

WOODTURNERS' NEWS

(Woodturners' Guild of N.S.W.)



By hand and eye

Newsletter No. 1/87

January 1987

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NEXT MEETING

Friday 6th February 1987

Woodturning Clinic - Bring
your problems along.
Panel will consist of John
Ewart, George Hatfield and
Bernie Axford.

Editorial

Well my first issue went relatively smoothly. No prizes for spotting the errors. I spent a lot of time proofing only to use the wrong computer disk for the final copy.

My apologies to those members who received a copy that had pale print. I am experimenting to determine the best (and most economical) way of producing the newsletter so you may find slight differences from issue to issue. Please let me know if you have any problems as I do not examine every copy.

First thanks to those who responded to the questionnaire. I received replies from 20% of members which is not bad. The other 80% are no doubt going to hand in their completed questionnaires at the next meeting. Details of the results to date appear elsewhere in the newsletter.

A big thank you to those who not only returned the questionnaire but also supplied an article. I will not reproduce them all at once. It's good to have a supply. Having said that please don't think I have enough articles. I can use all the letters and articles you, the members, can produce. Keep up the good work. Let's make the Guild newsletter the best available.

One suggestion received started the brain cells working overtime. We have about 100 members in the Guild and it is evident from the numbers attending meetings that not everyone can make the meetings regularly. How then can we involve these members who cannot attend ??

Mannie Burnham suggested that we pose some pretty controversial questions to members via the newsletter. These questions would be printed in one issue and the response to them in the next. Members at meetings could, if they wish discuss the issues but to gain maximum benefit for all the questions should be answered in writing. Your anonymity is assured if your answer is as controversial as the question.

The first series of questions are in the correspondence section. My postman has a motor bike so he will not mind being burdened by your replies. Don't forget that I will also need questions. Be the Devil's Advocate - ask a silly question it may not be a silly as you think.

1987 is well and truly with us now. I hope all members have a very successful year and that 1987 brings all you would wish yourselves. In one area let us all pull together. Let us all work towards making our Guild the Guild that all woodturners want to join. Please heed the President's request - complete the questionnaire (yes I know it's another one but it is for your benefit) and offer your services to develop the Guild for the benefit of all.

Good Turning

President's Column

Woodturners, no less than any other interest group have displayed their ability to organise to protect and expand their interests.

In most if not all States there are organisations serving the interests of hobby and craftsman woodturners. In N.S.W. there are no less than four such organisations, each having it's own newsletter to record and publicise it's activities.

Not only has there been the growth of organisations but also there has been a comensurate growth in the availability of wood turning equipment and technical guidance.

When I first became interested in wood turning it was almost impossible to purchase tools here in Australia. Even the technical colleges had difficulty in obtaining supplies. Suppliers would not import because of the lack of demand.

Look at the situation today. A massive range of tools and supplies to choose from - at least 28 lathes were described in the last issue of "Australian Woodworker". Many of the lathes are of Australian design and manufacture. We are no longer reliant on overseas supplies or technical advice. In fact we are now selling ourselves overseas.

Two Australian textbooks, lathes and toolings are now on the international market. Many of our fine turned products are also exported. Wood turning as a craft and a hobby has certainly arrived. But what of our Guild ?? Has it kept pace with this dynamic growth ?? Are the members in Sydney as deeply involved in Guild activities as members are in other groups ??

I think not and the other members of your Committee agree with me.

For this reason we have developed the questionnaire that is inserted in this issue of your newsletter. Not only does your Committee want to find out what you want from the Guild but we also seek your active involvement in making things happen.

So would YOU, as a Guild member fill in the questionnaire AND return it. I also ask that you volunteer your assistance to help make whatever programme of activity that emerges from the questionnaire a reality instead of a few formal resolutions.

May the lathes keep on turning.

Frank Bollins

Highlights of the last meeting - 28th November

The November meeting was spent mainly in general discussion whilst waiting for our guest speaker who was considerably delayed but more of that later.

