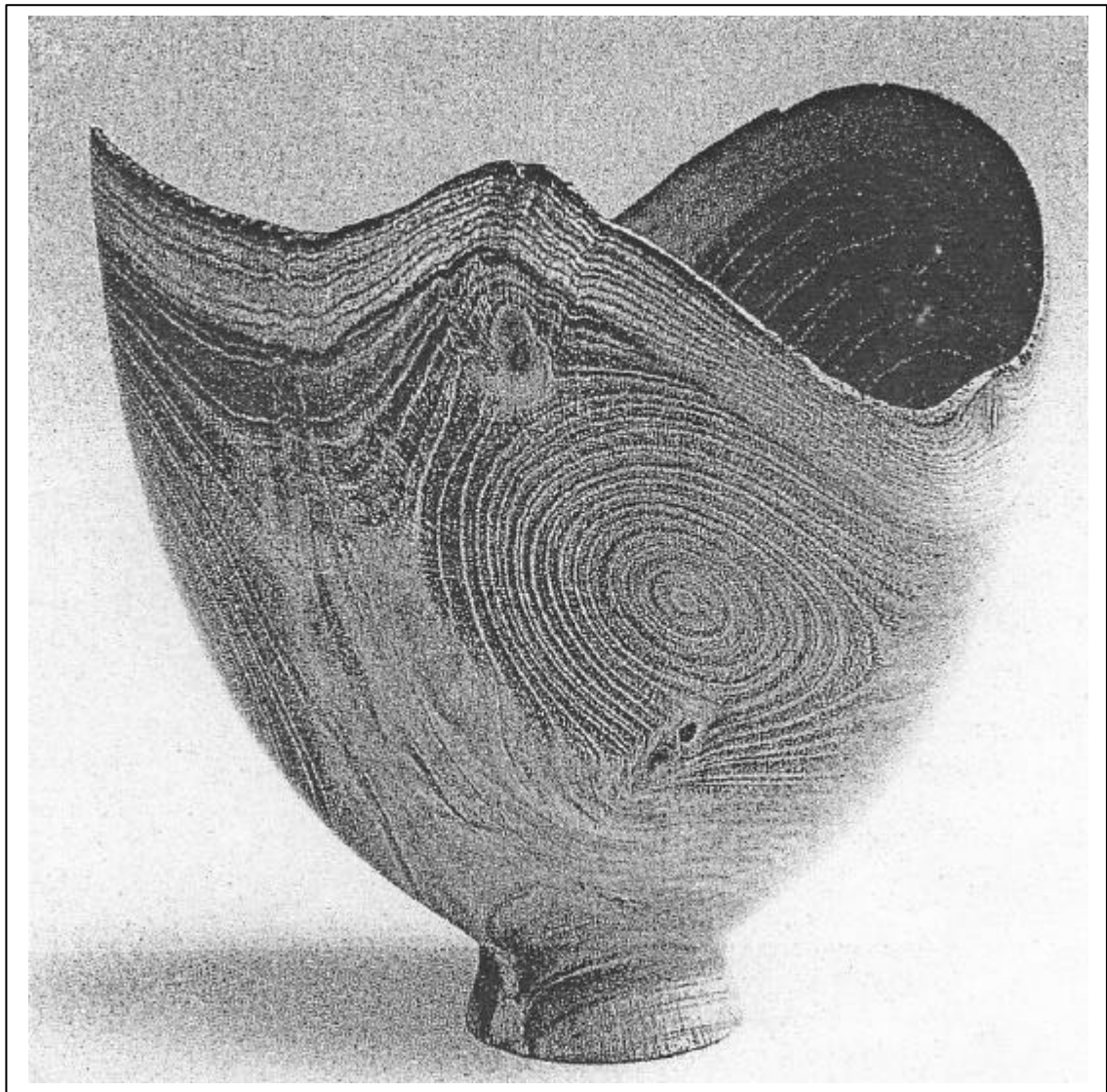


Your Turn

The Newsletter of Hampshire Woodturners Association

Volume 12 Issue 5. September 2001



**Woodturning - is it art?
Questionnaire Results
New Membership List**

Cover Story

The cover picture this time is of one of Bob Chapman's pieces. There is a dual purpose in showing this.

