

Another fact is that many turners own more than one lathe. Why? The reasons vary but for most it's simply the continual lust for bigger and/or better iron. (Is this your personality type? If so just save yourself the time and money by skipping the budget lathes and go straight for the "Big Iron".) Many turners start with a mini lathe and eventually upgrade to a full-size. Others start on a budget full-size lathe and later move to a better quality lathe with more capacity. The root motivation in nearly every case is simple: Turning can be very addictive.

Mini vs. Full-Size

One of the early decisions many folks face is whether to buy a mini lathe or full-size lathe. Some prospective buyers tend to discount mini lathes as a toy because of the name. We often hear, "Aren't they only good for turning pens?"

Nothing could be further from the truth. Most experienced turners will tell you that a good quality mini lathe is a serious tool and very well suited to a new turner looking to learn the craft with minimal investment. This makes the mini a great entry point for those who can't afford to start with that infamous and elusive "Last Lathe I'll Ever Own". Minis are ideal for bowls, vases, hollow forms, etc. up to 10" or 12" in diameter. Do you really need to turn a bowl larger than 12" in diameter?

The main advantage of a full-size lathe is obvious - capacity. A common argument for the full-size lathe is: "You can turn small objects on a full-size lathe but you can't turn large objects on a mini."

If you need to turn long spindles, such as table legs, you'll probably be looking at a full-size lathe. But again, give some thought to a mini with a bed extension. These generally extend the bed length up to 40" or 50" depending on the lathe model.

WHICH LATHE SHOULD I BUY? (Continued)

Now let's examine a few things to look for in a lathe (and conversely, a few things to avoid).

1) Safety Factors:

Safety should always be your first priority. One of the most critical safety factors in a lathe is the

speed for *safely* turning large, out-of-balance pieces (e.g. bowl work). If you plan to turn bowls you should look for a lathe with a minimum speed of 500 RPMs or lower. Lathes with minimums slightly higher than 500 RPM can be used but you'll need to be very diligent in rounding off your blanks with a band saw or chainsaw to balance them before mounting.

Lathes with a minimum speed of 1,000+ RPMs should NOT be considered for bowl work. Such lathes are strictly designed for spindle work.

Also pay attention to the **gaps** in the lathe's speed range. For example, a non-variable-speed lathe with speed settings of 500, 1300, 1900, 2700... is much better suited for spindle work. There are simply not enough usable speeds at the low-end for bowl work.

Next, a number of full-size lathe models are marketed with a feature called "**outboard turning**" to increase the swing capacity of the lathe. This is generally done by either rotating the headstock 90 to 180 degrees, or by sliding the headstock to the end of the bed.

Outboard turning should be viewed with a wary eye. Two important safety concerns need to be considered:

a) Is the lathe's support platform rigid and sturdy enough to handle swinging large objects outside the center of gravity? Any lathe with a gross weight of less than 300 lbs is probably not designed for safe outboard turning of large, out-of-round pieces.

b) How is the tool rest accommodated? Quite a few lathes come with a "tool rest extension" for outboard turning. My opinion is that these extensions are not safe and should be discarded. Too many reports have been heard of extensions breaking on a hard catch. This could lead to serious injury.

2) Build Quality:

In a previous section we discussed the subject of quality. I would argue that your lathe is one area you should invest in good quality. Why?

Build quality is key to your enjoyment of a lathe. A poorly-built lathe can be frustrating at best, and dangerous at worst.

This is not to suggest you only buy top-of-the-line equipment. But don't be tempted by the other extreme and buy the cheapest lathe available. Putting money into a "budget lathe" almost guarantees that you will upgrade in the not-too-distant future (or wish you could, assuming you stick with turning at all). Why spend money twice when you can put that same money into a better quality lathe up-front, even if it means stretching the wallet a bit more or waiting a bit longer?

Some things to look for related to quality include:

(a) Do the center points between the headstock and tailstock *exactly* align? Any misalignment (i.e. "run-out") is cause for concern.

(b) Does the lathe exhibit any vibration when running under no load at different speeds?

(c) How rigid is the support platform? If the lathe has legs, are they made from cast iron, aluminum tubing, or tin? (Hint: you don't want the latter.)

(d) Does the toolrest lock easily and firmly into position? Does it slide easily over the "ways" (i.e. bed)? Are the toolrest cam locks metal or plastic?

(e) How good are the castings on the lathe's frame? Are there rough or sharp edges?

3) Design and Ergonomics:

The key question here is: was the lathe designed by and for woodturners? "AnyToolCompany.com" may make terrific "flatwork" tools but do they know squat about woodturning? Many manufacturers dutifully clone a popular lathe model and put their version on the market. Is it usable? Certainly. It spins wood, doesn't it? But more than likely it will come with many compromises and limitations because the

manufacturer simply doesn't understand the finer points of turning. This is a common complaint with many "budget lathes". Examples of poor design include:

- a) Minimum speed too high (as discussed above),
- b) Under-powered motor,
- c) Non-standard component sizes (e.g. headstock spindle, tailstock, toolrest post, etc).

You, as the owner, will need to learn to work within the constraints and limitations of the tool. You may also have to replace some accessories should you ever decide to upgrade to a better quality lathe.

4) Features:

As you compare lathes you'll notice quite a few common features (aka "bells-and-whistles"). Let's mention a few.

(a) Electronic Variable Speed (EVS) - EVS allows you to adjust your speed to any point within the lathe's predefined speed range with a simple twist of a dial. Note that some lathes have two or more speed ranges requiring the operator to move a belt position to jump from one range to another. EVS owners will tell you it's a "got-to-have". My Jet 1442 is a Reeves drive (non-EVS) and I manage to get along just fine without it. Again, the wood I'm hacking at doesn't know the difference. It's all a matter of personal preference and convenience.

(b) Reverse - Reverse allows the turner to change the direction of the spin for sanding purposes, sanding both with and against the grain. Reverse also allows left-handed turners to turn from the obverse side of the lathe. Nice to have but again, most folks can easily get along without it.

(c) Indexing - Indexing is simply a way of locking the spindle at precise positions allowing the turner to decorate a piece by carving, fluting, etc. Most turners would rarely (or never) use this particular feature. Your mileage may vary.

(d) Sliding Headstock - A sliding headstock simply allows you to turn from the end of the bed making hollowing much more pleasant. I find this feature very useful on full-size lathes.

