

WOODTURNERS NEWS

(Woodturners Guild of N.S.W.)



By hand and eye

NEWSLETTER No. 1/85

FEBRUARY 1985



Mac Knowles, OAM
(See Page 2)

All correspondence to : THE SECRETARY,
WOODTURNERS GUILD OF N.S.W.
21 WOODBURN AVE.,
PANANIA 2213.

Newsletter Material to : THE EDITOR,
WOODTURNERS GUILD OF N.S.W.,
31 ADAMS ST.,
FRENCH'S FOREST 2086.

NEXT MEETING : 26th April, 1985.

Subject: Wood Finishing — question and answer.

COVER PHOTO

Guild President Mac Knowles is congratulated by the State Governor Sir James Rowland at the investiture at Government House Sydney on 15th March 1985.

Mac was awarded the OAM in the Order of Australia awards for "service to the banking industry".

APRIL MEETING

The subject of wood finishing is such a broad one that Dave Marks (Head Teacher of French Polishing STC), who gave such an interesting and informative talk on the subject in August 1984 has been invited to this meeting to expand on the basic information of his talk on a question and answer basis.

Bring all your queries and problems to the meeting and get the answers.

A provisional programme has been decided for subsequent meetings as follows (and will be confirmed in subsequent issues of the Newsletter):

28th June	Woodturning design.
16th August	Bowl turning demonstration – by an expert.
25th October	Talk by Tasmanian expert.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Bruce Leadbeater gave an interesting talk on his trip to the U.S.A. to lecture on and demonstrate his microwave drying technique. Bruce is a very accomplished speaker and was impressed by the interest aroused among microwave oven manufacturers in producing a special oven for the purpose for use in schools and other similar institutions.

Bruce's talk was followed by a demonstration of basic woodturning techniques with George Hatfield on spindle turning, John Ewart on faceplate work and Burnie Axford demonstrating tool grinding. It is not possible in a publication such as ours to report in any detail (many books are available) but it is very interesting to find that every time you see such a demonstration, new points of understanding and technique arise.

A set of professionally designed woodturning tools available from The Woodturning Centre was also on display.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

There has been no written response to our Technical Adviser George Hatfield's offer to answer technical questions submitted by letter. Consequently a short period will be set aside at each of our meetings for verbal queries on turning problems. These will be reported in the Newsletter where appropriate.

CHOOSING A LATHE

A quick count shows at least 25 lathes available to the serious amateur, craftsman or hobbyist and many more if larger and heavier professional machines are included.

The logic of selection divides into these headings:-

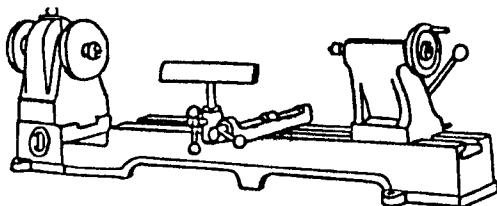
1. **SIZE.** This naturally depends on the size of work contemplated and will be most covered by a centre height above bed of 6" (150 m/m) and a length of 36" (885 m/m) between centres. A gap bed will increase this centre height by about 2" (50 m/m) for faceplate work (bowls, platters, sand discs, etc.) and by working on the left hand (outside) end of the headstock larger work still can be accommodated.

Smaller lathes of 4½" and 5" centre height and between-centre distances of 24" and 30" are also available. Bed extensions for longer work can also be had.
2. **WEIGHT.** Vibration is an important point to consider and there is no doubt that cast-iron is the most substantial answer to this, either in cast head and tailstocks on a steel or wooden bed, or ideally on a cast bed and even a cast base, stand or legs. Steel construction, nevertheless, can be quite satisfactory and reduces costs in manufacture.
3. **ENGINEERING AND DESIGN.** Cast-iron as above, lends itself to more aesthetic, flowing lines resulting in more pleasing design generally. A cast-iron bed also permits a gap bed to be more easily integrated into the design. All steel lathes can also be had with gap beds and all desirable design features, as well as being very robust they also will be cheaper. Ball bearings are now universal in machine spindles generally with seals or shields to keep the grease in and dust out and can run sometimes for years without attention. Roller bearings are generally reserved for heavier machines as are thrust bearings. Standard radial bearings are acceptable for light lathes and are almost universal these days. One lathe at least is fitted with four such bearings, instead of two, giving much greater load and thrust capabilities accordingly.