President Frank Bollins made a general request for assistance in determining what members want of the Guild. You will remember that Mike Walsh (a teacher at Colo High school) had offered the school facilities for the purpose of an "open day". Frank was interested to know if this was of interest.

It was generally agreed that "open days, "hands on" days for grinding and turning (with experts standing by for guidance) were a good idea and should be part of Guild activities. Bruce leadbeater, with great experience in teaching, spoke of his method of short demo's followed by "hands on" for school students without any turning knowledge. Bruce indicated that all students were "cutting" sucessfully after only minimal instruction. Obviously this is something to be developed for future meetings of the Guild.

Mannie Burnham advised members of the wood machining course at Tech. and invited members to enroll. A number of Guild members participated last year and found the course very valuable.

Bruce Leadbeater spoke briefly about turning balls. Describing the use of a piece of pipe to turn the ball Bruce made it sound very easy. *(What about a short article Bruce ??? - Ed)*

Show and Tell

Clarrie Snell brought in a beautiful combination lamp and lampshade. Having difficulty in selecting a shade, Clarrie made his own using glass (or perspex) with eye pleasing results. A great deal of thought has gone into the design of not only the lamp but also the on/off switch Clarrie adapted to suit his own requirements.

The Guest Speaker was to speak on "Adeze" so Max Nicholas' camphor laurel bowl was a timely inclusion in "show and tell". The bowl, of unusual shape was turned green. It was, Max advised, very very wet. The "adeze" finish was applied directly to the wet timber, no microwaving was involved. Four coats of the two pot finish, rubbed down with water rubbing compound gave a very high gloss finish.

It will be very interesting to see what happens to the bowl. The moisture in the "wet" bowl must go somewhere! Hopefully Max will report back in a few month's time.

Members were interested in the way the bowl had been turned. Max had used firstly a "pin chuck" and then hot melt glue to fix to "custom board" which had been turned to the required size.

The method lead to discussion about pin chucks and similar fixing devices. Bruce Leadbeater (that man again !!) told of his screw spigot chuck - the opposite of the threaded cup chuck. A hole is bored in the blank and the spigot chuck screwed in - the flat face provides additional friction hold. The screw spigot chuck provides a very positive grip for large bowls.

Archie Cooke's design for a chuck was also discussed. (*A brief note and drawing would be great for the next issue Arch - Ed*)

Bruce Leadbeater (yes - that man yet again - keep up the good work Bruce) was given some wood preserving solution to test for the Forestry Commission. The solution, which goes into the outer layer of timber and sets like gel, is intended for dry timber but could be used on wet. Bruce suggests that the manufacturer's claims were not well supported by use. There was no splitting but the timber moved and was discoloured. Maybe we will hear from Bruce again after more use of the solution.

Guest Speaker

Unfortunately many members had gone home early and missed the Guest Speaker, David Arnall, speaking on his specially formulated two pot polyurethane finish. David was very late but those who stayed on learned a little of the use of "Adeze". Unfortunately David did not bring much in the way of technical literature nor was there a great deal of time for discussion.

For those members who want more information the distributors of "adeze", Polyurethane Specialists will be happy to assist, ask for Anthony Hope. Polyurethane Specialists are at 342 Pennant Hills Road, Pennant Hills (telephone 875 2433).

x x x x

Richard Raffin Video

As you may be aware the Guild has purchased a copy of Richard Raffin's video "Turning Wood". It has been decided to make this available to members for a very modest fee.

George Hatfield (at the Tech.) is taking charge of the video which may be hired for \$2.00. The maximum period of hire is one week.

Fine Woodworking

The Guild has for some time been subscribing to the magazine "Fine Woodworking". These have not been made available to members other than at Guild meetings and for the most part sit in the cabinet unopened. The Committee has decided to allow members to borrow the magazine on payment of a small refundable deposit. See George Hatfield for details.

