

WOODTURNERS' NEWS

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



By hand and eye

Newsletter No. 3/87

May 1987

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NEXT MEETING

5.30pm Friday 5th June

Subject: The Jointer

Speaker: Mannie Burnham



EDITORIAL



"How much wood would a woodturner turn
if a woodturner could turn wood ?"

This old tongue twister came to mind the other day as I looked at the huge pile of shavings surrounding a professional turner. We turners are very good at creating large piles of what is really unusable waste. My garden, as well as my workshop, is already several inches deep with wood shavings.

What do you do with your wood shavings ?? How do you maximise your use of the timber you have ?? Could you use the "waste" that you turn out of the centre of a bowl by using a different approach (maybe a "cranked" parting tool) ?? Let's hear from YOU.

I really like to look at and handle timber. Hidden under the rough surface of a really well used piece of timber lies a whole new world. Beautiful grain patterns, fine texture, wonderful colours. Try scraping the surface off a piece of metal and see what you get!

One of my favourite pieces is an old fence post turned, by Ralph Kennedy of Urunga, into a rather elegant vase - complete with old weathered surfaces and a staple. People that have seen the vase are amazed to find that this old fence post, which had no doubt been keeping sheep and cattle at bay for many years, is ROSEWOOD.

The land holders of the past were not particularly thoughtful in their use of timber. I suppose, in fairness, if all you have for fence post, gates and buildings is rosewood or cedar then why not use it. Oh to be so lucky !!

The land holders of today do not seem to have changed attitudes much. It always surprises me to see vast heaps of trees destroyed in the name of increased pasture. The wood-lover in me always gets the horrors at this "waste".

You will, I hope, forgive my indulgence in publishing a poem about trees on the back page. Unfortunately I cannot acknowledge either the author or the source - I've forgotten where it came from.

Frank's Column this issue is most interesting. Perhaps as a follow up we could explore the history of woodturning further and put together a "Best Seller". Has any member got any other old magazines or articles that could be published in "News" ??? Are there any members out there who would be interested in pursuing this thought and putting it into action ??



President's Column

After reading the most interesting profile on George Sutton (in a discussion with George before his retirement he and I discovered that we had both attended Granville Junior Technical School at the same period) the thought came to mind "How old is woodturning in relation to the history of Australia".

Noting the fact that George had commenced his apprenticeship at John W. Adair I recalled to mind a photo contained in a magazine titled "The Craftsman" that showed the woodturning section of Adair's. This edition of "The Craftsman" is dated July 1926.

The photo clearly shows four turners at their belt driven lathes, each of them wearing a white apron. In the foreground a variety of turned articles are displayed, including the Jacobean twisted turnings mentioned in George's Profile. In the background with a clear view of all stands the foreman, dressed in a dark suit and wearing a high necked collar and tie.

A visit to any of our National Trust Properties such as Old Government House and Experiment Farm Cottage at Parramatta will show many fine examples of early colonial furniture, much of which has been date in the early 1800's.

As much of this furniture is made from cedar, one can assume that it was made here in Australia by craftsmen, any of whom would have been convicts.

Much of this furniture, including finely turned rose mahogany balusters on a Stairhall which was added to the Old Government House by Macquarie between 1810 and 1821, contain turnings that obviously were turned by skilled turners, perhaps by the cabinetmaker.

It was through reading "The Fatal Shore" by Robert Hughes that I came upon the first reference to wood turning as a specific trade.

Contained in a segment of the book is a description of a prison for convict children between the age of nine and eighteen years at Point Puer, Van Diemen's Land. The teaching of practical skills was part of their rehabilitation from their "corrupt habits".

Contained in a document listing some of the items manufactured by these young convicts is a reference to "Turning of 216 Masons' mallets, 20 hat pins, 50 belaying pins, 2 bed posts, and 243 ships' blocks".

From the above it can be assumed that wood turning as a trade has been practiced throughout the almost entire period of white domination of Australia.

(President's Column continued)

Having gone through the various modes of motive power, the pole lathe, the treadle lathe, the belt driven and individually driven lathes and the growing influx of highly sophisticated automated lathes, the trade or craft of wood turning is still flourishing.