A standard thread on the right-hand of the spindle is most desirable, as it is also on the left-hand end. As every manufacturer has his own idea of a standard this "standard" is hard to maintain, but in Australian lathes one inch B.S.F. is used on at least four brands which assists greatly when special chucks and attachments are required as these are generally stocked for immediate delivery.

Hollow-bored Headstock spindles with No.2 morse taper bores on the R.H. end are also very desirable, enabling quick interchangeability of taper-shank centres, drills, drill chucks, small face-plates etc. This feature is not possible with thread sizes less than one inch (25 m/m). Drive is now universal by stepped aluminium or cast-iron pulleys, giving 3, 4, or 5 speeds from a matching motor pulley.

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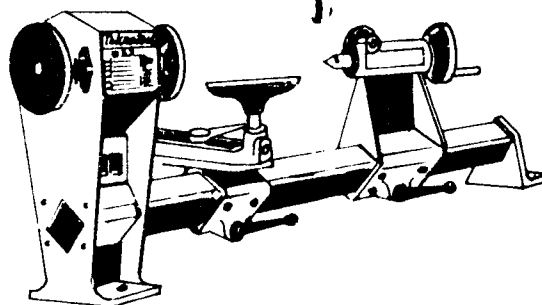
WOODFAST



900 Model

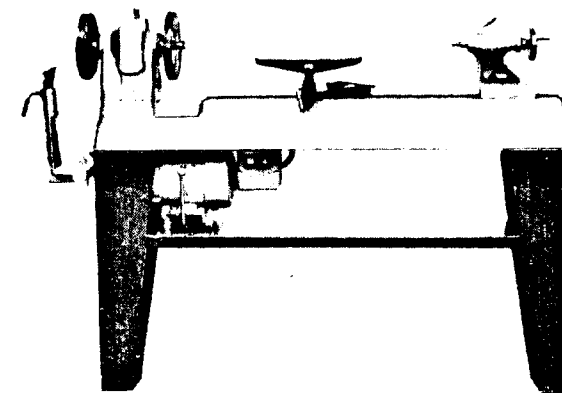


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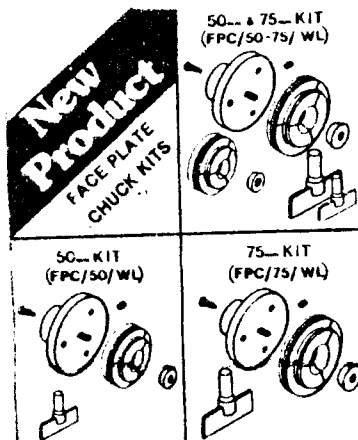
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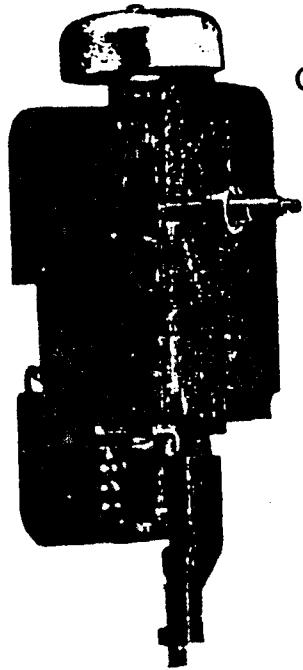
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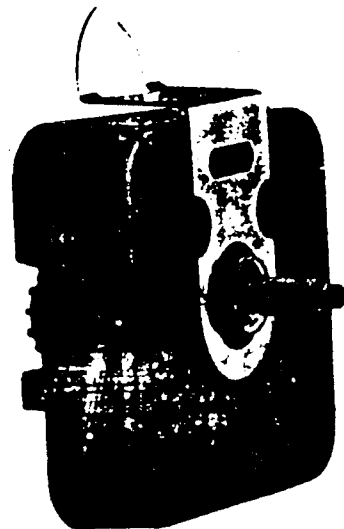


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ASH, HIGMO HEAD BEECH, CORKWOOD, SCRUB PLUM.

IF WE HAVEN'T GOT IT, WE MAY BE ABLE TO GET
IT, BUT AUSTRALIAN TIMBERS ONLY.

Tailstocks also should have No.2 taper bores for the same reason as above, preferably with self-ejecting mechanism by winding in the handwheel. Hollow tail stocks with matching hollow centres are a further refinement for deep boring operations but not essential as this can be done by alternative means. Very few lathes have hollow tailstocks. A quick-action lever-clamp is also desirable for locking the tailstock to the bed, but again is not found on many lathes. The spanner and nut system is cheaper but still quite effective.