Marketing of Woodturned Articles - A Gallery Operators Viewpoint

Neil Jones

Part One

Frequently articles appear written by Woodturners or Exhibitors of other crafts giving advice to less experienced craftsmen on the various aspects of marketing, e.g. Design, Quality, Finish, Pricing and the dangers of placing work on Consignment.

Often it is inferred (in fact, sometimes stated) that the Gallery Operator is an ignorant slob incapable of judging and separating good work from rubbish. Further, he is sometimes depicted as greedy and obtaining an unfair share of the Retail Price and keeping the Artist/Craftsman in poverty (e.g. Ron Saw's recent T.V. episode on State of the Arts).

As a woodturner with a wife a talented porcelain artist and both currently operating a small gallery, our views, comments and experience should be of interest and, it is hoped, helpful to members of our Guild.

DESIGN:

This is a very subjective area and much contradictory waffle and, yes, even nonsense, is written on this subject.

Basic design rules have been enunciated for years and one can do no better than be guided by the advice laid down in the Tech's Theory Book and in Mike Darlow's "Practice of Woodturning". However, an even more fundamental piece of advice is the old adage "If it looks right, it will fly right".

Galleries will vary widely in the type of work they exhibit. Generally, though, their policies and requirements can be firmly stated.

For each piece of purely decorative art (excluding Oil and Watercolours) sold, 10 or even 100 functional or decorative/functional pieces will be sold in the same period. This statement holds true for many crafts and was confirmed recently by one of Australia's finest Glass Blowing Artists, Julio Santos.

So by all means do your own thing, but don't be surprised if the Gallery Operator is not as enthusiastic as you are.

QUALITY:

Regardless of the size and value of the item, obviously torn grain and sander marks are O.U.T. "out". Additionally, the bottom or any other normally unseen surface must have the same high standard of finish as

(A Gallery Operators Viewpoint - continued)

the rest of the item.

Many other quality aspects are, to say the least, controversial. For example:-

- * Mike Darlow invariably uses a 2 Pot finish.
- * Richard Raffin uses Cooking Oil and Beeswax, claiming the item will, in time, acquire a "Patina".
- * Alan Schultz fills his screw holes and claims the only people who complain of this practice are Woodturners.
- * For our part, filled screw holes are out, but a perfectly finished dovetail in the bottom of a bowl of good proportion has never been the cause of adverse comment. We can hear the purists protesting now!
- * Painters sign their work, and so should you.

FINISHES:

Again, a controversial area. For our part, as almost all of our pieces are made to be used and admired over a long period we demand a very durable finish.

In other words, provided the finish is durable and "attractive" (another subjective term) we leave the matter to the exhibitor BUT Cooking Oil and Wax are out, as are Toffee Apple finishes.

Members have been privileged to have heard David Marks and Paul Gregson on this subject. Our advice - Follow these gentlemen's advice.

(To be continued)



Lottery Ticket

Those members who attended the last General Meeting will recall that Gloria Egan presented the Guild with a Jackpot lottery ticket which was to be the first step towards obtaining our own clubrooms and equipment. This was an excellent thought on Gloria's part but lady luck did not share the same enthusiasm.

TRIVIA - NEWS FROM ROUND AND ABOUT

The other night while watering the front lawn I was approached by the driver of an ambulance apparently looking for an accident that turned out to be a hoax but via the small talk that followed I learnt some interesting news about one of our members we have not seen for some time, Jan Hughes. It will be of interest to members to know that Jan is now a very proud mum. Specifications not known at this stage. Let's hope we see Jan and family soon - perhaps we can arrange a special show and tell segment.

Hear tell that the ever smiling member and owner of STYLE KITCHENS of Crows Nest, Ken Graham, has become the proud owner of one of the latest Dabar long bed lathes. Anyone considering such a purchase may like to contact Ken for some hands on knowledge while other details and supply can be obtained from member John Ewart at the Woodturning Centre at Brookvale.

