

Your Turn

The Newsletter of Hampshire Woodturners Association

Volume 14 Issue 4

July / August 2003

**The King
visits
Hampshire
Woodturners**



WARNING
The Editor has been on holiday.



Cover Story

Nice smile for the camera!
Stuart King demonstrating at Hampshire Woodturners' June meeting.
Full report in the "Review of Events"

I've been chilling out in the Dodecanese.
Plenty of time to let the mind wander, so be warned!

Dave Gibbard, Editor

Hampshire Woodturners Association

The Association meets at the Kings Worthy Primary School on the first Monday of every month (the second if the first is a bank holiday). Kings Worthy is two miles north of Winchester and the school is at the top of Church Lane, which is opposite St. Mary's church.

Meetings start at 7.30 and finish around 10.00. Most meetings feature a talk or demonstration about a turning or related subject by a club member or an invited guest. Several times a year we have "turn-ins" with a number of lathes being operated by members demonstrating various techniques. There is a club shop selling various turning sundries, and a library. The "trading post" enables members to advertise things for sale or wanted.

Every month members are invited to bring work for the gallery and there is usually a critique of selected items. There is also a monthly project for novices and intermediates with the opportunity to discuss the problems encountered and overcome. Refreshments are served at a mid evening break when members can catch up with the latest gossip. A raffle and prize draw round off the evening.

Membership is £17 per year with a joining fee of £5 for new members. Potential new members are welcome to come along and visit us without obligation or charge.

There's a Web Site too. Check it out at www.hants-woodturners-hwa.co.uk

Your Committee

Chairman	Dave Foote. 01794 523314
Secretary	Bob Hope. 0118 9813552
Treasurer	Alan Sturgess 023 80892622
Novice Projects	Ian Woodford 01962 854528
Membership Secretary	David Ackroyd 01489 784985
Turn-ins Organiser/Newsletter Distribution	
	George Gale 02380 265195
Newsletter Editor	Dave Gibbard 02380 262660

And the address for your Newsletter contributions:

Email d-m.gibbard@virgin.net

Your Turn

HAMPSHIRE WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL – A Fishy Story

It takes but a short time for a remote Greek island to work its magic.

The mind is cleared of yesterday's baggage and becomes fertile ground for fresh thoughts. Indeed, have you ever wondered why so many philosophers were Greek?

One such thought as I sit here gazing at the sea is how simple and beautiful are the lines of the traditional Greek fishing boat. Some say that the Greeks developed them that way for efficiency of fishing. But surely the combination of "Greek" and "efficiency" is the ultimate oxymoron.

I cannot bear to conceal the truth any longer.....

It was in those ancient times when the distinction between myth and reality often became blurred.

Nereus, the god of the sea, said to his wife:

"Not tonight, Doris, my little ocean nymph, I have work to do."

"You've been out drinking with that Bacchus again, haven't you? You're never any use to me afterwards."

"It's just as well. We have 50 daughters already, I'm knee deep in the little Nereids and I think I've worked out what's causing it!

Besides, I must visit the boat builder, Makalotaboats. Have you seen his ships? Such clumsy things. He needs a little help."

And so it was that Nereus came to the boat builder in a dream and said:

"I will now reveal to you the shape of boats to come. A shape of such perfection that men shall weep when they behold it"

The next morning Makalotaboats awoke with his head spinning and ran through the streets naked shouting "Eureka". The Poloi paid little heed for this was the way intellectuals behaved, though few had hitherto numbered the boat builder amongst them.

Later in the kafenion, he spoke to the others of the magical shape revealed by the god and verily they wept.

One of them who was from Rome exclaimed "Oh Gee" and stole away to register the design as the Roman Ogee.

Such curves have influenced craftsmen like us woodturners since that magical time. Strive to reproduce them and the gods will smile on your efforts.

You can't buy this stuff folks. It comes free with "Your Turn", courtesy of the editor under the influence of a small Greek island, the sun and a glass of ouzo.

Dave Gibbard - Editor

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REVIEW OF EVENTS

2 June – Stuart King

Following the preliminary announcements, Stuart King took the floor, perhaps a little concerned about what sort of reception he might get. He need not have worried, Hampshire Woodturners are a forgiving lot! He was soon into his stride, describing the traditional, not to say ancient, items that influence his work. He had brought along a number of interesting bowls and vessels collected from all over the world, many of which had been produced without the aid of the modern machinery we take for granted. Just to prove the point he then started work on a piece of green oak using the Club's old Cub lathe. Stuart could never be accused of over sanding his work but just for our benefit he had brought along a piece of indeterminate grit which he had rescued from Gary Rance's floor. The resulting bowl had a nice simple shape and oozed ethnic charm. After tea Stuart entertained us with his critique on the very impressive gallery of members' work. Stuart is the master of the good natured put-down redeemed by the fact that he puts himself down along with everyone else.

