



Christchurch
Woodturners
Association Inc.

Splinters

Newsletter of the Christchurch
Woodturners' Association Inc.

www.woodturning.org.nz



Waitaki Wonders



Photo: Celia Irvine

John Scott finishing a Neil Scobie-inspired leaf platter; another Waitaki project improving skills. Some of the work begun down there impressed later on the Showtable. See page 4 for more.

The club meets for demonstrations on the first Thursday of each month at 7pm in DA02 at the College of Education, and for a free hands-on night at Cobham Intermediate every third Thursday of the month, also at 7pm. All are welcome; a \$3 door charge covers costs for the demonstration evenings.

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Brought into the Club by a Rubbish Bin, Page 14.

Rambling Abroad: Ex-Expat Pat



In September and October I had the pleasure of a six-week trip abroad with my wife Erica. We spent our time in England, North Wales and had stopovers in Singapore. The observations that follow are mostly tree and turning related.

Our first visit to Singapore was a revelation in terms of how much open space and treed area there was in such a crowded city. Of course the highrise buildings help boost the housing density, but despite the vast amount of concrete and glass, there was not the sense of sameness about the architecture that many of us fear in the Christchurch rebuild. Sending our planners to Singapore could be money well spent. Highlights included a trip on the Singapore Flyer and a

visit to the National Orchid Collection in the very pleasant Botanical Gardens.

Jetlag did not seem to be a problem upon our arrival in England, so we enjoyed a stay with Erica's cousin in Ulverston in the Southwest corner of the Lake District. The scenery was stunning, as expected. Then it was on to Sheffield to catch up with old friends, especially Lesley Churton, long-time secretary of the Sheffield Woodturning Club. She and her partner are having their house remod-elled, with chaos the equal of earthquake repairs.

I am afraid I rather disgraced myself by nodding off during the demo at the club meeting, jetlag having finally caught up. I was alert enough to see an embellishment technique

which I hope to demonstrate next year after I master it in private. A couple of days later, Lesley flew out to Germany to demonstrate turning pens from acrylic resin at a symposium. About 7 years ago I taught Lesley how to make her first pens, so it is great to see that she has progressed as a noted international demonstrator.



Beware the Wollemi pine

Revisits Sheffield

Far Left: Pat's former home's view of Sheffield; this page, Kew Gardens [note chestnuts, right of bridge]



A visit to York followed before we headed south. A brochure made play of the 7 “county champion” trees in the gardens at the museum. I left underwhelmed, but the idea of provincial or national champ-ion trees could be interesting in New Zealand. (Champion being the greatest trunk girth for that species).

Our travel was by train to save the stress and tiring nature of motorway driving. Being over 65, we were able to get senior railcards for 30

pounds each; these reduced off-peak fares by one third. Combined with savings for advanced bookings, intercity travel became reasonable. For instance, less than fifteen pounds each for Birmingham to Bexhill on the south coast.

London in early October was the scene for Erica's high school reunion. By this time we could plainly see what we had heard about, but not really appreciated: the horse chestnut trees in England are in serious trouble. By this

time their leaves were all brown and mostly on the ground, while the other trees did not yet show any change of colour. They still seem to produce a reasonable crop of conkers, but the outlook does not look good for them. Just imagine springtime without the glorious horse chestnuts flowering along the Avon downstream of the Antigua Boatsheds to appreciate how great their loss would be.

Pat Jordan (To be continued)

Summer Club Night Schedule

December 5: Four kinds of turned Christmas decorations will be demonstrated, at the Brake Street Church Hall, Upper Riccarton. Both the Showtable Trophy and the Jim Dunford Trophy will be awarded on this evening.

The first club night of 2014 will be February 6; we're still on, even though it's Waitangi Day. 3

Waitaki Spinaround: Big Gains for Attendees

The November club night's showtable was sparkling again with an excellent variation in turnings. Two, being placed first and second, were the result of members attending the Waitaki Spinaround event at Oamaru. This is further evidence of how our members benefit by attending these regional weekend turnfests with competent demonstrators.



The demonstrator for the Waitaki weekend was Neil Scobie, who is exceptionally arty and incredibly helpful. His focus was on turning, carving and colouring; he seeks inspiration from nature and the things around him. Neil provided written instructions for each piece shown: erosion vase, foxtail palm pod, leaf bowl, nautilus bowl, wave ring bowl, and offset seed pod; these were an excellent reference as we progressed with our turning.