Have any members come across the problem where they had a special glueing problem which required one of the industrial type Urea Formaldehyde products which is only available in 5 litre containers with a limited shelf life and the cost made it uneconomical to purchase the quantity packaged? If enough members are interested, we may be able to purchase, say, 5 litres and divide it into 500ml lots. Please contact Secretary if you are interested - the cost will be approximately \$7 including hardener.

A number of our members must be ex Boy Scouts, judging from the number who carry chain saws in their vehicle to "BE PREPARED" to pick up the prized logs which have been found in the most unlikely places. One member was sighted up to his knees in mud dragging logs out of a swamp. The stench of the timber resulted in his wife banning him from using the microwave oven to carry out the seasoning process. Word has it that this did not deter our ardent turner, but the smell inside the microwave gave the clue as to what had been happening while his wife was at the shops!

Thanks to Allen Reay for contributing items for this new "TRIVIA" section - keep your eyes and ears open - let's hear from YOU!!

NEWSLETTER QUESTIONNAIRE

All who responded to the questionnaire felt that the items I suggested (e.g. Hints and Tips, For Sale section etc.) were worthwhile. As a 20% response is reasonably representative of all I will include such as I am able from the material received - over to you !!

Some other suggestions were really worthwhile - Articles on filling, finishing, glueing and abrasives - Brief controversial articles (150 - 250 words) - Beginners page - Things to make (items for both beginners and experts)

Thanks to all who participated - keep up the good work - Ed.

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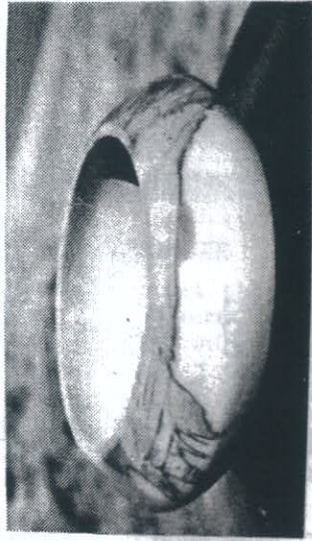
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Woodturning Specialists



George Hatfield - A Profile

Woodturning, woodmachining, teaching, store demonstrating, horse riding, rugby league. George Hatfield, married (his wife a history teacher) with two children, a daughter 20 and a son 23, has a profile which makes very interesting reading.

Born in 1942 during the Japanese midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour George spent his childhood on the central coast. He took up horse riding at an early age riding to primary school in South Avoca Beach. Later George's parents built a house at North Avoca Beach where he lived until he was 12.

Secondary school saw George at Liverpool High School where he really liked woodwork. So much so that on leaving school he looked for a job as a cabinetmaker. After three days of job searching George was offered an apprenticeship as a woodturner. Although he never heard of woodturning before George grabbed the opportunity.

Boyce and Bridden was the scene of George's apprenticeship. B & B manufactured reproduction period furniture and had a staff of 4 woodmachinists, 2 woodturners, 6 chairmakers, 6 cabinetmakers, 5 upholsterers, 5 polishers and 2 carvers. As a tradesman George moved to W.O. Fairweather who copied from the same American furniture books.

George went back to Tech as an adult student and learned woodmachining using this new found expertise at D.H. Gibson's who made knock down furniture for Woolworths stores all over Australia.

No-one can say George's experience is not varied because in 1965 he started part-time teaching in the woodturning section of T.A.F.E. and demonstrated tools in department stores on Saturday mornings. In 1967 George transferred to the woodmachining section of T.A.F.E. as full time maintenance man and subsequently became a part-time teacher in that section.

After four years of full time teaching in the woodmachining section George took over from George Sutton in the woodturning school. John Ewart and George worked together for five years and, now that John has left, George is now the only full time woodturning teacher in Australia and possibly the world (Sydney Technical College has the only woodturning trade course in Australia).