Thanks, Stuart for an entertaining evening and thanks too to all you members who made the effort to bring work in.

A good show too, of salt and pepper shakers on the novice table.



Stuart King, bowled over by the members' gallery.

Well seasoned turners Ian and Brian shaken by the entries for the novice project.



7 July – Summer Social, Competition Round 2

The evening got underway with the bring and buy sale. Lots of useful stuff including copious amounts of wood. The remaining items from Dudley's stock were on offer with the proceeds going to charity.

George Gale had worked hard providing the "nibbles" which duly disappeared down the throats of the members. Thanks George.

Les Thorne gathered a crowd for his sharpening clinic and then Brian Hannam presented his selection from the entries in the second round of the competition. He expressed his disappointment once again at the poor entry, 6 in the novice class and 7 in the advanced. Not many from 150 members and fewer than the average members' gallery attracts. However, this time he felt able to award 3 places in both categories to Dave Foote (1), Horace baker (2) and Bill Willetts(3) in the novice category and Brian Mitchell (1), Harry Butler (2) and Dave Gibbard (3) in the advanced. Pictures below.

The committee would really appreciate some feedback on why members are not putting work forward for the competition. John Davis, the competition administrator, writes on the subject on the letters page.



Novice winners from right to left Dave Foote (1), Horace baker (2) and Bill Willetts.



Advanced winners from right to left, Brian Mitchell (1), Harry Butler (2) and Dave Gibbard

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

4 August – Turn-in

Another of our regular turn-ins. The line-up at the time of writing includes John Davis, Jon Harmer, Ian Woodford and possibly Les Thorne. The Novice project will be a pot pourri bowl.

1 September – Tobias Kaye

Toby's distinctive style should make for an entertaining evening. This is another opportunity for members to see a top turner with no entrance fee. The project is a table lamp. Should be illuminating.

LETTERS & EMAILS

Captain Georgos, the sequel

Do you remember an article I wrote last year about the building of the Captain Georgos in the traditional style in the village of PEDI on SYMI? Well, one year on I thought I'd pay another visit to the boatyard to see if they are still in business.

Although commissions like the Georgos are very rare, I am pleased to report that boat building is still surviving there as the picture shows. The Haskas family rely on their beach Taverna for a substantial part of their living, but they still make the occasional boat from new. And, whilst fishermen continue to sail traditional boats on the island there's always the repair business.

Dave Gibbard



Traditional boat building still surviving on Symi – just.

The HWA Competition – faceplate turning

The competition is now well under way, with the second round having taken place at our July meeting. Surprisingly, this round was less well supported than the initial spindle turning round. The previous Months gallery had a much larger display of quality work with no cash prizes at stake, I wonder why? Perhaps our members are just not into competitions, which, in my opinion, are a challenge and if you make a piece especially, it follows that more effort will be put into it and better work is the result.

In the novice section it may appear that with Dave Foote having won both rounds he is home and dry. This is not so, as Horace Baker is running a very close second and either could be the overall winner in the final round, with third place being wide open. The advanced class is even more of a challenge with the possibility of any one of the top four, namely, Dave Gibbard, Ian Woodford, Harry Butler or Brian Mitchell being in with a chance of becoming overall winner.

Whilst you may not be in with a possibility of being an overall winner, this does not mean that you are precluded from entering the final round in November. The more entries, the more competition, so come on folks, take an example from our youngest member, Sandy Cambell, who entered a really nice burr in the last round, for which he deserves full credit. Have a go and give our judge Brian Hannam some real work with a large entry of first class innovative turning.

John R. Davis

The Wood Show

Did any of you visit the Wood Show at the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton? No? Well you missed a great day out and you'll have to wait 2 years for the next one. Yes? Well why didn't you write to the editor with a report for the newsletter? Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed it. The museum itself is worth a visit any time but this show held real interest for us woodies, helped by the superb summer weather, beer tent and hog roast! Lots of traditional crafts in progress including a massive show of pole lathe turners in the field. Some exquisite furniture in the marquee by Brendan Devitt-Spooner (beyond my pocket I fear), carvers, chair makers and, for me the highlight, some very impressive turned work by Richard Chapman from Hunstanton. His work is very artistic with a lot of large wet turned vessels with minds of their own. And some very unusual wood. He has an annual show at a London gallery which produces a superb brochure and charges challenging prices yet succeeds in selling out. I chatted to Richard and his wife for quite a while. Nice couple. I must look them up when I am next in East Anglia. If you missed the show, make a note not to miss it again in 2 years time.