So, a worthwhile weekend, even without besides turning, it's very sociable, with the catching up with old friends and making new ones. If you haven't been before, plan to attend next year, when the demonstrator will be Nelson's Nikki Marshall.



Ray Morgan, Celia Irvine

New Show Table Trophy Unveiled



Peter Clemett made the trophy, incorporating a pair of Soren Berger's sphere calipers, which each year's show table winner will have use of for the next year.

The Show Table Trophy pictured here is half of a pair of new club trophies. The other is the Peter Hutchinson Trophy for the best colouring in a turned piece, awarded each AGM.

Come along to the club's Christmas breakup evening and see who will take it home on December 5! The points ladder for the show table competition has been close throughout the year, so it may even be decided on the night.

If a Tree Falls in a Forest....

But what if that tree fell in the Whirinaki Forest Park, in the central North Island...? It's one of the last old growth podocarp forests, escaping the axes of old and more recently chainsaws, until protection came in the '70s.

The editor walked some tracks in the forest on a recent long weekend, and was delighted to find giant matai, totara and rimu standing tall, and to count rings in those fallen giants by the track. A delight to walk among such grandeur; I just needed a barrow.



October Club Night: Making Sweet

Large and small musical items were on the agenda for the first club night to start in the daylight for a while. And a very interesting pair of presentations it was too.

Rainer Kuprecht, a Swiss Kiwi friend of Rick Bolch, made an alphorn last year, with help from Rick. He had two horns with him: one brought from Switzerland, and the home-made horn. They're each two main tapered lengths, each about



six feet long, joined by a sleeve, quite impressive.

Back in the homeland, half a dozen craftsmen make horns for thousands of enthusiasts who make the mountains ring with duets, trios, even 30 horns being blown together; and the manufacturers are quite cagey and secretive. So a wee bit of Swiss ingenuity was needed, and Rainer got busy: he says the pros make a horn in 100 hours; his took 250, with the kick to come.

Rainer bought six 5m lengths of white pine, 240 square and laminated. He marked out how the horn should look, and using a grinder, chainsaw and rasps, hollowed out a couple of tapered half pipes. That's a lot of timber to remove, rather

carefully, and he got a bit close and made the edge too thin in a few spots.

Rick and Noel helped with the turning required for the fluted end, and an engineer turned the brass sleeve for him. Routing the shaft close to the edge gave Rainer a guide for what to remove, and then it was more hollowing. Perhaps more arduous than roughing out the waste, was smoothing the bore, as any roughness inside will blur the sound.

Thus the tubes were all done in halves and glued up, after coating the inside with polyurethane to help handle the spittle. The outside was a breeze compared to the inside of the tubes, and gauges



(Sort of) Music



helped Rainer sort the taper.

And then, what we'd all been waiting for: a few tunes, quite melodic if you close your eyes and think of the mountains. Rainer coaxes almost four octaves out of the horn, although the homemade horn didn't quite match the professional job for clarity and hi-fi sound. While the cows would be quite happy, Rainer plans to do more sanding and finishing on the inside of the shafts, which will require some surgery and still more hours.

Rainer's alphorn was followed by something smaller and not so designed for tranquility: we went from the Alps to Lake Ellesmere, as Ron Peterson demonstrated a plethora of calls on the duck callers he turns. These are pure turning

jobs, a neat four part item, and one caller can, in the mouth of an old pro like Ron, lure everything from Canadian geese to paradise shelducks and a humble, noisy mallard.

Despite the obvious difference, there is still a striking principle evident in both instruments – the need for smooth surfaces to transmit the sound clearly. Ron noted that a birdcall will never echo or blur – so the imitation must be honed to perfection, or they'll fly right on by.

Interestingly, the reed in the whistle used to be made of milar, but that is incredibly costly these days, so Ron and other makers have adjusted, ad turned to margarine container lids. They work just fine for about a millionth of the price.

Graduation Week had swelled the show table to epic quality, but it was Robin Blowers' stunning Greek urn that won. Creativity, variety and some fascinating turning must be happening in sheds all over.