Firstly to "trail" Bob's appearance at the 27 October workshop. Bob came to the club a few years ago and gave a most enjoyable presentation. He returns to us now, his reputation having grown and with the ink hardly dry on his new book. See one of the committee to get your name down for a super day's entertainment at a bargain price.

The second purpose is as a visual introduction to a thought provoking (I hope) article about the artistic status of woodturning which appears in this issue.

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 £15 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.

Your Committee

Chairman.....Dave Foote. 01794 523314
Secretary.....Ian Hutchinson 023 80267960*
Treasurer/ Membership Secretary.... Alan Sturgess 023 80892622
Novice/ Intermediate Projects..... Ian Woodford 01962 854582
New Members/Trading post..... Steve Page 023 80252650
Turn-ins Organiser/Newsletter Distribution
George Gale 023 80265195
Newsletter Editor..... Dave Gibbard 023 80262660

And the address for your Newsletter contributions:

7 Balmoral Close, Chandlers Ford, SO53 1TG
Email dgibbard@ thermomeasurement.com

*Note Secretary's new number

Your Turn

HAMPSHIRE WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Volume 12, Issue 5

September/October 2001

EDITORIAL - "All right now"

When I took on the job of newsletter editor recently, I was more concerned about the content than the mechanism of producing it. After all, I use a computer at work and have one at home. It's just a tool, and we all use tools, don't we?

But computers have been given minds of their own. I sometimes look at the text on the screen and think "I didn't write that". Microsoft decrees that things will be done in certain ways and "Word" makes changes even as you write.

Have you seen that little animated paper clip that pops up with a "ping" and says "It looks like you are trying to write a letter, need any help?" Clicking to get rid of it seems a totally inadequate response to such corporate insolence. For heaven's sake, I was writing letters before Bill Gates of Microsoft was a twinkle in his daddy's eye; that's assuming he had a daddy.

I don't expect much from a tool - just blind obedience will do. How would it be if your latest antipodean deep hollowing tool were to pull up whilst you were in full flow and say "It looks like you are trying to make a hollow form vessel, need any help?" Well, maybe that could be handy, but it's not for me.

Then it got even more sinister. My computer would periodically dig its heels in and refuse to do anything. Rather like a petulant child that throws a tantrum in Sainsbury's. Have you noticed how everybody stops and looks? It wouldn't surprise me if one day one of them went "Ping. It looks like you are trying to rear a child. Need any help?"

Anyway, the computer complained about parity errors or something. This got extremely tedious as I usually lost the job I was working on. It had to go. But Bill Gates had won. I couldn't survive without the infernal machine and I was forced to contemplate an expensive replacement.

At this point I was rescued by my son, Mark. Now that's a refreshing reversal!

Mark is a techno-freak. He has to have the latest gismos. He's got CDs, DVDs, Dolby surround sound etc, and that's just on his state-of-the-art mountain bike!

Well, he had decided his computer was lacking in the on-line gigahertz megabyte capability department and besides the colour had gone out of fashion, and he had bought a new one. So I relieved him of last year's model.

"Suits you dad", he said.

Well this computer is really good. Sure, it still thinks it can write better than I can, but it doesn't stop like the old one. And it can play music whilst I work. Plug a CD into the slot and away it goes. All at the same time.

Now I read somewhere that listening to Mozart improves the creative activity of the brain. So here goes. Sock it to me Wolfgang.

Hey, I'm not sure this is working.

"Ping! Looks like you are trying to write a newsletter. Need any help?"

Oh no, not you too! Let's try something else.

"All right now, baby it's all right now..."

In this issue:-

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- Roy Child at the August meeting
- Colwin Way at the September meeting

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- October and November meetings
- Robert Chapman Workshop

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LETTERS

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- A hollow form (October)
- A toy (November)

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REVIEW OF EVENTS

6 August meeting

After a slight hitch when we had to convince the new caretaker that we carry on through the school holidays, we were pleased to welcome Roy Child as our guest demonstrator. Roy showed us how to make a box from green wood, allowing it to shrink onto a dry disc to form the base. He also demonstrated a hot glue chuck which provoked a discussion about the relative merits of hot glue compared with double sided sticky tape. Roy had not expected the 90 plus attendance and ran out of Peter Child mail order catalogues. He will send more through for those who missed out, (*They did not arrive in time for the September meeting, I will bring them along in October. - Ed*).