Because of the obvious trend towards automated production, it now rests with bodies such as TAFE and organisations such as our Guild to maintain and expand wood turning as a craft.

Each of us has a responsibility to do just that. So..... keep the lathes turning.

Frank Bollins



Engineering and Woodworking Supplies

While holidaying on the South Coast, I happened to visit a firm called Expressway Engineering Supplies of Unanderra and met the Managing Director, Mr. Peter Hands, and spent several enjoyable hours browsing through his showroom. He has the most incredible range of equipment and tools, ranging from heavy engineering equipment to the smallest piece of woodworking equipment.

Peter was extremely interested in our Guild's activities and indicated that he would welcome any enquiries from members interested in purchasing lathes, jointers, bandsaws, portable hand tools, chisels, carving tools, spindle moulders, etc. Peter supplied us with literature covering part of the range of equipment he stocks.

It is not difficult to see why Peter, with his enthusiastic approach to woodworking, was recently named the top Australian dealer for the Elu range of products. Readers of the Australian Woodworker may recall seeing Peter and his wife Marelle entering the Hotel Windsor in Melbourne for a weekend which was part of the prize made available by Black and Decker distributors of the Elu range of products. Anyone wishing to contact Peter can do so by ringing him on 042 711066 - mention the Guild.

Alan Reay

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

The President's task for our next meeting (June) is a 200mm diameter bowl. The August meeting President's Choice is open. This should appeal to those turners who may wish to display skills outside those already covered by the past tasks.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

SOUTHERN REGION

As a follow up on the viewing of Richard Raffin's video on woodturning, the Southern Region met at Mannie Burnham's home as planned and spent a most interesting day testing out some of Raffin's methods.

Eight members assembled and after viewing various segments of the video, hurried down stairs for a practical test on the lathe

At the end of the day the general opinion was that with the exception of his methods of hollowing out small boxes and scoops etc., little advantage could be gained from changing over from the general methods that we have been taught at the various colleges and training centres.

However, because of the shortage of time and the limited use of the lathe, it is hoped to have an enlarged "hands on" day at Colo High School at a date to be fixed.

NEXT MEETING : Not advised to "News" - refer Frank Bollins

EASTERN REGION

Our meeting, as advertised, was held on Tuesday night, 28.4.87. It was a most interesting meeting. The attendance was low, probably due to change of nights because of the Easter Holidays and we hope for a better attendance next meeting.

Jim Dorbis showed some of his miniature turnings, made from scraps of different timbers. The prize, once again, goes to Emanuel Busutil for his beautiful segmented bowls.

Different ideas were expressed to make our meetings more attractive and these ideas will be presented at our next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 1987 AT 7P.M.

WHERE: 55 DARLEY ROAD, RANDWICK

TELEPHONE: 399 3068

Anticipating a colder night we'll show the Raffin Video. Members of the Guild in the Eastern suburbs PLEASE make an effort to attend. We'd like to hear your comments on the video.

Jim Dorbis

(REGIONAL MEETINGS continued)

NORTHERN REGION

A good "turn" up at Mac Knowles home for the Northern Region meeting. Eleven, including three new Guild members, enjoyed a pleasant evening. We certainly learned a lot about each other as Mac had everyone introduce themselves and share their woodturning experiences.

The main part of the evening revolved around "finishing" with Bob Hentschel, Tom Bartie and Mac Knowles passing on hints and tips. Bob showed some coloured finishes for non descript timber. Mac stressed the need for "horses for courses" if selling items (Quick easy finish for the less expensive items - better finishes for others). Tom, the expert on high gloss finishes took us through the painstaking process necessary to produce the finish for which he is well known.

The task set for the next regional meeting is - a Bowl.

NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY 3 JULY 1987 7.30 pm

WHERE: 31 ADAMS STREET, FRENCH'S FOREST

TELEPHONE: 451 5715

New Members New Members New Members

We would like to welcome two new members to our group. They are Anton Peterson of Cromer and Christopher Nisbet of Eatham, near Lismore.