Clockwise from below: Ron's duck calls; the alphorn up close; in action to give some scale; a worthy showtable; and Robin Blowers explains some winning details to John Scott.



Ten Questions for Don Morgan

What have you just finished turning, and what is your next or current project? Most projects are homework for the course. Since I'm not usually satisfied with version 1, it's on to version 2 or maybe 3. I have just finished October's paper towel holder, and yes it's the second model but the prototype went to a good home. It's going to be used to flatten some sort of dough for Chinese cooking rather than hold paper towels! Next project is November's task.

Favourite wood/s? Kauri, yew, walnut, elm, olive. I like all wood but those are current favourites.

How long have you been turning, and what got you started? Only really this year so I'm very new to turning although I have been making small boxes for a couple of years. I've always enjoyed working with wood, ever since watching my dad carving and teaching woodwork. Sadly he died when I was 9 so did not get to learn a lot from him.

Have you had any training?



One year at intermediate is all, and now the training is the Aoraki course, it's great.

What's something you've turned with which you are very pleased, or most proud? Anything that does not fly off the lathe or break is cause for celebration. The first real thing I turned was a small yew goblet. I really like it as the grain is great and it came out nice and smooth. Gotta love those smooth finishes.

Do you often have several projects on the go at once, or do you generally finish what you start before you start another project? I often have two projects at once, one turning and the other a jewelry box

or something like that.

How do you plan what you turn? That is, with detailed diagrams, or letting it flow and evolve? Well I normally start out with a specific thing in mind such as goblet, bowl, etc. Then a very rough diagram as per Noel's advice, but from then on it's let's see what happens. Halfway through a recent bowl, I tried to make the profile resemble an SR-71 fuselage.

What does your wife think of your turning? She loves it. She is more artistic than me so I seek her advice when stuck. She also says it keeps me out of her hair, something which can happen when you retire.

What else do you like to do with your time as well as turning? Other woodwork projects, fishing, photography diving, athletics, gardening. A major project coming up is to finish a Tesla coil started years ago.

Has your working life lent itself to turning, or was it a nice point of difference? Retired now so all is well in that regard.

Rolly Munro Weekend at Timaru

World-renowned woodturner and toolmaker, Rolly Munro, will be at Timaru for a full weekend.

Saturday 30 November will be a demonstration all day, from 9am to 4pm.

Sunday 1 December will be a workshop all day, from 9am to 4pm.

Both days will be held at the clubrooms at Phar Lap Raceway. The entrance is off Pleasant Point Highway.

Each day will cost \$30, or \$50 covers both days. Morning and afternoon teas and a light lunch are included. Lathes are available, with up to two participants per lathe. Billets may be available if required.

To help with planning, you need to notify the Timaru Club of your intention to attend. Please contact secretary John Cookson on 03 615 8880 or johncookson56@gmail.com or president Adriaan Slooten on 03 686 2540, or aslooten@orcon.net.nz.

Rolly will have tools available for sale.



Wigstands in Demand: 2013 Jim Dunford Trophy

This year we will be awarding the Jim Dunford Trophy for the best wigstand. The Cancer Society has confirmed that there is definitely a shortage of wigstands.

Another good reason for this project this year: a couple of our club members have succumbed to cancer lately. So let's get busy! The South Auckland Woodturners' Guild has guidance for making wigstands on its project page – their website is www.sawg.org.nz. Or be creative and design your own. It's recommended that we end the shortage by making more than one each.

Bill Parsons Carves it up in November

Bill Parsons, like several other club members, likes to carve wood as well as turn it. In his opening comments he noted how many of the world's great turners use some carving on their work. He piqued our interest at the start of his demonstration by passing around some bowls with words carved around their rims.

Bill's introduction was about doing lettering on wood, and he passed around a book on it. He said the great thing about carving is that most of us already possess the basic joinery chisels that we need, or can find them for \$5 at the market. It is great to have a range of sizes of straight and curved ended chisels.

Chip carving knives are also essential and Bill showed us a selection of them. A set of



wood carving chisels are an option, but as Bill showed us, you very quickly require a large range of straight and curved chisels to suit a range of letter types and heights.

Bill showed us a collection of V tools, which are ideal for script like the black lettering,

the easiest kind, which was on the sample bowls. He explained how to sharpen them correctly with various angle options.

