



# Splinters

Newsletter of the Christchurch  
Woodturners' Association Inc.

www.woodturning.org.nz



## Tutors Want Course to Continue



Graduations such as those pictured above will no longer be held under the banner of Aoraki Polytech, after August 2014. While discontinuing the course, Aoraki has assured

current students that they will be supported through to completing their course. What happens beyond, says Noel Graham and the other tutors, is up to clubs. **STORY PAGE 3.**

The club meets for demonstrations on the first Thursday of each month at 7pm 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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## Ten Questions for... Danny Brooks

*What have you just finished turning, and what is your next or current project?*

The last things I made last year were toys for nephews; I've got a couple of big elm bowls on, seeing as my wife has decreed that we make a bowl and keep it for once.

*Favourite wood/s?*

Swamp kauri – colour, smell, mystery; driftwood from the west coast, too; my students love to help collect it on field trips over there.

*How long have you been turning, and what got you started?*

A retired friend got me started over a decade ago, but only very on and off; when we moved to Christchurch, another fellow of a similar vintage got me taking it a bit further. Only recently have I discovered that Dad had a small lathe buried in the shed all my growing up years.

*Have you had any training?*

Just what these two mentors taught; Rex, Bruce and Noel teach me a few things too.

*What's something you've turned*

Having fished around in vain for interviewees, with the deadline pressing, the editor turned the questions on himself.



*with which you are very pleased, or most proud?*

I'm at the stage where I'm always delighted to not wreck things. There was a pretty arty [for me] driftwood bowl and another out of a bit of macrocarpa root that I might struggle to do just so again.

*Do you often have several projects on the go at once, or do you generally finish what you start before you start another project?*

Yes, both faceplates are usually fully booked, and there are a few half-turned things waiting to re-inspire me to resume action on them.

*How do you plan what you turn?*

*That is, with detailed diagrams, or letting it flow and evolve?*

I'm afraid I'm not much of a draw-er. This area needs some coaching – it's the next frontier, to plan more and evolve less.

*What does your wife think of your turning?*

Ledua prefers the product to the process, and the by-products – shavings, dust and shedspace. But she is happy to give things away to her friends and promise them I'll make them something soon.

*What else do you like to do with your time as well as turning?*

I like to read, cycle, and go tramping; and sharing these interests with my students.

*Has your working life lent itself to turning, or was it a nice point of difference?*

As a fairly impractical high school history teacher, the best thing about woodturning is that you can see some progress in minutes. It's very therapeutic, and best of all, the wood doesn't talk back.

## Course May Continue Through Clubs

The uncertain future of the Aoraki Course was signaled at the August 2012 Graduation ceremony by retiring course founder, Gavin Spence. Aoraki is of course committed to helping those who have already begun the course complete it.

The club secretary, Bruce Irvine, recently received correspondence from Aoraki detailing the closure of the woodturning course. Severe funding droughts, combined with government pressure to concentrate on courses that appeal to 18 – 28 year olds are the main issues credited with the course's demise. Polytechs have also been told to stick to their regions and not sub-contract out their

courses to tutors; the woodturning course could not survive such conditions.

Even before receiving these letters, our club tutors Bruce, Rex, Noel and James were pondering a future of the course without its key backer.

Aoraki has ensured those currently enrolled in the course will be seen through to completion in the next year or two. Bruce has looked at the heavy schedule of tutoring Saturdays and projected a final Aoraki graduation in August 2014.

For the future of training, it would not be satisfactory for each club to administer the course without a higher authority to establish some

national consistency.

Noel is emphatic that a new intake of the course will begin midyear, and this will be the pioneering group of the new club-run course. The tutors are committed to continuing to keep the course as cheap and accessible as possible. Some fee would have to be charged but this would only be to cover venue, resource and tool costs, rather than the wages of tutors. The club would have to handle these accounts for transparency.

So with some sacrifices from all, the future looks positive for the future of quality local instruction in woodturning.

*With Noel Graham*

## Summer & Autumn Club Night Schedule

February 7: Demonstrating all things for the bandsaw; Showtable – your best work over summer.