(e) Rotating Headstock - Rotating headstocks are often marketed as a means of outboard turning. As I mentioned in #1 above, I am not a fan of outboard turning for the reasons stated. However, rotating headstocks can still be useful for hollowing, sanding, and other tasks that do not involve toolrest extensions.

So, do you really need any or all of these features?

There's only one feature that you absolutely need in a lathe: it should be able to safely spin wood at various speeds. Aside from that, any other features are nice to have, but not necessarily "needed". They are simply matters of convenience.

5) Track Record:

One of the best ways to gauge a particular lathe model is to talk to owners and find out what they think. A great place to do this is online woodturning discussion forums (see my [Links](#) page for a list). But always keep in mind that what you are getting are *opinions*. An owner of a "Brand X" who has never seen "Brand Y" will often tell you that one is as good as the other. Take that for what it is worth.

6) Warranty:

Pay attention to the warranty. A warranty can tell you a lot about the manufacturer's confidence in their product. As a rule-of-thumb I would pass on any lathe with a 1-year (or less) warranty. You don't need the headaches. Most lathe manufacturers have at least a 2-year to 5-year warranty . Obviously, more is better.

WHAT LATHES ARE AVAILABLE?

Hopefully this page has given you some perspective on things to look for above and beyond a lathe's specifications. As we have seen, specs alone are not always a good indicator. There are over 100 new lathes available and many hundreds of used lathes on the market. See the [Wood Lathe Listing](#) page for a listing of new lathes available on the North American retail market.

OPTIONS AND ACCESSORIES

Finally, let's mention a few non-essential but very useful options and accessories.

1) Chuck - Some may be surprised that I did not list a chuck in the "essentials" section. Chucks are a very useful item for both spindle and bowl turning but they are not necessarily "needed". Nearly every lathe sold today comes with a face plate which performs much the same purpose (i.e. holding your work piece). Still, most turners who use a chuck will tell you they don't know how they got along without it. Count me in that camp.

There are a variety of "chucks" available on the market but the main type you will need for woodturning is a **four-jaw scroll chuck**.

This is one area where you want to invest in good quality. Why? Your chuck is the only thing keeping your work piece from becoming a ballistic missile. Don't settle for the cheapest chuck available.

Teknatool (Nova), Oneway, and Vicmarc are three of the top manufacturers of quality woodturning chucks. Use them as your yardstick by which to measure others.

2) Sharpening jig - Sharpening jigs, such as the Oneway Wolverine, are very useful to new turners, particularly those new to sharpening on a grinder. Jigs provide quick set up and repeatability. They can also save you from ruining a good tool as you learn to sharpen.

3) Buffing - Buffing systems, such as the Beall Woodbuffing System, can make an impressive difference in your finished product. They use cloth wheels loaded with various compounds to produce a high polish finish to your work.

Systems generally come in two flavors: 1) a "3-on-1" with three wheels on a single mandrel; and, 2) a single wheel system with three separate wheels, one for each compound. My advice would be to opt for the single wheel system unless you plan to do nothing but pens. The wheel spacing on the typical 3-on-1 is too narrow to manage bowls and/or larger objects.

Conclusion

We've covered a lot of territory in a short space but hopefully you have a better feel for what is required to get started in woodturning. Keep in mind that the thoughts and advice presented here are one man's *opinion*. Other turners may differ with some of the finer points along the way. That's fine. Again, turning is very much a "personal preference" endeavor; there are few hard-and-fast rules that apply to all.

Once again, this article is not intended to choose your gear for you. Only you can decide what works best for your budget and needs. Hopefully this article has given you food for thought as you continue your slide down the "Slippery Slope".

Enjoy the ride!

This article was kindly reproduced by written permission of the Author, Neil Addy. He is an American Turner who can be found at Three Seasons woodturning on <http://www.nealaddy.org/node/1> He does some pretty amazing turnings there. This article was originally written for the American market so terminology may be a little different...but Viva la' Difference!!!

Thanks Neil and continued success to you sir.

The Sydney Woodturners Guild turns Thirty this year. What are the high points over the last 30 years? What are the low points? We'll put the low points out behind the shed, bury them under shavings - let them spalt and decompose.

Perhaps the best thing we've done is charity work. We've made thousands and thousands of toys - tops, trucks, dolls, ducks - you name it we've made it - and raised stacks of dollars for a heap of good causes.

Some might say that our greatest achievement is a high standard of turning. More than a few of our members are wonderful technicians. There probably wouldn't be another club on the planet with better spindle turners - or as many skew chisel wizards.

All this skill owes something to the world class demonstrations put on by members such as George Hatfield, Mike Darlow, Bernie Axford, Lindsay Skinner, Bruce Leadbeater, Jonas Kirk, John Ewart and others - and to the classes they've taught. To spice up the local talent we've had demonstrators from around the country and around the world - John Jordan, Terry Martin, Richard Raffan, Remi Verchot, Emmet Kane, Andrew Gittoes, Johannes Michelson... Perhaps education has been the strength of the Guild.

Others might say that the brightest highlight was the advent of our club houses. Once the Southern group showed the way, other groups have been emboldened to go for it and five have succeeded. This has led to more classes, workshops and sausage sizzles than you can poke a gouge at.

One crucial aspect of the Guild's history is the emergence of the regional groups. These are the places where friendship and learning grow. But these groups didn't just appear automatically. In the late 80s and early 90s three of our presidents, Frank Bollins and the late Manny Burnham and Arthur Ball, had the vision to encourage the formation of new groups. They recruited tirelessly then drove all over Sydney to attend early meetings offering advice and support. They also had the wisdom to respect the independence of the fledgling groups.

With 500+ members we may have 500 slants on our history but, for me, the vigour of the Guild lies not in the big names, the special events, the buildings, the flashy skills but rather in quiet acts of kindness - the offer to kick-start a new turner with a free lesson, the loan of a book, the gift of a piece of camphor laurel. These acts are rarely observed, or praised, but they are the glue that binds. Hundreds of people sharing designs, tips, tools, tales, jokes - this is the story of the Guild.

MEGA HISTORY QUIZ

Ernie Newman

The twenty questions in this quiz reveal the secret history of the Guild over thirty years - the devious intrigues, naked power plays, bitter disputes and dirty betrayals. All is revealed, all except matters of national security and certain indiscretions that I've been paid to suppress.

Just kidding - but seriously I spoke to over twenty people to learn about the Guild's history and they came up with more than a few surprises so read on.