Rugby League ?? Yes as well as the very varied career path outlined above George also found time to play rugby league for Newtown at President's Cup and Grade level. Somewhat older George now lists his likes as playing squash once a week and racing his Laser sailing boat at Middle Harbour. Among his dislikes George lists moving "bloody" lawns and Paul Keating !!

George is a foundation member of the Guild.



Correspondence



The Editor
Woodturner's News

I have just finished the first stage of a woodturning course and, thanks to our learned teacher, all the students thoroughly enjoyed the year. We learned so much we can't believe it !

So many things have remained engraved in our memories from what we learned during the year (besides beads, fillets and grooves) but one is especially worth mentioning.

To impress upon us all some aspects of safety in woodturning our teacher brought in a stroboscope (from the Greek : a counter of revolutions). This toy, when adjusted to the revolutions of the turning job on the lathe, gave the illusion of the job standing still (although still rotating).

By these means we could approach the rotating wood with a skew chisel or detail gouge and see exactly the point of contact (and the angle) and learn where we were going wrong.

If ever I can afford a Stroboscope I will aquire one for my new workshop.

Jim Dorbis

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

- * Does it matter what angle a woodturner grinds his/her gouges and chisel.
- * Turning dry timber is better than wet ??
- * Craft turners are more interested in bowl turning than other work !!

(Go to it turners - answer the challenge - Ed)

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

As announced at the last meeting the President's choice for the February meeting is a lidded bowl up to six inches (12.5 cm) in diameter.

President's choice for the April meeting is a pair of candle sticks from garden timber.

Saw Safety

For those of us with a circular saw there are some basic safety measures. Here are three of a number.

THE HOOD

The hood is designed to :-

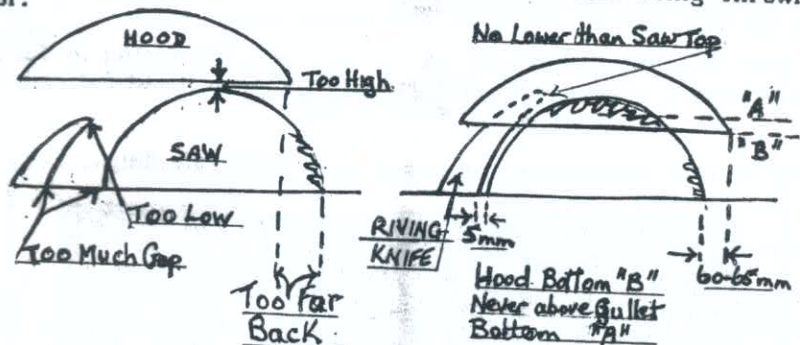
- prevent people accidentally hitting or falling onto the blade and
- restrict movement of timber flying back towards the operator.

Leave the hood on the machine and see that it is set correctly

THE RIVING KNIFE

The aim of the riving knife is to :-

- stop timber closing onto the saw blade and either jamming it or, worse still, hurling the timber back at terrific speed towards the operator often with shocking results. That is why the knife is shaped to be slightly wider than the saw cut.
- stop waste catching the back of the saw and also being thrown at the operator.



UNSAFE

SAFE WAY

SAVE A FINGER OR MORE !!

While ripping, use a "push stick" when the end of the timber is about 300 - 400mm from saw teeth. DO NOT get into the unsafe habit of passing the right hand up to the saw and then past on the fence side. Similarly it is unsafe to push the left hand, on waste side of cut, up to and past the saw. This is particularly unsafe when the waste is very narrow.

Mannie Burnham

(I am reminded of a lovely sign recently reported in "Fine Woodworking" and suitably changed :-"USE REMAINING FINGERS AS PUSH STICKS" - Ed)

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

As indicated in the president's column your committee has prepared a questionnaire in an attempt to ascertain from Guild members their desires for future Guild activity.

The questionnaire was prepared at a meeting of the sub-committee agreed upon at the last Guild meeting.

