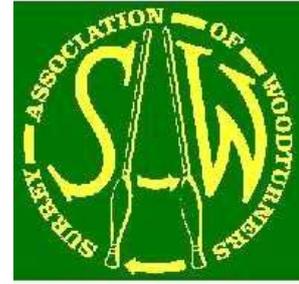


# Surrey Association of Woodturners

## Newsletter July 2012

Reports, News and Views from North West Surrey



### New Members

Ian Wakeford

### Paid up Membership 157

### Items for the Diary

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Aug. Practical Evening

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. Mark Hancock

Sat/Sun 22/23<sup>rd</sup> Sept Rural Life Centre

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October Princes Mead

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October Club Turner

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October. SAW Open Day

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November Tony Walton

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December Xmas Special

### June Evening



This was a Club Turner evening with our demonstrator being our Chairman David. He was not used to the Club lathe but had been to John Sherwood's to practice on his. He intended to show us a Natural edge bowl in Laurel using his American gouges. And after tea he would demonstrate bowl saving. The Laurel had come from the neighbour's garden. The tools were Easywood Tools, a roughing gouge, a smoothing gouge and a detail gouge. These David finds best for removing lots of wood from wet timber. Using a moisture meter he established

that the moisture content was 11%. He was using a 4 pronged drive centre that he had bought from Warco for £25. When setting up the blank he tries to arrange it so the two high points of the rim are at equal height and the same with the low points as far as possible.

When using these gouges they must be held level. A small spirit level on the shank would help. The shavings come back in your face so there is a small Perspex guard to fit on the shank.

David started to shape the bottom by cutting in from the edge but it was very hard work and he had forgotten to bring the Allen key so that he could rotate the square cutter to a new edge.

He increased the speed of the lathe and cut in from the edge but progress was still slow.



During the tea break Robert and Allen Hazel had a go but both agreed that the turning speed was too slow so this project was abandoned.

After tea David showed us bowl saving. The bowl to be cored had the outside shaped and was mounted on the largest chuck available. His Wood Cut bowl saving tool will cut bowls varying in size between 16" and 6". Cutting wet wood the bowls need to be 1" thick to allow for movement when drying. The width of the blade is 1/4". The outside of the bowl is marked to indicate the depth of the cut. There are two cutting blades, a small and a large. He fitted the smaller and after

carefully checking the position of the tool, proceeded to cut out the small bowl by moving the handle through 90' degrees. There are no shavings only lumps of damp sawdust.



David then repeated the process with the large knife fitted and cut out the middle size bowl. He would then cover the pieces in wax and allow them to dry slowly. If they were require soon he boils them for an hour and then allows them to cool and dry.

A smoothing gouge was used on the inside of the largest bowl. An interesting evening. There is a nasty streak in most of us when we enjoy seeing the demonstrator struggle.

### **NOTE from David**

Thank you all for your support when things were not going right for me in the demo. It certainly was the wrong piece of wood for the job. The next day I remounted the blank on my own lathe, turned up the speed and got the job done. However it was defiantly a lot tougher than the piece of laurel – from the same tree – that I had tried earlier in the week. To show the process I made a short video of completing the outside of the blank and placed it on the clubs face book page.

So, on reflection, there was some learning for me, one was to listen to the audience; there was a suggestion about trying one of the other carbide cutters, which I was not in a place to hear at the time, as I had a set plan of what I wanted to demonstrate. On reflection it may have worked as the cutting width of the other tools was a lot thinner. Mel, I am sorry I did not listen.

Another was choice of wood; before the demo I thought I had this covered as I had turned a piece from the same tree and had a spare piece with me. With hindsight swapping the two blanks would have worked better as the second was more balanced and I would have been able to get a higher speed on the lathe. The process of selecting wood for the demo was harder than I thought. The club has a list of woods that we do not want used in demos for health reasons. Some of the woods that I have that would have been good for the demo are on the list or were nicely spalted and fungus spores with minimum extraction would not be good. I spent time searching my stock for something that I thought fitted the specification, and still had problems.

My intended outcome for the first part of the session was to show a bowl that had a finish on the outside from a standard bowl gouge and carbide finished inside. What this should have shown is that the finish from the standard gouge is a lot cleaner.

If anyone wants to try the carbide tipped tools you are welcome to come to my workshop as part of the Hands on Day Mentoring sessions just follow the instructions in the paperwork that Jennie sent out via email or left for you to pick up on club nights.

## **SURREY ARTISTS OPEN STUDIO - John Sherwood**



Every June for the last five years in June, John has opened his workshop and gallery to the general public for three weeks. This is part of a scheme run by artists in Surrey working in all different mediums, ceramics, craft, glass, jewellery, metalwork, paint, photography, sculpture, textiles and woodwork. This allows the general public to view and buy the work. The other hope is that the public may become interested in trying that craft.