After the interval we prevailed on our visitor from Surrey Woodturners, Paul Nesbitt, to give a critique on the impressive gallery of our members' work. Well done Paul, I suspect you've done this before. Paul also brought along the clever Longworth chuck for reversing bowls to remove the chucking recesses. See the article from Alan Sturgess later in this issue if you are interested in making one for yourself.

The member's draw produced yet another roll over, the prize now standing at £80. Better keep coming and don't forget to wear a name badge!

About 2/3 of those attending handed in their questionnaires. The results are reported later in this issue.

All in all a good evening. Take a look at "behind the scenes" for the post mortem from Roy!

3 September meeting

Well, you said you like to see visiting demonstrators and Colwin Way's visit made it two in a row. Colwin is Axminster's in-house turner but on this occasion he was here in his own right.

Another good turn-out of almost 90 members came to see Colwin give a very relaxed, polished demonstration of how to make small items like fruit and vases and in particular how to finish them off using home made wooden chucks to grip them. The demonstration was liberally sprinkled with hints and tips about marking up, not using too many types of tool, sanding tips (don't be embarrassed to start course or to hand sand difficult patches) and finishing.

In fact it was such a busy evening there was no time for the gallery critique. This was a great shame since there were some nice things on display but members did get the chance to look at them. Perhaps those who brought things would like to bring them along next time.

It was encouraging to see a lot of eggs on display on the novice/intermediate table too.

The member's draw produced yet another roll over - £100 next time!

Footnote

Two gallery items were left behind after the August meeting. They remained unclaimed after the September evening. If anyone would like to claim their bowls, George Gale has them.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Evening Meeting on Monday 1 October

Another of those ever popular turn-ins.

The provisional line-up features.....

Brian Mitchell, John Davis, Alan Stroud, Les Thorne and Dave Hyne, one of our less experienced members "under instruction". Thanks to Dave who responded to the Chairman's invitation in the last newsletter. Hopefully some others will step up and demonstrate things they are having trouble with. The novice/intermediate project is a hollow form.

Workshop, Saturday 27 October –

Robert Chapman

It's getting closer but there's still plenty of time to get your name down for Bob's Saturday demonstration. Let Ian Hutchinson know if you are interested in this great value day out at Badger Farm community centre, next to Sainsbury's Super store, Winchester. £15 including lunch.

Evening Meeting on 5 November

Two speakers tonight.

Our own Lionel Joliffe will be giving a talk with demonstrations about metals in general and steels in particular. Hardening, softening, tempering and the pitfalls of doing all these things by mistake when sharpening.

We also have a guest, Celia Lewis, a wood sculptor whose work caught Ian Woodford's eye. Never backward in these matters, Ian persuaded Celia to come and show her work to us and talk about it. The novice/intermediate project is a toy.

Come on guys and help the 5 November evening go with a bang.

WOODTURNING - IS IT ART?

I have lost count of the times someone has picked up an object I have made and asked to what they could do with it. Sensing that this is probably not a person who is likely to buy my work, I am afraid there have been occasions when my suggested use has given offence. I now usually content myself with just saying "I think you will find most of my stuff is completely useless" whilst turning my attention to a more promising punter.

Is it just woodturning that suffers from the notion that everything must have a use? Did Van Gogh have this problem? Do you think someone said to him "Vince, I like your sunflowers. Do you think I could use them to cover that nasty mark on my wall"? Perhaps that's what made him flip and cut off his ear. And did Michelangelo's David lose his arm through someone using him in their garden to support a sun shade? I think not.

What's wrong with just stimulating the senses?

That's what artists seek to do, but then ... is woodturning art?

My perception is that most people think not. Woodturning, according to the common view, is to do with useful things like light pulls, pepper mills, barometers, salad bowls etc and, since these items are also made automatically in large numbers and cheaply, the concept of a highly priced non functional item turned from wood is rather alien. Many woodturners themselves betray this attitude by derogatory references to decorative pieces as "arty-farty."

I recently visited the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. I can recommend it for the building alone, (Richard Rogers I think) but I actually went to see an exhibition of "Modern Pots". I expected to see ceramics and, indeed for the most part that's what was on show. I've always liked ceramics and have derived inspiration from some of the imaginative shapes that often translate well into woodturning. (Incidentally, do ceramic artists struggle with their image in the same way that woodturners do?).