Members of the sub-committee in attendance were Paul Gregson, Tony Buxey, Ken Gray, Max Nicholas and Frank Bollins (Allen Reay was unable to attend). The meeting was held at Paul Gregson's home amid a fine array of antique furniture and bric-a-brac.

As a Guild member would you please heed the President's appeal and respond by filling in the questionnaire and returning it to our Secretary (Allen Reay) as soon as possible.

Regional Meetings

SOUTHERN REGION MEETING

The south side meeting held on Sunday 2nd November was a BBQ at the home of Barbara and Mannie Burnham.

Mannie gave an informative talk on the use of woodturning in furniture. Some very good examples were displayed including a beautiful cedar dining table.

All those present agreed that it was a very enjoyable day.

NORTHERN REGION MEETING

The Friday, 7th November meeting was held at the home of Max Nicholas. The attendance was disappointing but this did not effect the enthusiasm of the meeting.

At our previous meeting Bob Hentschel gave each member a small piece of radiata pine (approx 150mm x 100mm x 15mm) and we had to turn whatever we could from this small plain piece of timber.

The results were amazing - Two segmented boxes, a fob watch holder, a standing photograph frame and two small trinket boxes. All were beautifully turned proving that wood turners do not need expensive woods and they are not lacking in ingenuity.

For our next regional meeting Max has given members a photocopied plan of a candle holder. Each member is asked to turn the candle holder as near as possible to the photocopy and bring to the next meeting. The results should prove very interesting indeed.

(Continued on page 15)

(Regional Meetings - Continued)

After an enjoyable supper (some delicious 'home smoked' fish - ask Max for the recipe) members visited Max's workshop which proved to be a fitting end to a most enjoyable evening.

NEXT NORTHSIDE REGIONAL MEETING - 6TH MARCH

DAVID HUTT

5 SOUTHERN CROSS WAY

ALLAMBIE HEIGHTS

939 1695 939 1695

LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING ALL NORTHSIDE TURNERS
PLEASE TELEPHONE FIRST

OTHER REGIONS

Good news for members in the Eastern Suburbs - Jim Dorbis intends starting up a regional group in 1987. Judging from the success of the established North and South groups, the Eastern Suburbs group should be very successful.

If anyone else would like to consider starting up a regional group, please contact the Secretary for details of members in the area. We have quite a lot of members in the Western area that may be interested in forming a group if someone would like to take on the role of being the organiser.



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CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

The first Guild Christmas function was a great success.

Thanks to Edna and George Luster and the weather, 14 or 15 Guild members and their wives and children thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the delightful surroundings of the Luster home.

An attractive display of turnings showed great initiative in both design and craftsmanship by the Guild members who responded to the invitation to exhibit some of their work.

By a strange coincidence a certain elderly gent, associated with this period of the year, resplendent in red garb, white whiskers and wellies bestowed gifts on six lucky wives whose names were drawn from the hat by Edna.

Six equally fortunate Guild members with the luck of the draw were also recipients of "gifts" from Santa - packets of used abrasives, jars of sawdust, old nails and once used paint.

George Luster, bemoaning the fact that through a temporary absence from the function he had missed out on a gift, was suitably rewarded by a small gift. Frank Bollins, encouraged by the festive spirit, kindly gave George his gift from Santa - a small jar of used paint.

All of the wives and children present received either a bouquet or sweets from Santa.

At the conclusion of the merriment, Frank on behalf of the Guild presented Edna and George with a flowering pot plant to add to the beauty of their delightful garden.

Edna's doll display again enthralled all those who viewed the collection after making a donation to the "Cotton Wool Babies Fund".

Before the day ended, Bruce Leadbeater again displayed his lathe, dust extractor and turning technique. He also had on display the patterns for the castings for his new lathe which hopefully will go into production early in the new year.

By popular acclaim - a most enjoyable day - one to be remembered and repeated next year.

Thanks George and Edna for a fine day.

1987 MEETINGS

3RD APRIL

5TH JUNE

7TH AUGUST

16TH OCTOBER

4TH DECEMBER