March 7: Demonstrating wet turning, and a hat; Showtable – something involving the bandsaw.

April 4: the Clemetts turning Oamaru stone on the lathe; Showtable – something first turned wet.

May 2: as happens at the fun days, an activity-based program where many turners can participate.

Watch out this year for demonstrations from Terry Brunell, Graeme Priddle and Mike Davies.



## Flower Show Progress Report: an Update

Preparation for the Ellerslie International Flower Show (EIFS) has kept many club members busy over summer, and looks set to produce a truly spectacular display to represent the club.

The Sub-committee has met regularly and various tasks have been set and many completed. Mel Orange's workshop was the place to fabricate the set, with Mel, Ray Morgan, Mike Foster and myself putting it together in the form of a kitset.

By mid-January, progress is on schedule and the budget is under control. All 800 'bricks' have been turned for the wall; Noel has the table sorted, and Rick Bolch has put many hours into creating a water feature.

By the end of January, there will be a dry run, putting all the components together, and from there, it will be a matter of fixing and filling what is still to be added.

The Mad Hatter's tea party theme has drawn carvings, clocks, and fresh new turning projects. The Subcommittee has been stunned at the



quality of the workmanship as well as delighted with the willingness of so many club members to contribute time and effort in this significant endeavour.

The next major input from club members will be in mid-

February, when we are allowed in to Hagley Park to begin the installation. We have a truck, although it will not be able to deliver right to the site, so we will need several hands with trailers to

## from EIFS Subcommittee Chair Peter Clemett

move items from the parking area into our allocated spot. Once we reach Show time, (from Wednesday 6 March until Sunday 10 March) we will be looking for club members who are willing to attend the booth on rotating shifts. We plan to have flyers to hand out as well a folder of photographs, a portfolio of club members' work to view. Please provide photographs of your best work to Pat Jordan by February 20 for printing and compilation. We will also require some smiling faces from the club to keep an eye on the many valuable items as well as gain contact details of prospective members who are viewing the display. Cheap tickets will be provided. Remember that a big factor in our involvement at the Ellerslie International Flower Show is to publicise the club and attract new members. Bravo again to those of you who have invested so much time, skill and effort in making this truly a landmark event.

*Peter Clemett*



Clockwise from left: Bill's mad hatter; redwood flooring; Ray, Peter and Mel fabricating the set; where 'bricks' meet 'tiles'; driveway construction. Photos by Mike Foster & Peter Clemett.





## Christmas Club Night: a Soren Sphere

A medium-sized crowd of members and their wives gather at the Brake Street Methodist Church Hall last December to farewell the club year together. It was a lovely night of fun, food and some fine turning thrown in.

On the tables were puzzles, which gradually drew more folk into their quirks and tricks as the evening progressed. Soren turned up a sphere for a demonstration, and a more expansive raffle that usual sent some home with extra bonus tools and wood. The prizes, awarded by people's choice, went to Don Reeves and Rick Bolch.



Don's segmented cup [below left] was adjudged the best work of the year, while Rick's striking routed and dremelled bowl [right] was voted the best by the wives and partners to earn him the Jim Dunford Trophy.

Soren's demonstration was partly to showcase some new calipers he has developed. The sphere he made could be a Christmas decoration or part of a toy or artistic piece.

He roughed down his blank and cut a half inch tenon, marking the length and removing the waste. Where

his calipers differ from a standard sprung caliper is that nothing needs to be reset. The calipers use the dimensions of the blank to easily transfer proportionate markings for the subsequent angles.

Soren was able to mark the equal distance along the blank and down the diameter of the cylinder. He also made lots of incremental marks down what would be the curve of the sphere. Using a spindle gouge, he removed the waste and shaped it



## Amid the Festivities



between the marks he'd made, although not yet fully rounding it.

Cutting a straight line between the marked lines gave the soon-to-be-sphere a more digital, rather than rounded, shape. So the rectangular blank becomes an octagon that turns into a 16-sided then a 32-sided orb, and then it is basically ready to become a sphere.