Anyway, there was some turned wood too, and jolly good it was. This was, to my mind, unquestionably art.

I was moved to write to two of the turners, sorry, artists, Steve Howlett and Anthony Bryant inviting them to come to HWA and inspire us. They both took the trouble to reply, unfortunately declining the invitation due to being unaccustomed to public presentations and too busy.

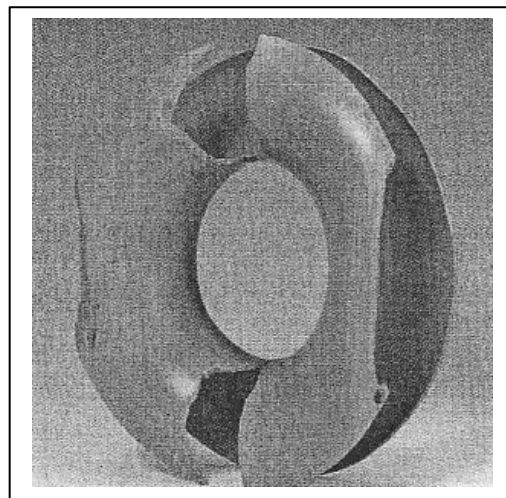
However, I suspect that Steve revealed another reason in his opening paragraph where he wrote of his appreciation of my interest and went on "In my experience it's something of a rarity to encounter a woodturner who is interested in aesthetics as well as techniques".

Ouch!

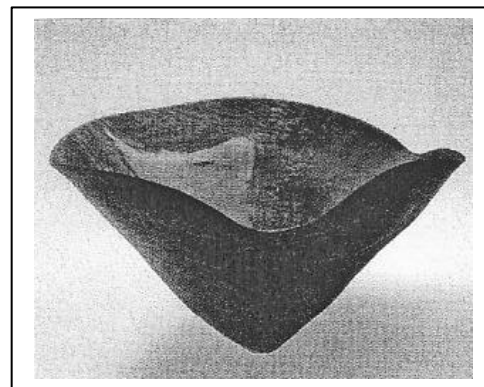
But I get the message. He probably didn't fancy being called arty-farty.

So there you have it. If you think I'm being deliberately provocative you're dead right. I'm sure readers would like to hear your views on the subject "Woodturning - is it art ?"

Dave Gibbard



'Doughnut' Form by Steve Howlett



Conical Bowl by Anthony Bryant

LETTERS

As a rule I would ignore anonymous letters but I have included this from "A Member" since I wonder if others might feel the same – Ed

Having received, read and digested the latest issue of "Your Turn" and after much "soul searching" I offer my comments on how I see the Club from the perspective of a relatively new member. The Club appears to be well organised and manages its affairs in a right and proper manner. Club nights are conducted well, and the video and sound systems are very well received. There is not a great emphasis on competitiveness, leaving it up to the individual to decide to participate. Consultation with the membership is excellent, and the shop and monthly draw are well run.

However, without wishing to give offence to an obviously very hard working and dedicated committee, I do believe that the officers of the club should re-examine the way new members are welcomed (or otherwise).

Had I not been invited to join by a good friend who is an existing member I would have long since abandoned the organisation. The only contact I have had with the officers of the committee was with the gentleman who took the membership fee. Apart from having my name announced as a new member, that has been it. No words of welcome by the (outgoing) Chairman, No-one enquiring as to the level of interest in turning or what equipment I have or have not got. The Club's sole interest seemed to be in relieving me of £15.

Some months on I am beginning to feel a little more part of the organisation as I get to speak with individual members, but it has not been easy. Perhaps therefore, before pushing members to participate, the committee should look inwardly. Perhaps a mentoring system could be introduced involving committee members, at least until new members feel settled. Just a thought, bearing in mind you reap what you sow.

A response on behalf of the Committee from the Chairman:

Firstly I am delighted to have feedback and comment on how the club operates and serves its members. It is by expressing and debating issues and opinions that we can take the club forward.