1. At least five Guild members have been on television because of their turning. Can you name one?
Clue: One has convened a regional group for many years.
2. Can you name any of the eight people who met to discuss the formation of the Guild in July 1983?
Clue: Two of them taught, and still teach, the TAFE trade woodturning course.
3. About 50 Guild members have had their work featured in overseas magazines. Can you name any?
4. The Guild has had over 40 women members over the years. True or false?
5. Which two Guild regional groups won prizes in the club competition at the international woodturning symposium held in Newcastle in 2000?
6. Which Guild member was the first person to use microwave ovens to season wood? Clue: He invented a number of woodturning chucks and tools.
7. Which was the first regional group to form? Clue: This group won a state Community Service award in 2000 for their contributions to their local hospital and bush fire brigade and raised over \$20 000 for Assistance Dogs for Independence in 2001.
8. Who was the first person to demonstrate for all eleven of the Guild's regional groups. Clue: His geometrically baffling and 'impossible' pieces were featured in the *Australian Woodworker* in January 2001.
9. Can you name any of the regional groups which won prizes at the 2001 or 2003 Blue Mountains Woodturning Challenges?
10. What is the link between the Sydney Woodturners Guild and the Woodturners Guild of NSW?
11. Can you name one of the three Guild members who have written books on woodturning?
12. Can you name any of the people who collaborated on the wacky stool which made the front cover of the *Australian Woodworker* in 2000?
13. Six of the Guild's ten presidents have a first name or surname starting with the letter "B". How many can you name?
14. Can you name any of the demonstrators from Woodturn 98 or Woodturn 2002?
15. Link the groups and the people who contributed to them - Menai, Bankstown, Macarthur - Jonas Kirk, the pole lathe man, Gary Light, turning teacher and proponent of hands-on meetings, Marie Freeman, OA and "Queen of Miniature Turning".

16. Many of our members first came in contact with the Guild after watching one of our demos at Trend Timbers at Mulgrave. When did the Guild first demonstrate at Trend: 1982, 1988 or 1994? Clue: It was the year after the Eastern group started and the year that the Hornsby group started though in those days it was called the Upper North Shore group.

17. Can you name any of the Guild's life members?

18. A trio of turners known as the "ABC" were central in the establishment of the clubhouse at Oyster Bay. Alan Bourne was the "A" and Clive Cairns was the "C". Who was the "B"? Clue: His first name and mine are linked in the minds of millions of kids because of two Muppets.

19. How many of the Guild's regional groups have a clubhouse?

20. Mike Darlow viewed the thousand turned pieces on display at the international woodturning symposium held in Newcastle in 2000, pieces from overseas and all over Australia, and judged a lidded bowl made by one of our members as the best of the lot. Who was the maker? Clue: He was born in Latvia and has the initials AR.

After twenty questions I'm conscious of what hasn't been mentioned: the hard work and humility of Doug Burdon, the jokes and jibes of Warren Ashley, the repartee and resolve of Graeme Campbell, the generosity, grace and talent of so many others. And thousands of turnings – simple, elegant, clever, odd, classical, innovative – and more dig-ins than any of us wants to remember.

30 Years of the Guild - Answers

Ernie Newman

1. Lindsay Skinner, Frank Bollins, Jonas Kirk, Mike Darlow and Bruce Leadbeatter have all been on television. Doug Midgely, Adrian Barendgret and Jim Dorbis have spoken about the Guild on radio. Aaron Ehrlich's bicycle powered lathe has also been shown on television, sadly without Aaron. That is Australia's loss.

2. John Ewart and George Hatfield discussed the possibility of starting a woodturning club after John attended a club meeting in Queensland. George invited some students and graduates of the trade woodturning course to his home where they planned the formation of the new club and selected those who would be nominated for the executive and committee. Those present were: George Hatfield, John Ewart, Allan Reay, Tom Bartie, Bert Britten, Bob Howarth, Arch Cooke and Don Wilson. About 30 people then attended a more formal meeting held in the woodturning section of Sydney Technical College at Ultimo and formed the Guild. Over the next few years George, John, Allan and Tom worked hard to advance the new club. Meetings were held every two months at Ultimo until August 1990 then at Lidcombe when the trade course was transferred to Lidcombe TAFE. Allan Reay retired as secretary after five years but, despite all attempts to update addresses, still gets mail for the Guild. What does George feel looking back over twenty years? "I'm flabbergasted that something starting with eight people turned into a club which has had over 2000 members. No one in their right mind could have guessed that the Guild would have taken off the way it has."

3. Gina Harrowell, Brian Smith, George Hatfield, Mike Darlow and Ernie Newman have had their work shown in overseas magazines. Over 40 others from the Western and Blue Mountains group collaborated on a coffee table with 42 legs in 1999 and it was shown in the English magazine, *Woodturning*
4. True. Today there are about 40 women Guild members, more than 5% of our total membership, but ten years ago it was only 2%. Gloria Egan was an early member and Toni Campbell was convenor of the Hawkesbury group. Anna Dawes and Kaye Paton have been active in the Guild for over ten years. Recently Karen Blewden, June McKimmie, Marie Freeman and others have made large contributions. Kaye Paton believes, "There's been a sea change for women in the Guild. In the 80s there were often no women at meetings, or a courageous loner, but now it's not so daunting and we feel more welcome."
5. The Western and Blue Mountains group won a bandsaw for the best club woodturning display at the Newcastle symposium. The Hornsby group won second prize. Fifteen clubs entered the competition including a number from interstate.
6. Bruce Leadbeatter discovered and pioneered microwave seasoning. He also designed and manufactured several Leady lathes and invented the Screw Cupchuck, the Woodfast Superchuck, the Eccentric Screw Cupchuck, the Bowl Miser and other tools.
7. The Southern group started in 1985. It was known initially as the Bankstown-St George group or the Southside group. The Guild's second group, known at different times as the Northern, Northside, North East and later the Peninsula group, was formed in the same year. Hornsby was also formed in 1985 via Arthur Ball.
8. Simon Priem was the first person to demonstrate for all eleven regional groups.
9. The Blue Mountains City group won first prize in the hands-on competition at the 2001 Challenge. Other group prizes were won by Hornsby, Southern Highlands and Western and Blue Mountains. In 2003 Menai came first in the hands-on competition, Peninsula came first in the exhibition and Hornsby came second.
10. The Sydney Woodturners Guild was originally known as the Woodturners Guild of NSW. The name was changed in 1988 because other woodturning clubs sprang up around the state.
11. In the 1960s the late George Sutton wrote the drawing and theory textbooks used in the TAFE trade woodturning course. In 1970 Bruce Leadbeatter wrote *Woodworking* as a text for high school students. Mike Darlow wrote *The Practice of Woodturning* in 1985, *The Fundamentals of Woodturning* in 1997, *Woodturning Methods* in 1999, *Woodturning Techniques* in 2001 and *Woodturning Design* in 2003.
12. Des Lane, John Frank, Brian Smith, Simon Priem and Ernie Newman made the stool on the cover of Australian Woodworker in April 2000

