



Editor's Comments

Much has happened since Newsletter No. 85 was produced. Perhaps the most notable news is the success of two of our members in the Worshipful Company of Turners recent competition. Dennis Keeling was awarded a Second Prize in the Plain Turning class, and Luke Rance was awarded a Second Prize and silver medal in the Junior class. Heartiest congratulations to both of them! We now have three prize winning members of MWA. You will remember that Robert Bishop took a First prize at Alexandra Palace in February with a fine large vase. I hope to include pictures of the winning entries in the next newsletter.

Next on the list is that we have firm dates for the Autumn Exhibition in the Cow Byre in Ruislip. We shall be there from 22nd to 28th October. This Exhibition should produce a good volume of sales in the run up to Christmas, as well as promoting MWA. and the craft of wood turning.

Still on the Exhibition front, the show at the Chiltern Open Air Museum is now definitely "on" this show is principally to promote the AWGB. We are not aiming to make sales, but if any items are sold, commission will charged which will go to support our chosen charity. More details follow in this newsletter. We do not have much time - the dates for this one are 17th and 18th June, with setting up on the afternoon of 16th June. Please support this important Exhibition. Ralph Pooley is team leader for this one, so please contact him if you are providing exhibition pieces or otherwise taking part. We are also supporting a Charity at this show.

Alan

President

Stuart King

Chairman

Adrian Needham

'Brimbles' 114 Slough Road
Datchet. Berkshire SL3 9AF
Tel. 01753 593771

e-mail ajneedham@e-brimbles.com

Treasurer & Membership Sec.

Richard Bird

'Staffa' Back Lane
Chalfont St. Giles. Bucks. HP8 4PF
Tel. 01494 872503

e-mail richardwlbird@aol.com

Secretary

Mike Collas

8 Wiltshire Gardens Twickenham
Middlesex TW2 6ND
Tel. 0208 894 6759

e-mail mike.collas@btinternet.com

Committee members:

Ralph Pooley Ken Horn

Derek Pollecutt Geoff Norris

Will Mailes

Newsletter Editor (Co-opted)

Alan Spargo 73 Park Lane,
Harefield, Middlesex. UB9 6BL
Tel. 01895 823159

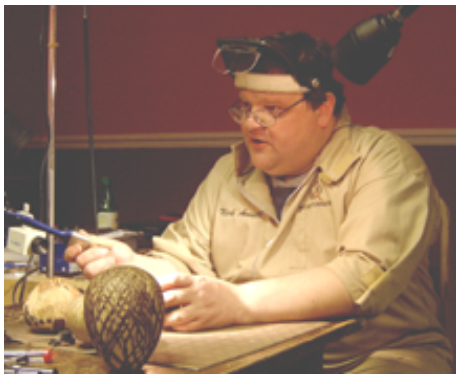
e-mail spargo73@waitrose.com

Dust Dangers

The danger from wood dust cannot be overstated. Repeated exposure to dust from almost all woods can result in a permanent allergic reaction which is severe enough to cause some turners to give up their activities. We hear that John Berkeley, of screw topped puzzle boxes fame now has to wear a full face dust mask, even when he is demonstrating and teaching, in consequence of a dust allergy. He says that ideally, turners should at all times wear a full face dusk mask, and have a dust and chippings collector funnel close to the lathe, together with a micro-dust filter running overhead. Such provision can be expensive, but good health is beyond price.

May Meeting with Nick Arnall

Nick is a most interesting craftsman. He uses small, beautifully proportioned hollow forms as the foundation for superb carved and coloured decorations. Obviously he could not show a project from start to finish, as each one takes many hours to complete. Instead, he demonstrated various stages of production, beginning with a small hollow form from unseasoned sycamore. For this used standard techniques for thin wall turning, and gave advice upon his preferred tools



and approaches. He did not complete the nicely shaped vase he had begun, but moved on to spend the rest of the evening

demonstrating and discussing the various decorative techniques he has developed over many years of experimentation.

Nick uses both powered carving tools, and rotary carving tools, but first it is necessary to draw his design ideas on the item to be decorated. Nick gets his inspiration from natural forms, such as grasses and plants. He carries a sketchbook at all times, and jots down ideas as soon as they occur to him. These are developed later into full designs, which are then drawn on the hollow forms. He makes it look very easy, and he maintains that anybody can do it with a little application and practice. Then carving begins. It requires great knowledge of how the tools will perform, and of the characteristics of the wood being carved. Nick has built this up over a period of at least twelve years. Nick uses air driven high speed rotary burrs in his workshop, but brought a motorised flexible shaft set for this demonstration. Diamond coated burrs are invaluable, as also is pyrography equipment which Nick

has adapted to enable a "hot knife" technique to carve as well as to burn. This is a method which we



have not seen before. Super sharp tools are essential, and Nick included a demonstration of sharpening the tools for powered carving.



After carving and or burning, Nick sanded off scorch marks, and any whiskery edges and moved on the the next stage, which is colouring. He uses airbrushing techniques in his workshop, but because of the need to bring in a compressor, he did not demonstrate these. However he showed us many other methods he uses to get the stunning effects which we saw used on items in the small gallery of finished work which he brought with him. It is not surprising that his beautiful artefacts sell for hundreds of pounds each. Each one is the product of not only many hours and even days of painstaking work, but also of years of experimentation and experience. Nick identifies very closely with each item he produces. How could it be otherwise when so much of his life is devoted to their production?