***** ***** ***** *****

Royal Agriculture Society Arts & Crafts Show

It was extremely pleasing to see two of the Guild members receive high recognition for their efforts in the woodturning section of the craft exhibition at the Easter Show. The members, Gloria Egan and Frank Bollins, have both agreed to bring their exhibits to the next meeting for members to see.

**Next Meeting - 5th June**

The topic for the next General Meeting has had to be changed and will now be on the use, setting up and maintenance of the jointer. This should be a most informative discussion for those in the Guild who already own or are contemplating the purchase of this very useful piece of machinery. Mannie Burnham has agreed to give the lecture.

Profile of a Woodturner

Recently, while looking through the Guild members' application forms, I pondered an interesting question as to what woodturners do for a living or when not turning wood.

This simple question was the forerunner to a very interesting exercise which resulted in assembling the entire Guild members into various categories in accordance with the various professions members pursue in their normal course of employment.

One of the interesting points is that a number of our members have reached the stage of life where they enter the extremely busy and active phase called "retirement". I have yet to talk to a retired member who has a spare minute in the day. This makes you wonder how you find time to retire.

I have attempted to place members into two categories, the first being those who earn their living exclusively by woodturning or teaching same. The second category, which comprises the majority of members, are either craftsmen, hobbyists, part time turners and people who just enjoy turning for relaxation.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

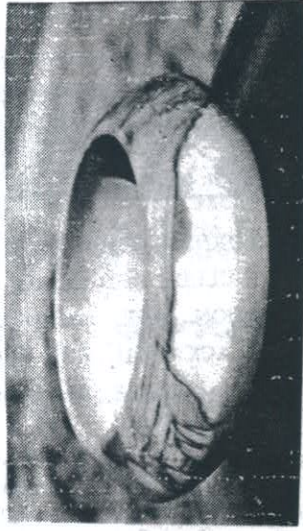


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(PROFILE OF A WOODTURNER - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Category 1.

- 8 Professional Woodturners
- 11 Woodturning and Industrial Arts Teachers
- 31 Retired members

Category 2.

Accountants - Bankers - Builders - Cabinet Makers - Carpenters and Joiners - Carriage Trimmer - Civil Engineers - Clerks - Company Director - Computer Salesman - Dentist - Doctor - Electrician - Engineers (elect.) - Eye Surgeon - Fitter - Foreman - Furniture restorer - Health & Building Surveyor - Handyman - Hydrographer - Management Consultant - Manager Computer Systems - Maths Teacher - Musical Instrument Maker - Pattern Maker - Pilot - Plumber - Produce Merchant - Production Planner - Property Manager - Quantity Surveyor - Retailer - Sales Reps - Saw Doctor - Sawmiller - School Principal - Ships Joiner - Shop Keeper - Student - Teachers - Toolmaker - Woodcraftsman

Interesting lot aren't we. Your next renewal notice will request details of your present and (if retired) your previous occupation and we will put together another profile next year.

Alan Reay



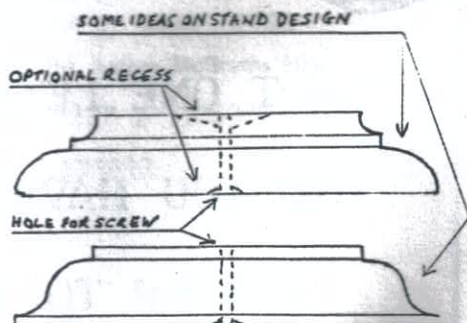
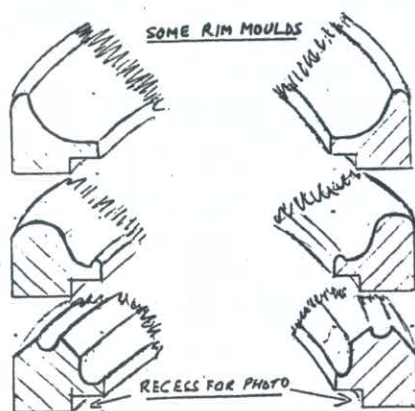
CORRESPONDENCE