13. Mac Knowles, Tom Bartie, Frank Bollins, Arthur Ball, Jonas Kirk, Bill Heller, Manny Burnham, John Jones, Adrian Barendregt and Peter Herbert have all been Presidents of the Guild. But the best has been saved for two ex presidents – Bill Black and Barry Belford!!!
14. The demonstrators at Woodturn 98 were Terry Martin, Andrew Gittoes, Roger Brown and Dean Malcolm. At Woodturn 2002 we saw Andrew Potocnik, Guilio Marcolongo, Roger Brown and Neil Scobie.
15. Jonas Kirk attended the Bankstown group, Gary Light attended the Menai group and Marie Freeman attended the Macarthur group.
16. The Guild first demonstrated at Trend Timbers in September 1988. The demonstrators that day included Clarrie Snell, Jim Dorbis and Charles Walker. Around the same period we exhibited and demonstrated at The Home Show at Darling Harbour and the Working With Wood Show at the Showground in Sydney. We have continued at the WWW Show ever since and the Hawkesbury group still organises demos at Trend. Hundreds of people joined the Guild after watching the shavings fly at these venues.
17. The Guild's life members are George Hatfield, John Ewart, Tom Bartie, Frank Bollins, Jim Dorbis, Simon Priem, Bruce Leadbeatter, Doug Midgely, Col Herbert, Peter Herbert, Patrick (Paddi) Thorpe, Ted Macquart, Warren Rankin, Lindsay Skinner and the late Arthur Ball and Manny Burnham.
18. The late Bert Ponder was the "B" in the three turners known as the "ABC". He was dynamic, capable and forthright. These qualities allowed him to make a major contribution to the establishment of the Guild's first clubhouse.
19. Two of our groups have clubhouses – Southern and Southern Highlands and several ex guild clubs Western, Blue Mountains, Peninsula and Hawkesbury.
20. Aris Ruicens made the lidded bowl which Mike Darlow admired

1. Northern hemisphere Oaks belong to the genus Quercus. There are 600 species of northern hemisphere Oaks: true or false?
2. What would a woodturner use a mixture of sodium peroxide and hydrogen peroxide for? Clue: This mixture changes the appearance of wood.
3. If the lathe centres don't line up perfectly it won't matter much for most spindle or faceplate work. However it can be a problem for drilling and when making boxes if the work has to be reversed and remounted. How can you use a steel rule to check whether or not the centres of a lathe line up accurately?
4. How do you ream a lathe tailstock or headstock?
5. According to traditional European, North American and Australian furniture design, horizontal turnings such as piano stool rails and table stretchers are symmetrical. True or false?

A Country Woodturner - Ken Sullivan

OK. Let's be brutally honest here. Imagine the following:

It's a nice day, and while I don't really have any particular idea in mind, I want to do some turning. So, I go out to my lathe, put a piece of wood on between centers, and begin. Yeah. It goes nice, and I sand and finish the piece.

So... What have I made?

Guess what? It doesn't matter what I may want to call it.

In fact, and in all simplicity... I've made a stick.

Oh, gee... I've been turning for more than 20 years. I've spent thousands of dollars on equipment and training. And I've made a stick.

I can just imagine taking my piece into the house and showing it off to my Best Beloved... and can hear her saying, "Oh Wow!! You've made a stick!!" (They can be cruel, sometimes...)

Ah, but I hear you cry... "You've made a bowl... That's not a stick!"

Guess what? It's a wide horizontal stick, with a bit of a depression in it.

For the last three weeks, I've been making buttons and toggles (they sell well during the winter... all those knitters making cardigans here in the Southern Highlands...). Guess what I've been making? Short flat sticks with a couple of holes in them... and without even a bit of a depression... (except for myself...)

Why am I so cranky? Believe me... it ain't you.

I look at “By Hand & Eye” and I’m stunned by the quality of work being shown (when the various regions put something in... but that’s for Scott to point out... Regularly... Sigh...). Each month I look at the “Show and Tell” for the Southern Highlands group, and am impressed by the ongoing improvement in quality, as we “spark” each other with new ideas and techniques.

And then I come home, and realize that all too often, I’m just making sticks.

Trees make sticks. Each one can make hundreds of them, each year, all sorts of sizes, and all sorts of shapes. They do it without thinking, simply as part of their being alive. As Woodturners, we each make somewhere around 50 “sticks” a year on average. Maybe a bit more if we work at it. But trees beat us all hollow... just by being alive. So why do we bother?

OK. Now it’s time to drop the other shoe. I did say I was going to be honest.

What is it that we bring to Woodturning? Well, it ain’t just making sticks.

I can think of at least three things that nothing else can bring to what we create as Woodturners: Function, Design and Skill.

When we turn a piece of wood, we should have an idea in mind. The first part of that idea is, “What will this thing do?” As creative human beings, we make things with a purpose. At the very least, they are intended to make our lives “better” in one way or another. If it is a bowl, it will hold something. If it is a spurtle or a spatula, it will stir something. If it is a candlestick, it will have a candle fit into it. In other words, it will have a Function: it will be able to do something, even if it is never put to that purpose and just sits around (in the closet?) “looking pretty”. That Function is something that comes from our own particular needs and imagination. And our success in achieving that Function is perhaps the first thing that makes the object unique and special: more than just a stick.

The next bit is Design. Beyond what it is supposed to do, what does it look like? Does it “work” correctly for it’s intended Function? Does it feel good in the hand? What curves, coves, and shapes are needed to make it special, to “draw the eye”, to make it beautiful, attractive and well proportioned? Design doesn’t just happen. It doesn’t matter if you’ve led a good life, or if you are kind to your kids. What matters is what you think!! It takes practice and study to come up with a good Design. We have to carefully look at other people’s good work: not just copy it (except perhaps as practice). But more importantly, we have to understand what it is that makes it good to our eyes, or to our hands. Just whacking a piece of wood onto the lathe is a first-class way to come up with a stick.