Having removed the tenon and the tailstock, Soren made the base flat. His marking system was colour-coded: red lines were to stay on and

black lines – high spots – were to come off.

Once cut, with very gentle, soft cuts, Soren used a steel ring to smooth out anything that was not spherical. Once happy with the overall shape, and it being time to part the orb off, he had this advice for parting cuts: "Don't be tempted to get too close".

The now separate sphere was placed in a steel ring chuck, which held it securely enough to remove the stem. Again the cuts were made very lightly indeed, as all the

work has now been done and does not want to have to be redone.

As Soren was sanding, he remarked on the importance of good quality lighting that throws a shadow and lets you know what needs to be sanded more or less. He did the last of the sanding with the lathe turned off, and the sphere stationary.

So, a different approach to doing a fairly familiar project – an interesting point in a fine, fun evening. Special thanks must go to Celia for her organisation.

## A Presidential Ramble

I have not done much turning lately, so will write instead of other things. One of my favourite authors is Terry Pratchett. He has created a fascinating world, which he populates with interesting characters, and has a way of making the reader see a situation in a novel light.

One of my favourite quotations is: "Count your blessings – until you run out of numbers!" This written in 2011 by a man who knows that he has Alzheimer's, and still somehow manages to write a new book each year.

Perhaps a reason why I feel an even stronger admiration for Pratchett now is that my brain is also progressively letting me down. In my case it is Parkinson's Disease which was diagnosed a year ago, just a few months after I retired. My visions of long days in the shed creating masterpieces have been brought severely down to earth, but at least I now understand the cause of the fatigue. I have had to learn to pace myself and rest when

necessary. Fortunately the tremor seems to stand aside while I have a turning tool in my hand, so I can indeed still turn.

So what blessings do I have to count? Firstly the friends I have made through wood-turning over the last 13 years are still there for me. This includes the committee, many other club members and also friends made from other clubs at the Harihari and Oamaru weekends. Keeping involved in old activities can be important in dealing with a new health problem and I can appreciate better now why some club members who can no longer turn still enjoy coming to meetings or even just getting the newsletters. I have several interesting new friends also from the MS and Parkinson's Society and they give me a valuable perspective on the challenges I face that I could not get any other way.

Gardening remains a pleasurable and satisfying activity. Photography and reading are still treasured

activities.

My six grandchildren are definitely blessings to be enjoyed. Unfortunately only one of them resides in Christchurch, but being able to take a two year old to the park three days each week certainly does wonders for me, even if I often feel too tired to go to the shed when she has her nap. The greatest blessing of all is Erica, my loving wife of 40 years and a tower of strength to me. I count that one very often.

I grew up in a large family, of three brothers and three sisters. This weekend we will all gather up in Taranaki to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of our mother. She is an amazing woman, still living by herself in the family home and doing most things including growing vegies and tending her flowers. She now has over 50 descendants and never misses sending a birthday or anniversary card. She does the Sudoku and other puzzles in the daily newspaper and still drives



## Pat's Piece continued

around her town, although not in the centre of New Plymouth. We have become increasingly in awe of Mum's resilience and willingness to try new experiences. Her attitude to life's challenges has inspired us when we have had to face our own challenges, which is surely another blessing.

So all in all, I have not run out of numbers yet, but I am working on it.

*Pat Jordan*

## Turn with us at Avice Hill



Craft Festival Sunday 10 February, 11am to 3pm.  
Avice Hill Reserve, Memorial Avenue.

Come along and do some turning as we interact with the community and show what we do. Bring your own tools and any turned items you wish to sell; club lathes will be provided.

## W R Owen - Woodturning Supplies

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**PROJECTS** ~ clock mechanisms & inserts, weather instruments, pen & pencil kits, salt & pepper grinders, perfume atomizer, pot-pourri lids, letter openers, bud vase inserts, lazy susans, keyrings, candle cups, ceramic tiles 90mm & 150mm, jewellery findings, chain & parts for pendants & earrings, badge clasps, acrylic sticks & pen boxes.