Lime is by far the preferred wood for carving, but totara, walnut and most fruit tree timbers are good too.

While he encouraged us to be open to a range of styles, black lettering is the style Bill chose to demonstrate. It uses straight lines, and gives a gothic look. The width of your chisel should be the





length of each stroke in the letter, he advises; this makes for much cleaner carving and less tidying up later.

Bill showed us how he planned the lettering on the bowls, working out the inner and outer diameter of the letters, then laid out in a straight line to work out the letter width and spacing. Bill warned us that these planning, drawing stages can take up to six hours, while it only requires two hours to carve the letters out.

Before the chisel gets to the

wood, holding the piece needs to be considered. A holdfast is good but not ideal for bowls; If the piece does not have a flat base, it can be rested on a sand bag, or held in a vice. Bill had a bowl was set up on a sand bag and Bill showed us how to use the chip carving knife and V tool and straight chisel.

Stopcuts are a vital first step, at the ends of each letter and along the middle, to prevent pulling grain out. A flat piece of wood was held in a vice and some flowing script was cut using a V tool.

And as Bill carved, yes, it was fairly quick. The letters smartened up a plain bowl.

Lots of preparation, done right, made it an easy job to finish. This was Bill's

bottom line: all the finishing in the world won't correct a roughly planned job; and if you're a bit impatient, finishing rough will be more excusable if the work has been carefully prepared. Carving sounds a bit like life in that regard.

Rick Bolch, Danny Brooks



Clockwise from lower left: the showtable-winning seedpod; Bill carving; another laden showtable; Peter White and Liz Macintosh, equal second; the seedpod with its maker.



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Joey Richardson, Lincolnshire, UK
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WOODTURNING NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

2 to 5 October 2014 at
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More on www.sawg.org.nz



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Brisbane, QLD
www.woodturner.com.au



Phil Irons
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Bruce Wood, Auckland



Robbie Graham, Taupo
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Richard Raffan, Canberra, ACT
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David Nittmann
Colorado, USA
www.davidnittmann.com



Ken Wraight, Melbourne, VIC

There will be trade stalls selling all the woodturning tools you need, an instant gallery, competitions, raffles, evening entertainment, and endless tea and coffee.

For further information go to South Auckland Woodturners Guild website www.sawg.org.nz
or contact Dick Veitch, 09 298 5775 or dveitch@kiwilink.net.nz

President's Page

Well, here we are coming up towards the end of the year and another holiday season. Perhaps, like me, you are wondering again how December can seem so distant when you are relaxing on a new year's summer evening, yet have raced up so fast when we reach this point. Inevitably at this time I reflect upon what I've achieved in my turning throughout the year, and start looking forward to the next. I find myself looking at the calendar of events to attend, and drawing up a mental list of the projects I'd like to work on. Next year my son begins university in Auckland, so perhaps I can work in a visit to a North Island club event or two. What's on your list?

One of the reasons I enjoy attending woodturning and woodworking events is that there's always so much from which to learn and gain motivation. Just recently, I made it to Oamaru for my first ever Spin-Around Waitaki. This event is always well attended by our club, as is evident by our apparent stranglehold on the Terrific Turnout trophy for the past 12 years. The fantastic facilities,

excellent guest demonstrator (Australia's Neil Scobie), plenty of hands-on time on the lathe, and great atmosphere made it certain I'll be returning in the future.

It was one of those events where there was something for everyone, knowledge freely shared, and challenge if you wanted it. Neil is a superb teacher, offering his advice and practical help to turners of all levels of ability. If you've not been before, I highly recommend you consider making it next year.

This month your committee has received good news from the National Association of Woodworkers (NAW), accepting our club's offer to host the next two years' South Island Interclub Fun Days. Planning will get under way shortly for the 2014 event. If you've not been to one before or have been unable to travel to those in recent years, this is your chance, when it's on our own home turf, to be involved. It's always a great day – meeting old friends, challenging yourself in the team turning, displaying your work, or just enjoying the atmosphere. Please share any ideas or

offers of help with any of the committee members.