John will sell about as much as he would from three craft fairs but also having seen his work people will come back

with special commissions.

## **45<sup>th</sup> Model Steam Rally & Exhibition Sat/Sun 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> July**

We were invited to demonstrate at this exhibition at Stoke Park. There were several members to help set up on the Friday. Saturday there were plenty of visitors, mainly to get out of the rain. We had two lathes working in Paul's gazebo and Jennie was demonstrating piercing and



colouring in her colourful tent, when she was not turning. There were lots to see. Model railways, some you could ride on. All sorts of engineering was in the big marquee including jet engines plus a large display of model boats.

The radio control switch on Colin's boat was corroded. My unit worked at home but after 10 minutes in the pond it stopped. I worked out that the R/C unit is 24 years old so maybe it needs replacing. On the Sunday I used takings from my sales plus Birthday money to buy a new unit. So I hope we are invited next year.



The overnight rain, which continued on the Sunday morning, meant that the field could not be used for parking. Everyone had to squeeze on to the gravel at the side of the roadway leading to the field. This was a blessing in disguise as we were not allowed to bring cars into the exhibition field when it was time to pack up. However everyone helped and with the use of several sack barrows all was packed up quite quickly. It was interesting to chat to metal workers who use lathes to make their engines etc. We all use similar principles but in different materials and so could appreciate each other craft. I look forward to next year and just hope for better weather.

## JULY

Our demonstrator for the evening was Peter Hemsley the proprietor of The Toolpost. I had not seen him at the Club so it is more than five years since he had been to demonstrate. His intention was to talk about and demonstrate hollowing tools. He emphasised that anyone considering buying a hollowing tool should visit Toolpost first where they can try various tools to determine which is the one for them. He had price lists of all the tools he was demonstrating.

Everyone has a simple hollowing tool. Your small spindle gouge, which you can push into the centre of your blank to create a hole and then expand keeping the flute at 45°.



Chris Stott modified the grind on his gouge so that the left side had a longer grind. Stuart Mortimer sells 3 gouges with different lengths of flute. You need to consider the length of the tool that that will project beyond the tool rest. You should have solid bar on your side to provide the strength.

Peter thinks that Sorby cranked tools should be avoided because of their tendency to twist. We were shown the RS200 which is flat on one side and is used in a trailing mode.

Peter believes that ring tools should be BANNED BY STATUTE unless you have been shown how to use them correctly. Start with the face of the ring vertical and slowly rotate until cutting. The angle should never be more than 15°. All hollowing tools are best on wet end grain.



The Kelton Hook tool is far safer but is used as a ring tool. Peter Duguid got up to use it and was impressed. Sharpening is by a slip stone around the outer edge.

The Wiedemann Hook tool, Peter recommends for thin vases.

The Kelton Hook tool came in a set of three originally. It is good for sheer cutting up the sides. They have a hard wearing Stellite layer brazed to the top of the tool.

Peter likes the BCT Hollowmate and the two others. This has a prong on the side so that providing the tool rest is long enough, the tool will not twist. The Supercut is ideal for dry side grain. The circular cutter is set at an angle to

give a sheer cut. All three tools are safe to use.

He went on to demonstrate Hunter Carbide tools and the Hamlet tools. Peter reckons that probably the best tool on the market is the Rolly Munroe but this costs more than £200. This was an excellent evening with Peter giving lots of tips and advice plus a lot of emphasis on safety and members not making expensive mistakes.

On Friday & Saturday 9/10<sup>th</sup> November Toolpost will have an Open House Event with Heinz Wiedemann, Horst Weber and Chris Eagles in attendance.

**Wood Sales.** Paul Raubusch brought a load of timber which members took away for small donations which Paul kindly gave to the Club. This raised £123.10. Many thanks Paul.

The sale came about because Paul ended up having very little space in his combined shed / greenhouse which doubles (and triples) up as his workshop wood store, garden tool store, greenhouse etc, etc, etc, and, in order to keep her indoors happy he agreed to divest himself of some of his excess wood.

The wood in the sale included locally felled yew, sweet chestnut from Chinthurst Hill, holly from Shere, oak purchased from a French saw-mill and left over from another project, pear (also from France, from a friend's garden), and beech from a mystery source.

The biggest seller of the night was yew, which was not surprising since half of the wood on sale was yew. It could also be that this is a very interesting wood with excellent colour - ranging from ivory through to an almost gingery orange - and, full of unique features. The timber came from a tree which was felled by Paul and club chairman, David Bracken, in October / November 2010 from a very large, and overgrown, garden in Ashtead.

The least popular was sweet chestnut - either, because the pieces were too big for most people, or, because it doesn't have the interesting features of other woods.