## Tucked Away in the Garden

Walking into Peter White's house for the first time, I'd come around past the garage out front. When he said, "Let's go out to the shed", I expected to head back out the way I'd come. But, no; he led me down the back, through beautiful beds of shrubs and flowers, to a shed I couldn't see from the house.

Peter and his wife Barb have lived in Harewood Road, Bishopdale, for over three decades, and he's had this back shed about half that long. He originally built it to build a canoe inside, which he did, out of cedar. The



shed now bears the boat's name, *Hiawatha*. Peter has built several model yachts, being in the local club.

Making things with wood has been a life well spent for Peter. He's been a builder, and came to turning about eight years ago, when he did a one year course at the Polytech with Barry Stevens. He was too busy then to do a lot of turning, but since retirement five years ago, he's been able to make what he wants, when he wants.

This has been an adjustment, he notes. "When I used to do this sort of thing, I'd have

to squeeze it in on a Sunday or in the evenings. When I first retired, I had to tell myself, 'hey, don't rush, you've got time to get it done tomorrow.'"





Clockwise from top left: Peter and his hidden shed; some of the jigs and tools Peter has made to assist; the big cedar yacht – its mast and six sails are in a seven foot-long case beyond; some of the last few month's work; the Peter-built router table and drawers with the mortising table in front.



The time has certainly been well spent, as Peter has almost filled the shed with tools he's made, let alone projects. He's made his own lathe table, mortising table, fingerjointer, and a range of other jigs for particular jobs.

Doing the Aoraki course a few years ago helped broaden

the turning too. He says, "There were things I didn't expect I'd be much interested in, but it turned out I was very glad to do them – some of the resin work and the colouring stuff. The whole course was very useful, and good because it helped you to get to know people better than you do at

most club nights.

The latest frontier he's found is segmented turning – since Don Reeves' demonstration last October, Peter has been into it. There are some beautiful pieces he's made already, and as he borrows books and makes new jigs and steadies, more are sure to follow.

It turns out there's another shed hidden in another corner of this garden – a shed full of wood. After a quick clamber to reach a lump of yew, Peter tells me there is at least another lifetime's worth here.

There is, and you can be sure it will be well used as tools or turned items.





## Wood Wanted

A few members really enjoy the option of buying a few bits of wood at a club night. If you have excess wood, bring a boxful of interesting pieces along, labeled and priced for petty cash.

## Photos Wanted

Get a photo of your best work to Pat Jordan by February 20. This will go into a portfolio of members' work at our booth at the Ellerslie International Flower Show. The photos will be displayed in a clearfile with your name attached at the club's booth.

## Door Fee Rising

This is to rise to \$3 per night from February 2013, due to increased rent charges by the university.

## For Sale

For chainsaw sharpening, at 20 cents per tooth, see Les Brindley.

Vacuum pump for sale, see Les Brindley. \$50 for a small unit that works very well.

Peter White has a Triton router table without a switch: ask him for a price.

A range of secondhand tools will soon be available from Bruce Irvine.

## For the Calendar

**FEBRUARY 10:** Avice Hill Craft Festival, 11am – 3pm. Volunteer turners required. There will be no *Garden Gala* in 2013.

**FEBRUARY 20:** Entries close for the Auckland Easter Show's competition. Follow up Rex's success last year.

**MAY [DATE TBC]:** Inter-Club Fun Day at Dunback, [near Palmerston] hosted by the East Otago club. We need teams, and to fill a table with the TEN best items the club produced this past year. Please do not be shy with your best work of the year.

### 2012/13 Committee Contact Details

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President: Pat Jordan, 39 McBeath Ave, Hoon Hay; 942 4279.

Vice President: Peter Clemett; 36a Fenhall St, Russley; 342 5242.

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Secretary: Bruce Irvine, 401 Withells Rd, Avonhead; 358 8482.

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Rick Bolch: 28 Waiau St, Hoon Hay; 980 5156

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Noel Graham: 63 Oakley Cres, Hornby; 349 8976.

Celia Irvine: 401 Withells Rd, Avonhead; 358 8482.

Rex Marshall: 396 Greers Rd, Bishopdale; 352 9297.

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