Skill is next, since we do have to execute what we are trying to do, but remember, without Design, Skill is useless... except for making sticks... efficiently. With the understanding that comes from our study of good work, then Skill is necessary in order to create what we have in mind. And Skill isn’t just how we handle our tools. It also includes choosing the right type of wood to complement the Function, putting it on the lathe in a way that will show off the intended Design, and the internal beauty of the material itself. Even storing the wood in a way that will prevent insect or fungal attack is part of the Skill of Woodturning. But if that attack happens anyway, well, maybe Design can show off the “defect” in a pleasing way... But that has to be thought about... and then executed...

So, what have you made recently... other than a stick?

1. True: there are about 600 species of northern hemisphere Oaks. Australian species called Oaks such as Forest Oak or She-oak are allocasuarinas, not true Oaks

2. Sodium peroxide in hydrogen peroxide will bleach wood. Some species are changed dramatically. Drain cleaner can be used as a source of sodium peroxide and hydrogen peroxide can be bought from a chemist. It must be used fresh. Mix the two outdoors so the fumes dissipate. **Eye protection and gloves are essential.**

3. To check lathe centre alignment with a steel rule:

First - Clean the upper surface of the lathe bed, under the tailstock and in the headstock and tailstock morse tapers with kerosene on a rag.

Second – If there is any damage to the points of the headstock or tailstock centres then true them. To true the revolving tailstock centre put it in the headstock, tape the revolving cone to the rest of the centre, turn on the lathe and true the point by holding a fine file or coarse diamond lap to the point of the centre. The prong centre may also be trued while running the lathe however it is safer to mark the high spot of the point with chalk or a felt tip pen while the lathe is running then remove the centre from the lathe and true the point on the workbench by hand. This may require a number of attempts.

Third – Check the morse tapers on the centres for damage and check the morse tapered openings in the head and tailstock for damage. If your centres or other drills and accessories will not lock into the lathe's head stock or tailstock then they may need reaming to remove damaged sections. Reaming is covered in question 4 below.

Fourth - When the centres are trued, bring them together with a small steel rule in between. Put just enough pressure on the tailstock so that the steel rule is held between the centres. If the steel rule points exactly at right angles to the lathe bed, both vertically and across the bed, then the centres line up accurately. Some tailstocks are sloppy in the bed and it may be necessary to make adjustments before locking the tailstock. Revolve the headstock spindle and tailstock centre by hand to see if the rule wobbles. If either causes wobbling then the centres don't line up perfectly.

If the tailstock centre is too high [the top of the rule leans towards the headstock] it may be possible to elevate the headstock with shims. If the tailstock is too low it may be elevated by fixing shims underneath. Other corrections can sometimes be made under the tailstock if there are grub screws for minor tracking adjustments.

4. A morse taper reamer is a tapered cutter which looks like a large drill bit and is used to de-burr or clean out the inside of morse tapered openings in a lathe or in a drill press. This is necessary if there are burrs or bumps inside the openings which affect the alignment of the centres or drills or make them loose. This last point is particularly critical in a drill press as the Jacobs chuck must be held securely. If you can pull a centre out by hand after it has been pushed in gently then there is damage either to the morse tapered opening or to taper of the centre. The centre should be firmly held by friction.

Most lathes and drill presses have number two morse tapers so a number two morse finishing reamer is needed. To use the reamer properly it is important to get the centres of the lathe aligned fairly accurately [see question 3 above]. This allows the reamer to be positioned by the tailstock centre when reaming the headstock and vice versa. The point of the centre sits in the small conical recess in the reamer and so aligns it correctly. A mixture of kerosene and engine oil can be used to help the reamer cut but specialty cutting compounds such as 'Treflex' are better.

The reamer's cutting end is positioned inside the Morse tapered opening in the headstock and the tailstock is very gently wound up till there is minimal pressure. The reamer is then rotated slowly with the aid of a spanner. The idea is not to re-cut the taper but simply to remove the high spots. Clean the tiny fragments of metal out with kerosene and a rag. Place a centre in the opening gently and see if it can be removed by hand. If it can then the reamer may need to be re-applied. The other possibility is that the Morse taper on the centre may need to be smoothed. Run your fingers over the taper to see if you can detect any high spots or burrs. If so then gently remove them with a flat medium diamond lap. It is critical that you don't change the shape of the taper – just remove the high spots. The Morse tapered opening in the tailstock may be reamed in the same way.

Woodturning clubs could consider buying a reamer and making it available to members as needed. A machinist or engineer could conduct a demonstration so that club members could learn how to use the reamer properly.

5. According to traditional European, North American and Australian furniture design, horizontal turnings such as piano stool rails and table stretchers are symmetrical. Vertical turnings such as candlestick holders are traditionally asymmetrical.

Well.....



SARCASM SIGN

Everyone needs one



CHUCK NORRIS

The early years...



CHOOSE YOUR BATTLES

Do you really have to be told not to tailgate this guy.



They shall never know....
ITS INCONCEIVABLE!!!

GUILD MEETINGS

Guides Hall, Waldron Rd Chester Hill	
<u>Month</u>	<u>Committee</u>
January	January 28
March	March 25
May	May 27
July	July 29
September	September 30
November AGM	November 25
All guild meetings 18:30 till finish President Hasso Constantin 9724 1203 or 0417 233 841	

HORNSBY DISTRICT WOODTURNERS INC.

1 Shoplands Rd. Annangrove	
<u>Saturday</u>	
Feb 9	
Mar 9	
Apr 13	
May 11	
Jun 8	
Jul 13	
Aug 10	
Sep 14 AGM	
Oct 12	
Nov 9	
Nov Fri 29 Xmas Tea TBC	
Saturdays 1100 - 1630 President Lindsay Skinner 9679 1055	

BANKSTOWN CITY WOODTURNERS INC.

Guides Hall, Waldron Rd Chester Hill	
<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>
Jan 5	Jan 8
Feb 2	Feb 12
Mar 2	Mar 12
Apr 6	Apr 9
May 4	May 14
Jun 1	Jun 11
Jul 6	Jul 9
Aug 3	Aug 13
Sep 7	Sep 10
Oct 5	Oct 8
Nov 2	Nov 12
Dec 7	Dec 10
Saturdays 0900 - 1600 Tuesdays 1800 - 2100 President Kevin Santwyck 9644 8366	

MACARTHUR WOODTURNERS INC.