I would like to outline the process by which we currently welcome new members into the HWA:

- Steve Page is the committee member with responsibility for welcoming new members and answering their questions when they first come to the club. Steve does his best to talk to all new people on their first visit.
- Each new member is sent a pack of club information on joining as well as going onto the distribution list for the bi-monthly Newsletter.
- We encourage new members (indeed all members) to participate in the monthly projects which are a great opportunity to get some constructive review of specific pieces of turning.

- At club meetings all members of the committee wear yellow name badges so that they can be easily identified and approached.

I will be the last to say that what we do is perfect, and welcome all suggestions for improvement. The idea of "mentoring" is an interesting one that I would like to understand better. Perhaps Mr (or Mrs?) A Member would be prepared to speak to me and we can discuss how mentoring could make the HWA even better than it is now? I am happy to maintain confidentiality.

Dave Foote,

This next letter comes from Alan Butler

Just thought I would write and say how I enjoyed the Turn-in on June 4th it was much better being able to sit and watch the demonstrations in comfort. Those members who wished to stand and watch were able to stand at the back and not have their view blocked by members crowding round the lathe.

Secondly I would like to thank all the members who did not support the Gary Rance workshop as it made it very easy for the few members who support the club and committee at these workshops to watch a master turner at work and to gain some very good tips and advice. But I am very disappointed that out of over around 150 members only 15 took advantage of a great demonstration. Remember if you don't use it you lose it.

And from Ian Woodford: Penny Farthing Tools

Many years ago a fellow member gave Penny Farthing Tools a write up in the Newsletter and since then I always browse through the shop if I'm in the Salisbury area.

It certainly is an Alladin's cave of second hand tools of all sorts and inevitably I come away with something. Recently I've needed some odd leg callipers *, so I left Di in the main shops and headed for "my" shop.

Penny Farthing Tools is in the centre of Salisbury at 26 Penny Farthing street & the entrance is a small courtyard which houses the larger machinery like lathes etc. Inside there are 3 or 4 more rooms stacked with workshop tools and machinery of all descriptions. If you want some obscure tool you can bet it's there or they will get it for you.

On this visit they had various metal working lathes & 3 or 4 woodturning lathes with chucks and turning tools. I was faced with a choice of callipers including some odd leg ones in excellent condition as everything is cleaned before going on display. I also bought a pair of vernier callipers. All together 3 cost me £12.50.

Next time you're in Salisbury pop in and browse. You will be offered what is sadly lacking these days - no pressure, good knowledgeable service and a friendly chat.

**Thanks Ian. I hadn't noticed your odd legs before.*

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

We had one of our consultation exercises at the August meeting in the form of a questionnaire. Past experience told us that what we don't get returned on the night we don't get at all, so the results are based on those members who were present. If anyone wasn't there and would like his or her opinions recorded, ask for a form. Anyway, we picked a good night since 98 members were present. Here is a summary prepared by **Alan Sturgess**. The results are based on 54 returns (37% of total membership):

Occupation: 52% retired. Of the rest hardly any two were the same.

Average membership 6 years.

Subscription value? 92% said good.

Workshops on Saturday/Sunday - 50% had been to one or more this year. Those that had not gave other commitments of one sort or another as the reason.

Members are interested in the following types of turning:

- **Faceplate - 70%**
- **Spindle - 61%**
- **Pens - 22%**
- **Fruit - 26%**
- **Decorative - 46%**
- **Hollow forms - 35%**
- **Green turning - 43%**
- **Furniture - 22%**
- **Functional items - 54%**
- **Miniature work - 20%**

A couple of members added "boxes" to the list.

The Best Event vote almost always went to a visiting turner. Top of the list by a factor of two was **Ray Jones** with votes from 25% of those who expressed an opinion. Next came Phil Reardon and Jimmy Clewes. The reasons given for the choice were usually that they were instructive with good presentation and communication.

Advice on problems - a pleasing 94% said they got plenty of opportunity to get advice at the club.

Turn-ins are considered valuable and interesting by 98% of you and 37% expressed a willingness to participate. Those who did not want to participate gave the following reasons:

- **Shyness - 15%**
- **Never done it before - 32%**
- **Not good enough - 47%**
- **Afraid of making mistakes - 50%**
- **No good at talking - 21%**

One member added the reason that there was too much effort involved.

59% are prepared to help in some way.

However, this included a number who already do a job of some sort.