As you read this, our December club night will be almost upon us. This is always a great evening to socialise, have fun, and be inspired by what's on show. Several club members will be demonstrating how to make various Christmas-themed items, and perhaps you'll pick up a new idea to incorporate into your own crafted decorations or gifts. Of course, there will also be two trophies up for grabs on the night. The Jim Dunford Trophy will be presented to the maker of the wigstand judged best on show, and our new Show Table Trophy will go to the club member who has accumulated the most points through our monthly table. Remember that double points are on offer at this meeting, so it could be decided on the night. Bring your partner or a friend, bring a plate, bring any wig stands you've crafted, bring your best piece for the year, and bring your Christmas spirit. I hope to see you there.

Have a wonderful Christmas and happy turning everyone.

Peter

A Shed You All Know Well

You know this shed, many of you. About half the club has worked in it monthly for a few years, and others are in it regularly. But for one of our members, it's an everyday location.

John Matthieson came to join our woodturning club through the rubbish bin. Yes, John's the woodwork teacher at Cobham Intermediate, where the Aoraki course is run most Saturdays. Most Monday mornings he'd find himself musing over what was left in the scrap bin, and thinking, 'how did they do that?' and 'if that's the waste, I want to see the product!'



So eventually John joined the course, and the club. As a woodwork teacher, he had always done some turning in amongst the rest, but scraping more than cutting and not being so sure of what tools and tricks were available.

Having just graduated from the Aoraki course, now it's John's students who see things he has made in his office. With his main turning interests being mixed media work, pewter and resin and so on, students often express interest in turning something along those lines.

So now there are four lathes in the classroom, two of

which are permanently loaned by the club, to shrink queues as students wait to turn. Mainly the Year 8 students use the lathes, and generally only to make parts of toys such as tractors and so on.

These days, with so many children having so little exposure to sheds, or tools, and often even granddads and dads, John finds it essential to make a wide variety of projects, using as broad a range of skills as possible. As he says, 'this may well be their only time spent in this environment and learning these skills.'





much, they won't have any ownership of it when done.'

John also runs basketball teams and competitions at Cobham, and he is involved with taking students out on camps. These extra responsibilities help him build a rapport with the students that is evident when you see him teaching.

He wasn't always a teacher. John was a motor mechanic for 18 years before going to teachers' college for a change. Out of training, he taught briefly in Manning Intermediate and at Grey-mouth, and has been at Cobham for a while.

Since earthquake repair work, storage arrangements and a mechanic's car garage have swallowed up a good deal of his home workshop, he is glad to be able to have a lathe all set up and ready to go at work.

It's good to see someone in a position where he's giving and teaching and passing on his knowledge and skills; and also that he is continually learning himself.

That also makes it vital that he tries to ensure that students have a positive experience in the workshop. 'I tell them "everyone is good at something". But then again there is a standard that must be met, so I find myself touching up some of their work so that they will be proud of it. But if I do too



Clockwise from far left: some of the work that students like to see; John with the class in action; when the students are gone, John can get busy in 'his' workshop; a graduation piece for the generations; detail.

For the Calendar

NOVEMBER 30 – DEC 1: Rolly Munro at Timaru, see page 9 for more details.

DECEMBER 5: Our end of year Christmas breakup at the Brake St Church Hall: bring a plate, partner and 2013's best work, for light refreshments, entertainment, and the end of year awards.

FEBRUARY 9, 2014: Avice Hill Crafts Festival.

MAY 3, 2014: Our club will be hosting the South Island Fun Day. Stay tuned and plan to be involved.

OCTOBER 2 – 5, 2014: South Auckland Woodturners'

Guild is planning another symposium. See page 12 for more details and their website; prices and bookings will be taken from March 2014.

For Sale

Dixon lathe for sale, it is the swivel head model, 180 mm centre height, 920 mm between centres; 1 hp motor, 4 speed headstock, it comes with the standard accessories and is on a steel stand. The asking price is \$250; call Les Brindley on 338 2216.

Make Danny Brooks an offer for a solid old Tanner buzzer; it can still do the job, but it won't make it to Melbourne.

Calendars

The Hauraki club in the North Island are now selling spiral bound A4 shed calendars, with turning and NZ timber visuals. They're \$15, see Bruce for details.

Does anyone do barley twist legs? Please contact Bruce Irvine if you do.

From the Editor

I'd like to thank all the contributors, both regular and one-off, and Bruce. It's been very fulfilling and has tripled the enjoyment of my club time, getting to know you, and your work and your sheds. My thanks to you all.

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