Robert Townson High School Shuttleworth Ave Raby(maxi only)	
<u>Sunday</u>	
Friday 16th Mar. 7:30 - 4 pm demonstration @ Camden Show	
Saturday 16th Mar. 7:30 - 4 pm demonstration @ Camden Show	
Sunday 24th Mar. 9:30 - 3 pm	
Sunday 28th Apr. 9:30 - 3 pm	
Sunday 26th May 9:30 - 3 pm	
Sunday 30th June 9:30 - 3 pm	
Sunday 28th July 9:30 - 3 pm	
Sunday 25th Aug. 9:30 - 3 pm	
Saturday 14th Sep. 8 am - 4:45 pm BBQ Bunnings Campbelltown	
Sunday 29th Sep. 9:30 - 3 pm.	
Sunday 27th Oct. 9:30 - 3 pm	
Sunday 24th Nov. XMAS Party 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	
Sunday Maxi 0930 - 1500 cost \$5 President Paul Kruss 9823 8340	

EASTERN REGION WOODTURNERS INC.

Call for meeting location	
<u>Sunday</u>	
Jan 6	
Feb 3	
Mar 3	
Apr 7	
May 5	
TBC	
TBC	
TBC	
TBC	
TBC	
TBC	
TBC	
TBC	
Sundays 1000 - 1530 President Graham Tilly 9660 3071	

MENAI REGION WOODTURNERS INC.

Menai High School Gerald Rd. Illawong
Tuesday
Jan
Feb 12
Mar 12
Apr 9
May 14
Jun 11
Jul 16
Aug 13
Sep 10
Oct 15
Nov 12
Dec 10
Tuesdays 1800 - 2100 President Graham Towle 9774 3198

NORTHERN BEACHES WOODTURNERS INC.

Narrabeen RSL Club Nareen Pde North Narrabeen		
Sunday	Tuesday Workshop	Friday Workshop
Jan	22, 29	25
Feb 17	5,12,19,26	1,8,15,22
Mar 17	5,12,19,26	1,8,15,22
Apr 21	2,9,16,23,30	5,12,19,26
May 19	7,14,21,28	3,10,17,24,31
Jun 23	4,11,18,25	7,14,21,28
Jul 21	2,9,16,23,30	5,12,19,26
Aug 18	6,13,20,27	2,9,16,23,30
Sep 22	3,10,17,24	6,13,20,27
Oct 20	1,8,15,22,29	4,11,18,25
Nov 17	5,12,19,26	1,8,15,22,29
Dec 22	3,10,17	6,13,20
Sundays 0900 - 1400 Workshops 0900 - 1200 President Jack Butler 9999 4290		

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS WOODIES INC.

Harbison Care Villiage cnr Moss Vale Rd.& Charlotte St. Burradoo	
2nd Saturdays 4th	
13th Apr	27th Apr
11th May	25th May
8th Jun	22nd Jun
13th Jul	27th Jul
10th Aug	24rd Aug
14th Sep	28th Sep
12th Oct	26th Oct
9th Nov	23rd Nov
14th Dec	N/A
4th Saturday meetings 0900-1600 2nd Saturday meetings 1230-1700 Every Tues.&Friday 0830 - 1230 Pls call for Tues/Fri to confirm meeting President John Powell 02 4871 2714	

SOUTHERN REGION WOODTURNERS INC.

"Cubbyhouse" Como Road Oyster Bay (opp. Scylla Rd.)						
	Wednes. Mini Day	Wednes. Mini Nite	Work Shop Meeting	Saturday Maxi Days	Thurs. Mini Day	Special Events
Jan	NIL	9	14	19	24	
Feb	6	13	11	16	21	C.H. 17th ANNIV.
Mar	6	13	11	16	21	TURNFEST 22,23,24
Apr	3	10	15	20	NIL	
May	1	8	13	18	23	OYSTER BAY SCHOOL FETE
Jun	5	12	11	15	20	
Jul	3	10	15	20	25	TWWWS 27,28,29
Aug	7	14	12	17	22	A.G.M
Sep	4	11	14	19	24	
Oct	2	9	14	19	24	
Nov	6	13	11	16	21	CRAFT SHOW 2, 3
Dec	4	11	16	21	NIL	XMAS LUNCH 21
Maxi days Saturday 0900 - 1500 cost \$6 Mini Days both 0900 - 1500 cost \$3 Mini nite 1800 - 2100 cost \$3 Toy/Friendship days 0900 - 1400 no cost President Keith Moses 9528 8885						

WESTERN SYDNEY WOODTURNERS INC.

Twin Gums retreat, Cnr Northcott Road & Dianne Drive Lalor Park						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 20	7,14,21,28	8,15,22,29	2,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24,31	4,11,18,25	19
Feb 17	4,11,18,25	5,12,19,26	6,13,20,27	6,14,21,28	1,8,15,22	16
Mar 17	4,11,18,25	5,12,19,26	6,13,20,27	7,14,21,28	1,8,15,22	16
Apr 21	8,15,22,29	2,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24	4,11,18	5,12,19,26	20
May 19	6,13,20,27	7,14,21,28	1,8,15,22,29	2,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24,31	18
Jun 16	3,17,24	4,11,18,25	5,12,19,26	6,13,20,27	7,14,21,28	15
Jul 21	1,8,15,22,29	2,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24,31	4,11,18,25	5,12,19,26	20
Aug 18	5,12,19,26	6,13,20,27	7,14,21,28	1,8,15,22,29	2,9,16,23,30	17
Sep 15	2,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24	4,11,18,25	5,12,19,26	6,13,20,27	21
Oct 20	14,21,28	1,8,15,29	2,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24,31	4,11,18,25	19
Nov 17	4,11,18,25	5,12,19,26	6,13,20,27	6,14,21	1,8,15,22	23
Dec 15	6,9,16,23,30	3,10,17,24,31	4,11,18	5,12,19	6,13,20,27	21

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays: 0930 - 1530
 Fridays: 1900 - 2100
 President Ken Young 0408 760 131
 Ladies days are held regularly organised by Anna Dawes 9638 6995

IN THE SHOP

WOODTURNING JACKETS \$40 POST \$5

Bottle Green, short sleeved with Velcro neck closure. Keep the shavings where they belong

GUILD CAPS discounted to \$5.00 POST \$2.50

Wear backwards - become a turner with attitude!