There was much more. Our CCTV set up and operator did sterling service in making it possible for us to see in close up details which we would otherwise not have been able to follow at all.



“Hands On” Evening



We had another popular “Hands On” evening in April. The committee introduced some new ideas in order to encourage members to take tools in their hands and make shavings. There were three expert members around the room demonstrating and instructing in different components of the craft. Robert Bishop was dealing with larger forms, Ralph Pooley with finishing techniques, and Brian Wooldridge with using the skew chisel. Just in case members wanted something different to look at, a video tape and a DVD were playing on appropriate machines.

It was soon apparent that the two video displays were perhaps not needed. Ralph demonstrated



many sure fire finishing methods, but was later overtaken by requests from newcomers who wanted to try their hands with the tools. It was rewarding to see some of our visitors taking their tentative first steps in wood turning under expert guidance. Robert meanwhile had a good crowd of interested turners who had already graduated from beginners stage, and also others who simply wished to improve their established techniques. Robert was kept very busy throughout the evening. Brian had an interested audience as he displayed his expertise with the skew, which is not the demon tool which it is often made out to be. He was producing the beginners standard piece - a dibber in softwood - , and it was



pleasing to see June Brown guided into producing a very creditable version of this old standard.

There was a good “Club” atmosphere, assisted in no small measure by the steady supply of tea etc. throughout the evening by Mary and Eddie. We also had a small gallery of figurines turned in response to the excellent presentation in February by Brian Partridge. They came in many variations. Perhaps the favourite was a ‘Jordanesque’ creation by Robert Bishop. (We do not believe that he actually turned all the detail!) The photographs tell it all.

For your Diary

13th July Rodger Foden. Rodger is a former member of MWA. Since moving away he has become an established professional wood turner, and is much in demand as a demonstrator and teacher.

14th 15th and 16th July The Chilterns Show at Gt. Missenden. This was very successful last year, and members were able to promote wood turning, show off their skills, and sell their work. We hope to do even better this year. Ralph Pooley will have the details.

10th August. Club Evening and bowl competition. Activities to be announced.

14th September John Davis.

Club News

A Competition

The recent survey of members' suggestions included requests for an occasional competition. Ever eager to satisfy a demand, we have decided to hold a competition in August. The project is to be a Bowl from an 8 inches diameter by 3 inches thick blank. The bowl can be as simple or as elaborate as makers wish, and there will be just two classes - 'Novices' and 'Non Novices'. Members are to decide which class they wish their work to be entered under. Get turning!!

The Raffle

As our membership has increased, a problem has arisen: the Raffle is taking too much time out of the evening, and is curtailing the demonstrators' time, so making it very difficult for their projects to be completed by 10.00 pm. From July, for a trial period up to the AGM, we shall no longer issue tickets for the raffle. Instead, raffle purchasers will be marked against their unique numbers on the register of members attending on the night, and the draw will be made by random selection from these numbers. Visitors will be allocated a number, and if any member wish to buy a second chance, an additional number will be allocated to him/her. The new method will accomplish several useful things. It will reduce time taken at the "check in", it will greatly reduce the time taken to draw the raffle, and it will guarantee a fair distribution of the prizes. It will also eliminate the disappointment of lost tickets! If the new method is successful, it will be formally adopted at the AGM.

Name Badges

With so many new members attending our meetings, the wearing of name badges is very much to be desired. It will help the Treasurer to identify each person quickly as they pay their club night fee and enable the new raffle system to operate accurately without taking the time needed to ask each person who he/she is. More important still, it will be a great help to members who will know for sure who they are talking to. The members of the Committee will particularly appreciate knowing who they are talking too, as it is difficult to carry all the names in one's head! The name badges also carry the person's Membership Number, and eliminate the need for issuing separate membership cards.

We are asking all members to wear their Membership Badges when they come to the meetings. We are investigating the manufacture of better quality badges, but in the meantime. if you need a replacement badge, please contact the Newsletter Editor, Alan Spargo, who will make one for you.

The Club Charity

We have long felt that in line with other clubs, MWA should support a Charity. The opportunity has arisen at the coming show at the Chiltern Open Air Museum. (Not to be confused with the Chilterns Show at Gt. Missenden in July.) We are approaching the Shooting Star Trust, which is a Childrens' Hospice based in Twickenham, and hope that we can adopt it for the rest of this year, and also the whole of 2007. We feel sure that the members will approve of our decision.

From the Treasurer

Would members please try to avoid presenting high denomination notes when paying their entry sub for each meeting. Giving the right amount, or at least nearly the right amount makes the Treasurer's job much easier. There have been occasions when a succession of £20 notes has cleared out all the change, and members have had to hang around until their change is forthcoming. Not a good thing!

MWA Seminar

There is space only for a brief comment about the recent Seminar. There were fewer people present than in previous years, but they enjoyed a very good day. Les Thorne gave a confident and comprehensive overview of wood turning approaches and methods. He kept us informed and entertained, and seemed as fresh at the end of the day as when he began. There was an excellent Instant Gallery. Those who contribute to it are to be heartily congratulated on the quality of their work. The buffet lunch was well enjoyed, and tea and coffee were laid on thanks to Eddie and Mary who never fail to come up with the goods. Thank you both.

A full report and pictures will appear in the next newsletter.