The first piece of wood to sell was a holly log about 6 inches in diameter and 15 inches long, bought by Colin Spain, who said he had a particular project in mind. Paul says he'd love to know what that project was, and, equally importantly, how it turns out...

Paul also says he plans to make a pair of candlesticks as Christmas gifts from the holly he still has in his shed, but, as that still leaves him with half a dozen logs he is looking for ideas. He says he believes that it is similar to box wood, so, should be good for boxes (especially threaded), but, any suggestions would be welcome!

**Attached is an article on judging by Derek Hayes** He is the Webmaster of Kent Woodturners He has written a book "Wood Turning Design", details of which you can find on their website [www.kentwoodturners.com](http://www.kentwoodturners.com).

## **Giving as good as you get!**

**Derek Hayes**

A complaint often heard from new turners is "I've no idea if what I'm making is any good". The easy bit is to ask for feedback. Receiving it is somewhat harder. It takes a confident, self-assured person to accept criticism of style and design, although it is arguably somewhat easier to accept comments regarding technical competence.

If receiving it is difficult, then so is giving it. A good observer is able to explain their views without alienating the maker. A "good receiver" needs to reflect on the criticism, good or bad, decide if it is to be accepted and just as importantly, how those criticisms will be taken used to improve future pieces.

A major problem is that different observers have different levels expertise. They also place different weightings to personal and, those elusive, absolute standards.

So accepting that views which may be received will differ depending on the observer, how can we improve the process of giving feedback?

Step 1 Empathise with the maker. **How do you feel when someone comments on your work:**

- He's a pro so he must be right
- I've never liked her stuff anyway
- What the hell is he talking about?
- He's absolutely wrong and I'm going to tell him so
- I'm always grateful for comments, I usually ignore it and carry on
- Everyone else thinks it's wonderful
- I think it's wonderful
- I've no idea what rubbing the bevel means, but I'd better not say so or he'll think I'm an idiot
- That's about 15 things he said and I don't remember any of them
- What's on telly tonight?

The last one I call the Homer Simpson moment – where comments just go right over your head and so you mentally switch off. Real communication begins with listening. This is more than just hearing information. It is using your full attention, senses and awareness. This is a two-way process; the giver as well as the receiver. The observer should be aware of how the maker is receiving the information. The good observer will be able to quickly pick up the signs of a breakdown in communications. At the basic level this could be achieved by simply asking for confirmation that the comments made are understood. This is not to say that they have to be accepted though, they are opinions, and the maker has the right to ignore them. This is not an opportunity for heated debate. A useful way to reduce confrontation is to lay down some ground rules prior to the chat.

This doesn't have to be too formal. Simply prefacing your comments in a statement such as "I'm happy to comment on what you've made. These are my views and you don't have to accept them but, perhaps you could wait until the end before you respond to what I say unless of course I haven't explained it too well. Otherwise, take the comments away with you, reflect on them, make use of them if you want to or ignore them if you disagree and, come back to me to discuss anything further".

Without this planned approach, a typical dialogue might be:

Observer

"The base is a mess – I like the bowl, but I certainly wouldn't award it a prize!"

Maker

"Well, I like it, the base stays on the table and only boring old turners look at the finish anyway. I have no intention of entering a competition."

Observer

“Look, you asked me, and I’m telling you, if you don’t like my opinions, don’t ask.”

That’s one disgruntled maker who certainly won’t ask that observer again nor maybe anybody else come to that.

Be aware of how your comments may be received. Think how you can pre-empt possible responses that might come.

A friendlier and hopefully more constructive exchange might be:

Observer

“This is a lovely bowl. You are probably aware that the base isn’t finished as well as it could be and it does let it down a bit. The typical buyer wouldn’t notice, the competition judge certainly will. If that’s not important to you, then fine, but I reckon it’s worth that little bit more time, but as I say, a really good effort – well done.”

Maker

“Thanks I’m not worried about competitions but I may as well try to get it right. How could I have improved the base?”

This leaves dialogue open and provides confirmation that the point the observer wanted to make has been understood.

Giving feedback in a way which enhances and not damages, self-esteem is rarely taught to teachers. Some say that praising work leads to under performance (“She said it was good, no need for me to change or improve it.”) whilst criticism will spur on the maker to achieve. There is little evidence that either one of these is true.

Here are 3 positive and 3 negative remarks you might like to consider when feeding back:

**Don’t:**

- Be subjective
- Generalise
- Give too many points

**Do:**

- Be clear and unambiguous
- Be specific
- Encourage

Success for the observer occurs if the maker is able to criticise him/her self, compare their own performance with the ‘ideal’ and diagnose strengths and weaknesses. Improvements can be suggested, but do seek the maker’s views and suggestions. Don’t forget to check for understanding and acceptance. Use what are called open, rather than closed, questions.

Open

- So what is it you are going to do?
- Which of the points do you feel were most helpful?