The club shop is used by 88% of you and there were very few suggestions for additional items. 600 grit sandpaper was the only thing with more than one vote.

Start and finish times After all the discussion, it seems 79% of you like the existing start time and 85% the existing finish time. The few who suggested alternatives wanted an earlier start time.

Your Turn. 94% like it, particularly in the new format and 6% do not. Various suggestions were made:

- Inclusion of hints and tips
- Inclusion of report of novice/intermediate project entries.
- More articles on "how to"
- More for beginners please
- Offer £1 per article or letter (*I'd be quids in - Ed*)

(Any contributions of tips or practical articles etc would be welcomed by me too. How about something for Christmas in the next issue - contributions to me well before the end of October please - Ed.)

Other Comments:

- At demos, put the lathe on a platform. (*We've thought about it but are concerned about safety - Ed*)
- Members talking at the same time as the presenter. Several comments about this, one aimed at committee members.
- Raise the TV screen.
- Will Hillary do the gallery critique every time?
- More interplay with other clubs.
- Tell members what is involved in committee work - might get more volunteers.
- What happened to priority seating for helpers?
- Occasional evenings about non turning topics.

Plenty to think about there. Thanks for all who responded. If anyone has any follow-up comments you can always send them to the newsletter editor. And if anyone feels like responding to the suggestions of other articles, hints, tips etc for the newsletter, I would be very pleased to receive them.

Finally, thanks to Chris West who expressed an interest in the creation of a Web Site. I am sure Alan Sturgess would be interested in hearing from you if you have not already been in contact Chris.

NOVICE/INTERMEDIATE PROJECTS

1 October - A Hollow Form

(Ian asked me to write about this subject - Ed.)

Bert Marsh thinks hollow forms are a waste of time.

True they do take quite a long time compared with a bowl or an open vase, say, and you can't see much of the inside for all that work, but on this occasion I humbly take a contrary view to my hero.

I do not say this because it is clever to get all that wood out of that little hole. It is more a question of the feel of the piece. The outside shape should be elegant giving the impression of delicacy which is confirmed by the light weight when you pick it up. A solid lump can have the same shape as a hollow form but it won't feel right.

Anyway, that's what I think. If you disagree, I have to say you are in very esteemed company.

Enough of philosophy. There are many hollowing tools on the market, some at outrageous prices. If you have one, show us what you can do with it, but if you don't you can still make a hollow form with a scraper provided you grind it suitably, you are not too ambitious with the hole size and you don't make the form too tall.

If you grind a 3/4" round nosed scraper to have an indented shape on the left edge, you will be able to undercut a rim and still use it as a scraper. You should be able to make a hollow form about 3" high and 3" diameter with a hole of about 1 1/4".

For a 3" vessel, I would use a green branch about 4" long, turn a spigot on one end and grip very tightly in a chuck.

Turn the outside shape but if you are going for a small foot, leave it thicker until you have done the hollowing. This will add support to reduce chatter and vibration.

Now drill a hole to the intended depth. A 1" or 1 1/4" Forstner or sawtooth bit will do this best.

I like to open out the inside as much as possible with a gouge. A 1/2" bowl gouge with the wings ground well back is a good tool for this, being rigid with a good flute to scoop up the shavings. You will have to keep pausing to rake out the shavings. I use a piece of wire coat hanger.

When there is enough working space, you can start with the scraper from the top, leaving plenty of thickness nearer the bottom for support. Work your way down, checking the wall thickness with your fingers near the rim and a double ended feeler further in. I must confess to having gone through the side on a number of occasions, so keep checking and raking. When you have got it as thin as you want to go, revert to the outside and take the foot in to the desired diameter.

At the foot, partially part off and check the inside depth. If the wood is wet and you have left it too thick at the bottom it will probably split on drying. Aim at not much more than 1/4". You can do a bit of sanding but the paper will clog if the wood is wet, so take it off the lathe and let it dry before returning to finish and complete the parting off. A microwave used in small bursts of a minute at a time can speed the drying process.



Diagram showing section through hollow form and cut-away scraper

5 November – A Toy

From the Projects organiser, Ian Woodford:

The last of this year's projects is a toy. I leave this wide open for your choice of toy, game or puzzle. Set your thoughts on things like spinning tops (with or without whips) diablos, Chinese chequers, automatum, baby rattles etc. I look forward to enjoying seeing your creations as much as you enjoy turning them.