Dave Gibbard



A selection of Richard Chapman's work at Singleton

MONTHLY PROJECTS

August – Pot Pouri Bowl.

A straightforward task that involves making a small bowl with a lid, and the lid can be a bought accessory, or (for the more adventurous) you could try making your own. The purpose of a pot-pourri bowl is to contain a sweetly scented dried material (could be flower petals) that allows the fragrance to permeate throughout an intended area like a room, drawer or cupboard. To do this the lid has to be pierced to allow the fragrance to escape. Lids for this can be purchased as they are fiddly and time consuming to make but for those of us who have this time – have a go.

The bowl is made in the conventional way with the grain running across the diameter. As ladies normally use these bowls, choose a blank with attractive grain. It need not be more than 100mm to 125mm in diameter by 60mm to 70mm in depth. The size of the purchased lid more often than not will determine the bowl diameter. Keep the shape simple and curvaceous and this will enhance an attractive grain even more. Beware of making the lid a tight fit because if the bowl moves even a small amount, the lid will jam. However, a very sloppy fit shows poor tool control.

For those making the lids, drill holes of various sizes in set patterns to make it look attractive. You could drill the holes before taking the final cuts because if there is any breakout from the process, the final cuts will overcome the problem. It would also look attractive if the lid is made from a contrasting wood.

A successfully made pot-pourri bowl will make a very acceptable gift.

September – Table Lamp

The purpose of this task is to incorporate faceplate and spindle turning with both parts fitting together by means of a turned tenon joint. I appreciate that not all of us have a long hole boring kit, so for those that haven't, why not substitute with a candlestick that still involves a base and stem. Turn the stem after the base, as it's much easier to make the tenon fit the hole than the other way round. There are two ways by which the electric flex can pass through the base and into the central hole of the spindle. Firstly a hole can be drilled from the edge of the base into the centre or the base can be fitted with feet so that the flex can pass under the base and directly into the centrally bored spindle. I leave this entirely up to you.

When starting work on the spindle make sure that the hole is bored first and then either end of the hole acts as the centre for the rest of the turning work. If you leave the boring until the turning is finished you run a very great risk of the hole running off line with resultant dire consequences. Only a fraction off line at the top, where the brass fitting goes, will be aesthetically (and maybe practically) unacceptable. If you are turning a candlestick, then bore out the hole for the brass cup first for the very same reason.

It would be interesting to leave the two parts unglued so that we can see how well the joint has been made. A good tip for a sloppy fitting tenon is to raise a small burr with a skew, against the direction of fit. This should make it nice and tight. The overall design is your choice but obviously make it stable, in proportion and aesthetically pleasing.

Ian Woodford



Thanks Ian. If any of you fancy being really adventurous, you could try a pomander with a difference. Here's one I struggled with a few years ago.

Editor.



TRAVELLERS' TALES John Webb in Ripon

John Webb (one of our members and also chairman of the Forest of Bere Woodturners) visited the Ripon Symposium earlier this year and returned with a feeling of slight disappointment that in his opinion the standard had slipped a bit. But he also returned with an article by Dale Larson about processing Pacific Madrone. This article was published in the Forest of Bere's excellent Magazine and is reproduced here with the kind permission of both the author and our neighbouring club. Apologies to the small number of our members who are also members of Forest of Bere, but for the rest, here it is:

WORKING AND TURNING PACIFIC MADRONE By Dale Larson

Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus Menziesii*) is an evergreen broad leaf tree that grows along the Pacific coast from California to British Columbia. Its primary use has been firewood. This beautiful reddish coloured wood has traditionally not been used in woodworking because the wood warps and cracks as it dries.

In 1995 a friend called up and said a neighbour had taken down a Madrone tree, and would I like some of the wood. Knowing the wood was unstable I hesitated, but then decided to accept his offer.

I had read about a man down in Oregon who had cooked Madrone logs in big veneer boiling vats to stabilise the wood. With the aid of my Mother's old pressure cooker I boiled some rough turned bowl blanks for about two hours, then left them to cool in the water until it was possible to put your hand in the water to remove the blanks, then dried them like any other wood. If you remove the blanks too quickly the blanks will crack.

After a few months, when dry, the blanks were finish turned to expose the lovely figure and colour, from pale tan to deep red. The wood is moderately hard, but not brittle, does not dull the tools, which give a fine finish. With a shear scrape finish it hardly needs sanding, and is not very dusty.