Closed

- Is that okay?
- Did you understand?

This is as much a learning experience for the giver as it is for the maker. It should help you accept supportive criticism when you receive it. Use the opportunity to observe good and bad experience when you are in the student's position. Ask yourself was that a good experience? Did I understand what the 'teacher' was trying to tell me? Will I adjust my practice because of it?

If demonstrating empathy verbally isn't your strongest suite you might prefer to use a written summary to give guidance. This is particularly useful in competitions where a lot of work needs to be considered. Could you try a doodle- type sketch of the piece and some scribbled notes? Make sure there are at least as many positive points as there are negative. I've given a simple example. If you don't fancy a sketch, a short written summary something like this might just do it:

This well-turned piece includes a good use of decoration (natural and added) and some excellent flowing curves. It is an attractive form from many viewpoints although the foot is slightly long which detracts from the classic balance of the piece. There are some sanding scratches but overall this was a creditable effort and there is the opportunity for developing the design in future work – well done!

Now, how about some feedback on this article? Treat me gently won't you?

## **2012 Seminar Cancelled**

Unfortunately the June 2<sup>nd</sup> seminar which we moved to November 17<sup>th</sup> has had to be cancelled. When we found we had to move the seminar from its original slot because of all of the extra National festivals and holidays for the Queen's diamond Jubilee, it was difficult to book a suitable slot later in the year and the only possible date was November 17<sup>th</sup>. This was always going to cause conflicts with members who find it difficult to free up time on Sundays, being only 3 weeks after our Open Day, which we hope everyone will attend, and a week before hands-on day.

Last year the seminar only attracted 30 out of our 170 members despite having an internationally renowned turner, Stuart Mortimer, demonstrating for us. I hoped that a different format, involving members who regularly do demonstrations for other clubs, might improve the numbers attending and offer a variety of skills for members to choose from. I am grateful to Bob French, Alan Hazel, Paul Nesbit and Phillip Wolsoncroft who agreed to join me on that day and demonstrate specific skills to members. As club members they were prepared to donate their time to the club at no cost (although we would have covered their travel expenses to Mytchett) so I hoped we could run the event very economically, making it more attractive.

Unfortunately, the cost of both halls for a whole day would make the charge per member over £10 without refreshments at lunch time. So, reluctantly, we have decided that the club has

enough events this Autumn without the seminar and that we cannot expect members to give up another Sunday to support this venture. We will, however, have a Seminar in the first half of next year, which will be in the small hall and with a professional turner from another area as usual. We will try to keep the cost under £10.

I am sorry to disappoint those members who look forward to the opportunity of watching a whole day demonstration but hope you understand why it has been necessary to cancel the event for this year.

Jennie Starbuck (Events Secretary)



## **Wood Dust and Words – The Ramblings of a Chairman**

Well the first part of the year is over and we are quickly heading to the October Open Day, flyers are available and if you know anywhere we can advertise this please take a flyer from the club table and pass it on.

Other forthcoming events being organised are

The Rural Life Centre - on 22nd & 23rd September. We still need stewards for Sunday so if you are interested there is a form on the club table on club nights.

Princes Mead Shopping Centre - on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Again we are looking for demonstrators and stewards and a list is available on the club table

The “Hands on Skills Initiative” - is still available for members to participate in. The list of activities was emailed out to members, copies are available on the club table on club nights.

The next “Hands on Day” is scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> November. We need ten members to make this event break even and will be asking for a show of hands and will start a list at Augusts’ club night.

Club Night on the 14<sup>th</sup> September sees a change from the planned demonstrator. Les Thorn will now be demoing at the October Open Day so Mark Hancock is our professional turner for September.

The last few months has seen the club contacted a number of times, asking if members are interested in pieces of wood or whole trees. To help us deal with these requests more efficiently we are compiling a list of people who may be interested. The idea is we can share this list we anyone who contacts us, if you would like to be on the list information is available at the club table.

Can I ask that members tell us if the items placed on the Newsletter for sale page have been sold or no longer available, a quick email or phone call to Peter can achieve this.

The clubs’ Facebook page has been busy and we have posted three offers of wood or trees. There has been a photo of a creatively pollard sculptured tree. I posted a couple of videos of finishing the laurel blank that caused me problems during the club demo in June. Adrian posted photos of some pieces of laurel he has been wet turning as well as his shinny new lathe. Colin shared an experience at a local

craft fair where this year's weather was the main protagonist. I posted pictures of two horse chestnut vases and Adi shared a photo of a Richard Findlay type long tool rest, made from Trespa board.

Facebook have changed the way that you can join the club page, we can no longer send you an email with a link to the page. You have to join facebook, use the search facility to find Surrey Association of Woodturners, and then request to join. This is more long winded but it has stopped all facebook users from being 'spammed' by facebook pages we do not want.