Rests and sockets. The ideal shape of the rest is largely a matter of personal choice and experience. A straight parallel rest is generally approved and can be flat, round, half-round, straight or curved bevelled. European rests are often very wide to support the entire hand rather than just a finger grip.

Rest-sockets or brackets are generally of the slotted type with spanner and nut tightening with vertical adjustment through a post with small lever tightening. An improved type has cam-clamp tightening of front-to-back and left-to-right movements in one quick quarter turn of the front lever. Also there is no nut to reduce the effective centre height of the lathe.

4. **COST.** This is largely affected by design, since cast-iron components are more costly to produce than steel. Nevertheless all steel lathes are quite efficient and several reliable types are available. Overall cost can be reduced by building your own stand, either in steel (bolted or welded) or wood, using plywood tops and motor-shelves and 3" x 2" or heavier frames. Supports can also extend from a wall in the form of hangers or brackets. Motors to suit 6" (150 m/m) lathes should be ¾ H.P. for preference, certainly not less than ½ H.P. Smaller sizes are easily overloaded and burned out and more costly in the long run as a consequence. Overload reset buttons are very desirable, otherwise a switch with thermal overloads is recommended. These must match the motor to be effective.

Size of lathe will also affect cost, too small a lathe or one lacking the facilities as described above will be a constant future frustration. It is recommended to consider not less than 5" (125 m/m) but 6" (150 m/m) for preference. There are several cheaper, imported lathes on the market with very doubtful motors and inferior engineering and which should be avoided in spite of their attractive price.

Jack Skinner, Gladesville.

Thank you for this article, Jack. Other members are reminded that any suitable articles will be welcomed. (What happened to "Diggin"?)

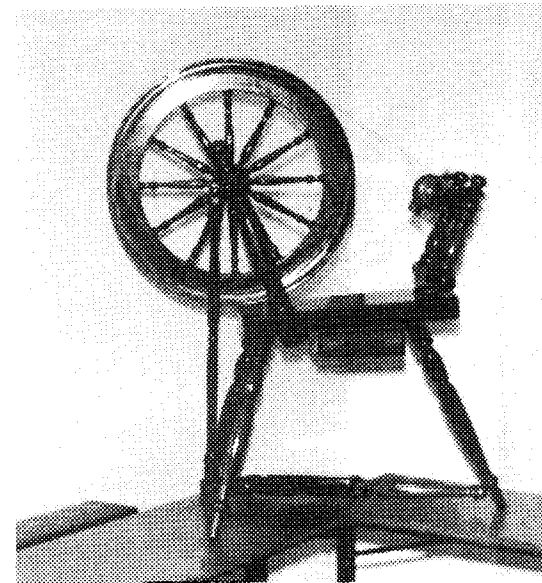
GOOD LUCK to Geoff Irving who left school teaching in New Zealand to come to N.S.W. to learn woodturning the professional way and is now returning home to become our only professional woodturning member in that country.

POPULAR CHOICE COMPETITION

This was again won by Jack Hungerford with a well conceived and executed built up bowl.

Tom Bartie took second prize with a spinning wheel and Stuart Webber third with a pine bowl showing knots around the periphery.

Unfortunately the camera suffered a "pilot error" type fault after the first two shots and the record is not complete.



To give you more time to prepare, subjects for subsequent meetings in 1985 have been set as follows:

April	Lamps
June	Open
August	Any item in "garden timber"
October	Bowls.

RING GOUGE

Vin Smith has advised that from the report on his ring gouge in the October 1984 issue of the Newsletter it could be inferred that he was assisted by others in the development of the ring and that this is entirely incorrect.

Such an implication was not intended and the possibility of the inference being drawn is regretted.

QUEENSLAND SEMINAR

The Woodturners Society of Queensland who held a week-end seminar in 1983 is planning a similar event next year and has asked for suggestions on the areas to be covered.

If you have any thoughts on this matter would you please contact the Secretary.

OBJECTIVES

- a) To promote the craft of hand woodturning in N.S.W.
- b) To bring together individuals interested in woodturning.
- c) To exchange woodturning ideas and knowledge through such avenues as:
 - Discussion
 - Seminars
 - Demonstrations
 - Recurring Education
 - Competitions
- d) To encourage interest in woodturning through the display of turned articles at exhibitions, shows, fairs, etc.
- e) To inform members of the availability of turnery timbers and associated items. Where possible to arrange purchase at prices advantageous to members.
- f) To seek and exert a progressive influence on the design and techniques of woodturning.

THE COMMITTEE

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