In 1998 my brother welded me a stainless steel tank (An iron tank would react with tannic acid in the wood, and discolour). Several blanks are placed in the tank and covered with water, then a scrap-wood fire is lit underneath, to boil for 2 to 3 hours, and left to cool and dry as previously described. The water that comes out of the tank is deep red and will stain anything it touches.

Extra care is taken during the drying process. The end grain is not sealed, to prevent spalting (a dull brown colour). The blanks are stick dried to allow air to circulate.

Because the time of the year varies, this is how I go about the drying. If the bowl starts to mould, the drying is too slow. The blanks are placed in a heated and dehumidified room (approx.70 degrees F) for a few hours, and repeated several times over a few days until the wood is surface dry, it should not spalt after this.

If a bowl starts to crack, the wood is drying too fast, so thin CA glue is applied to the crack, and the blank is placed in a plastic bag, with some dry shavings, for a few days, this may be repeated several times until satisfied the blanks have stabilised.

It takes about 6 weeks for the rough bowls to become stable, they are not dry, but will not crack after this. The blanks are placed on a shelf and forgotten for about 6 – 8 months, where they will dry down to about

12 – 18% in the unheated shop. They are then moved to the drying room, 70 degrees F and dehumidified all year round, to dry down to 6 – 8%.

You have to be willing to spend a little extra time watching and handling Madrone; once cooked it behaves like other woods. The cooking must take the stress out of the wood; it may crush the cells or affect the lignin. The bowls turned from dried Madrone are beautiful, and have remained stable over time.

It has been fun to learn how to work with this fine Pacific coast hardwood.

John Webb.



Dale Larson demonstrating at Ripon

BEHIND THE SCENES

The holiday season has started and several committee members have been away. Bob has done such a good job with the programme that it seems to be progressing with little interference.

I must apologise for the error in the date of the June meeting as shown in "coming events" last issue. It was shown as the 3rd not the 2nd. I had simply copied the same mistake that had appeared in the programme card without checking. Sorry if anyone missed the meeting and turned up on Tuesday. Remember, 1) we always meet on the first free Monday and 2) we can all make mistakes.

I am pleased to report that the raffle is saved, thanks to John Collister joining Brian Barker. Thank you both.

Another reminder. If you can download "Your Turn" from our website, please send the webmaster, Chris West, an Email. On a show of hands before we set up the website it looked as though over half of members would take their newsletters in this way but far fewer have registered with Chris up to now. Not only would it be helping the Club's funds through reduced copying and postage costs, but you get to see this fabulous work of art in colour! And George is running out of spit through licking all those envelopes.

Email Chris at

Webmaster@hants-woodturners-hwa.co.uk

Final Reminder

There are still quite a few members who have not yet renewed their subs. We have this problem every year. It would be really helpful either to renew promptly or to tell us if you are not intending to (and why not would be interesting!). If Alan Sturgess doesn't receive your subs, it will be assumed you do not intend to renew and this will be your last newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

There were no new members reported at the time of going to press. If there are any we have not yet "processed", we'll catch up next time.

TRADING POST

FOR SALE

ELU 3401 bandsaw. 12" throat, 6" depth. Fence, cool blocks, 6 blades. £85.
Dave Hyne 023 8073 3336

WANTED

A Good Woman to run a woodturning business.

Must have own workshop and lathe. Should have access to free wood and have experience in all aspects of woodturning. An ability to organise shows and make a healthy profit is essential.

(Please send photo – of lathe and workshop!)

Two of us know who placed this ad. What's it worth not to tell the wife? If anyone wants to apply you'd better write to trading post.

SIGNING OFF.....

So there we were on the bijou island of Symi when a rumour went round that the most famous man in the world was about to visit. Surely this could not be, David Beckham was in Japan. But no, they meant George W. Bush!

Well, some catastrophic events have happened whilst we have been on holiday in the past, the 11 September atrocity and the stock market crash for example, so I didn't dismiss the possibility of an invasion.

Then this sinister looking ship appeared with high speed boats and helicopters buzzing round it and searchlights playing on the water. Then, without a shot being fired the president set foot on the tiny island protected by a phalanx of huge people with no necks and ominous bulges. And you should have seen the male guards!

To my horror, they headed for our favourite taverna and a "closed" sign appeared at the door. I later berated Lefteris for turning away his regular customers. He said it didn't seem wise to refuse. I guess Mr. Blair knows the feeling.

Anyway, I sat and watched the yacht prowling around, not daring to stop and George W. waving to the common herd above the heads of the surrounding guards as he left the taverna.

The thought occurred to me that the simple pleasures of life can never be tasted by the most powerful man in the world.

Perhaps there is a god after all and he's probably Greek.

Dave Gibbard, Editor