NOT ONE LETTER THIS MONTH
SO YOU HAVE A BLANK SPACE
IT'S UP TO YOU TO FILL IT

★ THINGS TO MAKE - Picture Frames ★

Select the timber of your choice, I prefer it to be D.A.R. Mark out one face with a diameter suitable for the photo you like to frame. Follow the usual procedure of bandsawing and drilling (right through) for face plate work before mounting the disc to the face plate and trueing its circumference with a detail gauge. The next step is to face the timber true if necessary and to mark out the size of the rim on the frame which in turn will later give you the opening through which you view the photo. With a thin parting tool (made from a hacksaw blade) make an incision on the marked line and another one for clearance next to it on the side towards the centre. Penetrate to $3/4$ depth of the timber or even slightly deeper but not right through. Now you can proceed with shaping the rim into the mould of your choice with a gauge ($3/8$ works fine). After sanding the rim (you could also wax it already) unscrew the disc, turn it around and re-mount it onto the face plate. Mark out a circle the same diameter as for the opening on the first side and mark out a second 4 or 5mm larger next to it. With a suitable parting tool cut away the timber between the two marks to the depth required to meet the cuts made from the first side and taaah raaah off comes your picture frame. To avoid 'wearing' your masterpiece (it's not in fashion this year) place one hand on the rim before making the final cut through the timber. The small disc now left on the face plate still serves a useful purpose. It will make an ideal stand for your frame. With a detail gauge shape the periphery into a pleasing mould. Unscrew the disc from the face plate after sanding and finishing, push a small screw through the existing hole and now fasten the disc to the waxed or polished, pre-drilled frame rim. All that remains to be done is to insert the intended photo from the back with or without glass and to find a suitable spot on the already crowded mantelpiece amongst all the other treasured turnings.....'What a frame up!' BOB HENTSCHEL



Holding Device for chainsawing logs and balanks in preparation for turning

The central column is a piece of 1" diameter water pipe, 30" in length and threaded at both ends (purchased from local Plumbers Supply Centre).

Drill the desired number of $\frac{3}{8}$ " clearance holes equidistant through the diameter. The column is then secured to the wooden or metal base using a $4\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter flange, also obtained from the same source. (I used a piece of laminated timber $16" \times 16" \times 1\frac{1}{4}"$ which give a firm base).

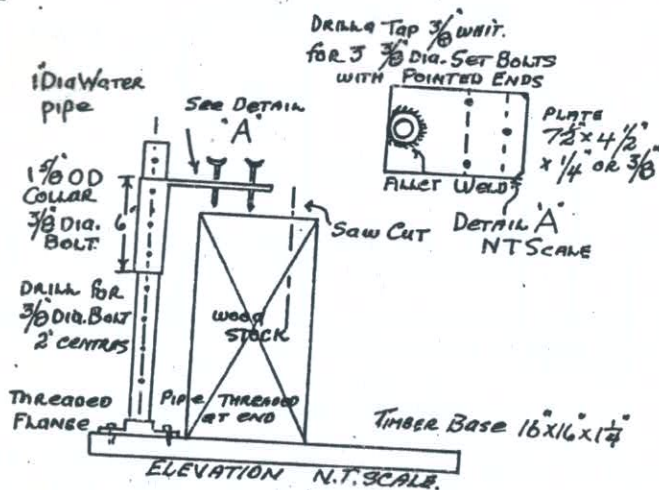
The holding plate is made from a piece of steel $7\frac{1}{2}" \times 4\frac{1}{2}" \times \frac{1}{4}"$ or $\frac{3}{8}"$. To this is welded a collar that slides easily over the column. Depending on the length of the collar, a number of $\frac{3}{8}"$ clearance holes are drilled through the diameter at 1" pitch. This gives a variety of positions for the holding plate.

At the end of the holding plate in a triangular configuration, three holes $\frac{3}{8}"$ Whitworth tread are drilled and tapped to take three $\frac{3}{8}"$ Whitworth set bolts with pointed ends to penetrate into the block when they are screwed down.