CLOTH BADGES AND ENAMEL BADGES \$5.00

Order from: Treasurer, Greg Croker on
9498 2350

Monthly meeting held on Saturday 3/9/13 at Chester Hill Girl Guide Hall with 23 members attending, with 9 lathes being used throughout the day.

A turning demonstration by Ted Batty involving the creation of corresponding threads in a small box and lid was conducted.

Guild meeting held 11am-12 am, with 13 of the present members voting to attend The Sydney Woodturning Guild's 30th celebration on 13/10/13.

Our Guild's Christmas function is to be held as 12am on Sunday 8/12/13 at the Guildford RSL Club. Attending numbers to be obtained at 10/13 meeting.

Show & Tell resulted in detail discussions of item displayed; unfortunately photos taken were of too poor a quality to be usable in this article.

Displayed items included:

Threaded box & lid – Ted Batty

Double Decker bus – John Willetts

3 Wooden pens- Fred Cassar

One mitre high chess pieces- 1 completed & another in progress – Jose Jalife

2 bowls –1 oil finished & another wax finished – Marcel Chalhoub

SEE YOU ALL AT NEXT MEETING- KEEP TURNING.



Antonio's Segmented Bowls



Bart's Vases and Barrel Mounted Clock



Bill Papalexiou's Wall Hanging Platter



Mario's Segmented Bowl and Oak Stave Pen



Terry's Turned Bowl and Platter with Ornamental Carving

Our August meeting saw 21 members and visitors attend the Hornsby Men's Shed for the second of our trial meetings there, and as well to vote to select our new venue for the future. The visitors were past member Bob Ackerman, Reagan Leatch and Daniel.

After the traditional welcome to all from Lindsay, we were advised that Harry's health had not change and that Bert Gude was (slowly) improving. We were also formally advised that the Hornsby Shed's downstairs air conditioned room would become available for any of our future meetings. Sadly there were no takers for the 600 mm dia. turpentine wood but a new source of dry jacaranda near Gordon was notified by Tim Sinclair.

Our programme for the day would be a 'workshop' and up-date on the usage of the skew chisel.

Show and Tell was commenced with a couple of large platters from John Markham. John had been using masking tape to radially apply paints to his turned items.



John Edwards had turned a large blackwood platter with good grain and finished with Shellwax.

Tim's son in Chile had turned an impressive 200 mm bowl in coigue with a central insert of local pine and finished with linseed oil. (Linseed oil usage was not recommended for general usage without mould retardant addition).

Simon had turned a 150 mm straight sided ironbark bowl very effectively pyrographed with a Greek frieze; and a small light yellow bowl from an unknown wood.



Visitor Regan showed a blackwood platter with a rim 300 mm diameter nicely finished in EEE and Glow, plus a couple of nicely finished pens.

Colin had turned two large identical shaped pepper mills from black heart sassafras and celery-top pine. Well turned and finished in EEE and Shellwax these are number 58 and 59 in his continuing production.

Ian had turned a couple of bobbins or spinners (for a weaving loom and on commission) from pine

and camphor laurel. Also on commission was a large architectural gable finial or capital made from pine by the Shed members.

To end Show and Tell a discussion on last month's pen forum. Mandrels ex GPW



at \$16 each; pen kits, 'click or cigar' can be purchased

in a 50 pack cheaply (see Ian Raper) and Brian offered a Pen State catalogue for loan showing a mandrel with a #2 morse taper tail -stock end at \$30. Finally Elwyn showed a pen with 9,000 year old angrophora wood included found buried in Botany Bay when the second runway was dredged and constructed.



At noon a discussion on the 'pros and cons' of both trial venues commenced, ie Dural Mens Shed and Hornsby Woodworking Mens Shed, followed by the vote. The members' vote was 80% plus in favour of Hornsby, so members will now meet in the most satisfactory downstairs room at Hornsby Mens Shed

Both Arthur and John were thanked equally by the members for their generous help and advice with the trials of both sheds leading to this decision.

The afternoon session was organised and run with Lindsay demonstrating the best use of the skew for most of its orthodox jobs. Interest was such that most members watched his skilful displays with a great degree of envy?

Included are some of photos as descriptions of this type of turning in not too useful, but of course practice makes perfect, (watch videos and practice on branches of wet wood)?



The day concluded with Information Exchange, firstly from Brian on the Pen State catalogue mentioned above and a short discussion from Greg on three woods from western NSW; gidgee, brigalow and Australian sandalwood. The woods were purchased at the WWW Show recently from a very pleasant gent, Mick Law, running his small business "Outback Burl" from Pt. Macquarie and contactable on 0427 761 444. Attached are notes which will give some introductory only knowledge of these trees and woods.

A momentous day for us with a new venue selected, and thank you Hornsby Woodworking Mens Shed There will be 'plenty' for us to do to settle in and this will be advised soon.

Meanwhile most importantly we have been requested to wear our identification badges particularly when entering the HMS. If you need a new badge please let me know.

Till Saturday 14th September at Hornsby (and our AGM).....please keep turning.

Wow!.. What a busy couple of months, The 2013 TWWW Show has been & gone. I myself had a ball! & Along with Michael Twemlow & Sam Shakouri, we spent the whole three days there on the Guild stand, 4 days for Michael who lent a hand on Thursday to set up. John Jewel spent 2 days there and we also had Gary Light, Laura Hough and her Pop Brian Knapp spending time on the lathes. Once again I enjoyed myself, It's always good helping those seeking advice, meeting old friends making new ones and catching up with those we only come across once a year or so and of course getting to turn.