There's no project at the December meeting. I will publish a list of 2002 projects in the next newsletter, but will give you a sneak preview of January's which will be a bud vase.

THE LONGWORTH CHUCK

Alan Sturgess writes: "If you were at the August meeting like me you may have been amazed at the simplicity and ingenuity of the Longworth self centring bowl finishing chuck made by our guest Paul Nesbit, chairman of Surrey Association of Woodturners. He was visiting HWA as part of the ongoing sharing of ideas and information with other Southern clubs.

Paul found the details of the chuck on the internet at www.services.skagit.com/woodturning/longworth.htm Paul says the only difficult part is routing the slots which needs a swinging arm attachment.

Doug Longworth the Australian inventor was a member of the Hunter Valley Woodturners in New South Wales. His chuck featured in their news letter in 1988 and was to be in two parts.

Sadly Doug died before publication of the second part. Fellow Australian Larry Pope took up the challenge and made a 3 jaw version then others developed the 4 jaw version Paul showed us. To his credit, Larry made sure the praise went to Doug by naming it after him. For those who keep back copies of Woodturning magazine, it was featured in No. 3 Spring 1991.

The full article and construction details run to 9 pages which would double the cost of the newsletter were we to publish it. So if you would like a copy and don't have internet access, send a stamped addressed A4 envelope to me, Alan Sturgess, 53 Crawte Avenue, Holbury, Southampton SO45 2QG before 17 September."

BEHIND THE SCENES

After the August meeting I was sitting with Roy Child making inroads into my birthday malt. Our wives (who used to work together in Cambridgeshire years ago) had been out together and Roy was recounting to them how the evening had gone. Relieved of the pre-performance nerves and lubricated by the Scotch, much merriment was being generated by the account.

Roy told how he had started his presentation at the club and was about to start work on the lathe when he noticed the audience sinking lower into their chairs. Thinking he had hardly been going long enough to be sending them to sleep, he turned round and the reason became evident. The mirror which was intended to show an alternative view of the lathe was slowly collapsing and the audience were involuntarily following it down. The mirror was resisting the efforts of several members to tighten it. The show must go on, however, so Roy started turning regardless. The mirror was eventually abandoned and carted off to leave Roy alone centre stage. Soon afterwards the scene shifting started again when Steve Page turned up to install the video.

I apologised for the lack of preparation but he said not to worry, all the clubs he visited were like this. He was reminded of the Morecambe and Wise show where Shirley Bassey was trying to sing whilst Eric & Ernie were moving the scenery. In the process they broke her shoe and were trying to put her foot into a large boot. She too had taken it in good part.

I think I'll write to her, I hear she does a good turn.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome another new member to the HWA: **Jeff Hurst of** 45 Southmill Road, Regents Park, Southampton SO15 4JW. 023 80348648.

TRADING POST

Bill Thorne tells us that **WJT Crafts** now have a web site. For those with the facilities, you might like to visit it on www.wjtcrafts.co.uk. You could even write to me and tell me what you think of it. Sorry, I don't like to pass up the chance.

Phil Kennedy has reported a source of **air dried timber** at reasonable prices. It comes from the Mottisfont Estate who often have oak, ash, cherry, beech, walnut etc in quantities that are not really of commercial interest. Anyone wishing to pursue this should contact John Surplice the head forester (?) after 8 p.m. on 01794 340512.

And from me, Dave Gibbard, having acquired a "new" grinder, I have 2 items for sale:

"Hilka" 6" bench grinder with a pink and a grey wheel, £20

Record Scan 150 wet grinder. The wheel is cracked. This is not a safety hazard in a slow wet grinder but it would be better with a new one. In view of the cracked wheel, I'll settle for £15.

Contact me on 023 80262660 after 24 September as I'll be on holiday.

The Southampton Woodworking and Power Tool Show will again be presented by Winchcombe Power Tools at the Holiday Inn, (was the Post House) West Quay Road, Southampton Friday 19 to Sunday 21 October. 10am to 6pm, 10 to 4 Sunday.

SIGNING OFF.....

That's all for another 2 months (do I hear groans?) except for the latest list of members which follows.

The next issue (November) is the last before Christmas, so how about some seasonal contributions?