In use it is simply a matter of standing the block on the base. If metal is used in the base then the block should stand on a piece of board to protect the saw. Bring the holding plate down to as near as possible to the top of the block. Insert the $\frac{3}{8}"$ locking bolt through the column and adjust the $\frac{3}{8}"$ pointed bolts until they bite into the block.

Having used this devise, I found it an effective and safe way to hold timber for chainsawing.

Frank Bollins



Sharpening

Many magazines carry inaccurate information written by "experts" on the correct sharpening methods for skew chisels. Some authors have included the same information in their books on woodturning.

Cast steel chisels almost invariably have convex curved surfaces when purchased, where the hollow ground surfaces should occur after preparing the tool for use.

Some of the "experts" advocate the convex surfaces should be maintained.

For the information of Guild members, these curved surfaces are the result of part of the manufacturing process and are not indicative of the intended shape of the cutting edge.

After a skew chisel has been forged to shape and size and the tang has been ground the tool is polished. This is done on an endless grinding belt passing over three or more pulleys.

The actual polishing is done by the operator working the chisel backwards and forwards on the underside of pulley "A" (see diagram below).

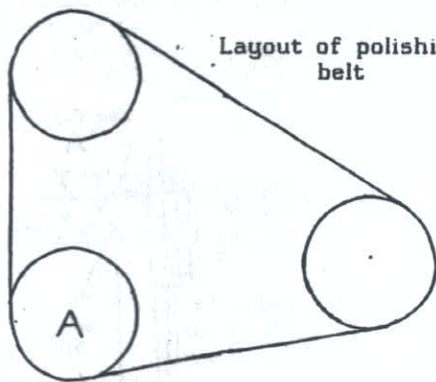
As a final part of this operation, the tool is drawn back towards the operator curving the end of the tool on both sides with a freehand motion. It is done for appearance only leaving the final grinding and sharpening to the user.

George Sutton

Shape of Tool
on purchase



Layout of polishing
belt



THANKS THANKS THANKS

Sincere thanks to those members who assist by writing items, large and small, for "News". I really appreciate the help. The time has come, however, to seek further contributions from members. If you don't want blank pages get writing and let's see your name in print.



The Friends of the Zoo Handicrafts Exhibition



The exhibition was held on 25th and 26th April 1987. Because of space limitations on this occasion only members in areas close to the zoo were canvassed and eight people exhibited.

Takings were \$761.50 of which \$38.07 (5%) is credited to Guild funds.

Our thanks to Max Nicholas for arranging the use of and for transporting a lathe lent by John Ewart (The Woodturning Centre). Thanks also to George Hatfield, Tony Buxey and Paul Gregson for demonstrating.

This was the first occasion that the Friends of the Zoo have held an art and craft exhibition and it was really a trial run for succeeding ones which will be held in much more spacious and accessible quarters. Consequently future exhibitions should result in greater participation with increased returns to exhibitors.

Ken Gray



NEXT MEETINGS - 1987



August 7th

October 16th



December 4th



Where and When

For the benefit of new members and for those who are not regular attendees at Guild meetings.

The meetings start at 5.30 p.m. and continue until 9.00 p.m. at the latest as we have to vacate the premises at that time.



10
All official meetings of the Guild are held at :-
Sydney Technical School Woodturning School



Bijou Lane, Ultimo

(Behind Her Majesty's Theatre - Parking Station opposite)
m

TREES

The tree that never had to fight
For sun and sky, for air and light;
That stood out on an open plain,
Never became a forest king,
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil,
Never had to win his share
Of sun and sky and light and air,
Never became a manly man,
But lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow in ease;
The stronger the wind, the tougher the trees,
The farther sky, the greater length;
The more the storm, the more the strength,
By sun and cold, by rain and snows,
In tree or man, good timber grows.

Where thickest stands the forest growth
Are found the patriarchs of both,
Whose broken branches show the scars,
And they hold converse with the stars
Of many winds and much of strife -
This is the common law of life.