Meanwhile back at the school in Campbelltown our July meeting was on the same Sunday as the show. Gary Light demonstrated his off-centered ducks then set up a lathe and encouraged members to have a go but sadly he had little takers, a while later he demonstrated turning toy cars (also off centered)

Show n tell

1. Stan Buick exhibited a gavel made from offcuts of silky oak and finished with 2 coats of "Jet" spray clear finish.
2. Michael Rhienberger donated two blocks of silver birch to any member who wanted it.
3. Werner Staats showed two pieces he had made, one a small goblet with the stem having the design of a small heart, achieved by using the technique of inside out turning. The second item was a lidded bowl on a taller stem. The design on this stem was also achieved by applying the inside out technique. Werner also spoke in great detail about a small keg made from European oak he had made and how his coopering skills had been acquired and refined over the duration of his working life.
4. Ferdie Hilberding spoke of the pyrography tool he had recently purchased for enriching the appearance of his wooden projects. He addressed the many technical details associated with this tool, such as transformers, amps, voltage, etc.
5. John Jewell gave a rundown on how he had made several sewing machine toys for the charity, bearing in mind the fact that they had to fit in a shoebox for distribution.
6. Paul Kruss explained in detail how he acquired a "Biquadro" leather-bound pen box and its contents. Some of the contents of pens were quite exquisite in appearance and several deemed to be of significant value.

There was much detailed discussion of these pieces by the members and much valuable information was generously exchanged on processes undertaken, tools used, finishes applied.

We held a BUNNINGS BBQ on the 4th Of August and our president Paul says: A big thank you to all those who assisted – our Bean counter Rodger is very happy as the proceeds were much better than the previous BBQ.

Saturday The 24th, Back to BUNNINGS Crossroads again to demonstrate at their spring launch. We had a good turn out of members who kept the 3 lathes we brought along working hard. During our 4plus hour stint we had numerous enquiries about Woodturning, lathes & tools and of course our club & membership. We had a full display table but I'm unaware as to any sales. Bunnings were as always pleased to have us there.

August 25th meeting A good gathering of members, a visitor from W.A. John Gray, a new member Mick Rowles quickly signed up for our training Program and wasted no time getting in to it. Our president Paul talked & updated us on the condition of Chris Dunn who is overcoming recent surgery. We wish you well Chris and hope you have a speedy recovery with little lingering effects.

All the norms were discussed, John Jewell talked about the guilds 30th anniversary and discussions were started concerning upcoming political guests, talk of getting a permanent residence or staying at the school. Gary Light announced we would be adding, "face plate moldings" to the training program and the development of a certificate for the completion program. Gary later in the day conducted a demonstration on these faceplate moldings and explained their uses on platters, lamp bases, wall plaques



etc... This meeting is also our AGM, Gary Light played the returning officer and the following positions were filled;

- President: Paul Kruss •Vice President: Daryl Sidman •Secretary: John Lees •Minutes Secretary: Pat Logue •Treasurer: Roger Goodfellow •Guild Members: John Jewel, Michael Twemlow & Don Malvern
- Librarian: Steve McGrady •Catering Officer: Neil Clark (the Minister for sauce)
- Membership Secretary: Paul Kruss •Equipment Officers: Dave Parsons & Michael Twemlow
- Bunnings Co-ordinator: John Lees •Publicity Officer: Neil Clark •Public Officer: John Lees

SHOW AND TELL:

1. Neil Clark presented a large block of camphor laurel timber, asking for advice on the best way to cut it to show the best grain patterns of the block. Gary Light spoke at length on the many aspects that determine such patterns as Neil was contemplating for this block. Such topics as drying times, thickness of the piece, the structure of a tree, the importance of the pith, etc...
2. Sam Shakouri: 1st piece was a multi – tiered, plywood segmented cotton reel stand with pin cushion, the segments laid at 120 degrees and finished in lacquer. 2nd piece was a potpourri bowl made from Osage Orange timber. Sam then presented a selection of segmented pen blanks with advice as to how best to use these blanks to get the best possible result. Well done Sam!
3. Keith Smith presented the result of last meeting's demonstration on how to turn off-centered a toy duck.
4. Werner Staats presented a lidded bowl on a stand. There were quite a few pieces of wood used in this large, eye-catching project; among them was jacaranda, merbau and several others.
5. Merv Larsson presented his project of a small Grinder/engraver purchased from Aldi that he modified into a small lathe for pen turning. A very clever device indeed! Merv also had a collection of banksia nuts that may be suitable for pen turning, for members to take if so inclined.
6. Gary Light presented a large collection of toy cars of many shapes to be added to the toy collection that members are contributing to for the charity to send overseas.
7. Marie Freeman OAM, presented photos from the "Maleny Wood Expo" for members to peruse.
8. Steve McGrady presented a square bowl and a round bowl, each of camphor laurel timber, a round bowl from a piece of plane tree and a bird house of the same timber. The birdhouse attracted a great amount of interest as to the method of turning used, the design of the finished product, the functionality of the design, etc.

From the above exhibits, there was much enquiry as to processes and timbers used, and a generous amount of time given by the exhibitors as to describing and answering such matters raised. There was far more flow of information between members than can be captured and presented by these few lines. A most informative session!





Mick Bouchard
Various in Silky Oak, Pinoak, Mahogany, Merbau



Bill Black
Spatula in Pacific Maple



Graeme Stokes
Scoop in Camphor Laurel



Ron Mendelson
Scoop in Pine



Ron Fisher
Egg cups in setting in Cypress Pine



Bruce Houldin
Scoop in Cotoneaster



Norm Lewis
Ladle in Avocado and Mountain Ash



Ron Fisher
Egg cups in setting in Cypress Pine



Bob Thompson
Mushroom in Pine



Mick Bouchard
Trivet in Jarrah with orange oil finish



Bruce Houldin
Trivet in Pacific Maple with EEE and wax finish



Graeme Stokes
Trivet in Blue Gum with Danish oil finish



Ken Underwood
Trivets in Camphor Laurel and Banksia

“Platters”



Cubby House News

August 2013

Page 7

Best Displayed

*June Show and Tell
Clocks Host: Keith Jones*



**Congratulations
Ken Stuart**



Best Novice



**Congratulations
Bernie Korent**

The "Turners" Gallery

Bill Dingley



SYDNEY WOODTURNERS GUILD INC.

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Find us on the Web at:
<http://www.sydneywoodturners.com.au>

E-Mail Webmaster at:
admin@sydneywoodturners.com.au

All correspondence to Secretary:

Correspondence to David King
 75 Bent st Chester Hill 2162
 Email - sydneywoodturners@gmail.com
 Telephone (02) 97866749
 Mobile 0424188857

Submissions to the Editor:

MAIL: Call for address.
 EMAIL: byhandandeye@gmail.com
 TEL: 02 9533 4086 or 0438 569 969

All submissions will be gratefully accepted. Original photos will be returned but we prefer soft copies if available. Please submit articles in PDF, Word or text files.