



Splinters

Newsletter of the Christchurch
Woodturners' Association Inc.

www.woodturning.org.nz



Graduation: “Outrageous Success”



Photo: Joe Hayes

The club meets for a demonstration 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, and there is a \$2 door charge to cover costs for the demonstration evenings.

Graduation Coverage
and Photos, 2, 3 & 5.

Club's Ellerslie Flower
Show Plans, Page 4.

Edendale & Timaru
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Fourteen More Club Graduates



The Graduation evening of the Aoraki Course was a gala night celebrating three years of learning by 14 students.

People had traveled from Auckland, Motueka, and Timaru to attend the dinner at the Cashmere Club, and all



left satisfied with an excellent event. Fine food, good conversation, and some stunning turned items on display made for a delightful evening; special thanks to Celia Irvine for organising it.

The course has trained more than half the members of our club, which makes the Christchurch branch the most prolific in the nation. And given that its founder, Aoraki's recently retired Director of Education Partners Gavin Spence, has only ever found one course like it worldwide, this is something fairly special.

It was certainly precious to see the families of graduates attending and forming a media scrum of paparazzi as each certificate was presented by the course coordinator, Ann Fitzgerald. And the graduation speech from Gavin was greatly appreciated, as it showed that the founder of the nation's sole turning course has himself recently been converted to turning.

His speech reflected on the



obsessive nature of turning, and he identified several new habits and traits observed since beginning to turn. The audience was asked to judge whether his behaviour was normal or obsessive.

The list of behaviour included the following:



This page, clockwise from above: Stuart Croft, Ian Walls, Mike Wing, Gavin Spence.

Celebrate Completing Aoraki Course



- carrying a saw in the boot;
- slowing the car whenever he drives past a woodlot;
- new trademe favourites, like Terry Scott's page;
- practising signatures like he hasn't since childhood: for signing bowl bottoms;
- suddenly words like bevel and spigot become vital;
- going out to the garage



freezer for a frozen chook, and returning hours later, chookless but with a bowl.

Upon completing this list, with a few other oddities mentioned, the assembled crowd was fairly evenly split between this behaviour being completely normal and fully obsessive. You can guess the breakdown of the vote!

Gavin paid tribute to the tutors across the country as the strength of the course – getting the real experts teaching. The course has given structure to clubs, widened the imagination and skills of turners everywhere, and helped improve funding and equipment for smaller clubs: a total success.

However, Gavin perceives a danger, also mentioned by Ann, in securing course funding in these tight times. While they feel the course amply justifies itself with positive outcomes in areas like health, culture and economy, the pressure is always on at the polytech. If anyone knows a rich donor willing to invest in the course,



get him interested in turning: this would be most welcome.

Well done to all graduates, and great appreciation to all the tutors, too! To you 23 currently doing the course, keep on keeping on.

*Page 3, clockwise from below:
Ann Fitzgerald, Ian Warren,
John Scott, Mel Orange.*



We're Going to the Show:

A very exciting opportunity has been identified to showcase our club and the talent of our membership in front of the general public. It has been proposed that we enter an exhibit in the 2013 Ellerslie International Flower Show (EIFS).

The aim of doing so will be to promote the club and to attract new members. The EIFS has high attendance (over 60,000 visitors), and the likely uniqueness of an entry from our club amongst the general backdrop of horticulture exhibitors is almost certain to attract publicity and interest from many local and national visitors, and possibly even among those from overseas.

The committee has approved in principle that the club seek to put forward an exhibit. A sub-committee, chaired by your club vice president (Peter Clemett) has been formed, and authorised to complete the registration and a design proposal. Other members of the sub-committee are: Celia Irvine,



Rex Marshall, Pat Jordan, Mike Wing, Mike Foster, and Rick Bolch.

The idea is that we enter an exhibit in the Hort Galore Marquee. According to the organisers, *"this marquee showcases horticulture, and the wonderful raft of clubs and societies throughout New Zealand - it is highly popular with visitors"*. Exhibiting is free of charge, and in fact a small grant is offered as a contribution towards costs. We would have a 3m x 3m maximum space to fill, and free reign to put together a design of our choosing, so long as it relates to the general theme of horticulture. We are currently considering design concepts that would create

some form of garden scene largely formed in wood, including a variety of plant reproductions. A possible sub-theme could reflect on the "life-cycle" of a piece of wood art.

It is an aim of our organising sub-committee to involve as many of our club members in this activity as are keen to assist with this. We desire to incorporate varied forms of work production and embellishment – not just straight turning. We want this to be a club project and will seek to find ways for all to contribute, regardless of work method or skill level.

Although we have a way to go before our design is locked

The Ellerslie Flower Show

down and we know what we need to produce, we are looking for expressions of interest now from all those keen to participate. Please contact either Rex Marshall or Mike Wing to register your interest. As soon as we have an idea of what we need to create, we'll be in touch.

Don't worry that you won't know how to make what we need – we've already decided that we will run some special tutorial sessions to teach what is required. We are also happy to receive your design ideas and/or see samples of items you think might work in the exhibit.

The EIFS show manager has already expressed high interest in an exhibit from the club, due to its probable novelty value. Nevertheless, our design will need to have sufficient wow factor to overcome the general expectation that living plants are the primary

focus of an exhibit. Our delivery will also have to meet high standards for public display. We will therefore require commitment and good time management from those contributing to complete pieces to the appropriate standard, and in time.

Key dates for your calendar:

November – Exhibit design elements identified. Production assignments and tutorials.

December – First pieces completed and remainder well underway.

Mid-January – All pieces to be completed. Design build-up in progress.

16 February – Hort Galore Marquee available to commence build-up.

4-10 March – Ellerslie Flower Show open to the public.

13 March – Exhibit break down to be completed.

If you have any questions or comments about this activity, please contact any member of the organising sub-committee.

Grad Photos

More of the stunning graduation pieces on display, from the top down: Ewan Allison, Pat Jordan, Rick Bolch, Jim Lunan.



Photos by Ledua Brooks

August Club Night: Peter Clemett's

August's club night saw an invigorating demonstration which left members feeling keen to have a go at the project. Demonstrator Peter Clemett threw out the challenge to members to turn their own variations of off-centre figurines.

Peter said he was inspired to have a go at this element of turning after seeing an Ken Newton's second place entry at the recent inter-club Fun Day at Palmerston. This sparked his research, and he showed some figurine photos from a book by Mark Sfirri, who had produced a descriptive method for perfecting these figurines. Lots of these inspirational designs were quite arty and stylised; Peter stated that he preferred figures that followed Da Vinci's models of human proportion guidelines, where the body can be split into eighths. Here, the head is proportionately one eighth of one's height, the hips are half the body's length, the knees and mid-chest at the quarters.

Peter next sketched his model



following the above design criteria and set out the centres along the model to achieve the bumps and curves of the human body, from the head, neck and shoulders down to the waist, knees and feet. Once happy with the conformity of the design Peter made a story rod and this was used to transfer the high points for the head, shoulders etc onto the rounded timber. These marks were left on the timber, as they remained part of the shape, and the shaping was done between these marks.

Once the drawing was finalized the off centre points were established at each end

of the timber to be used. The timber was radiata pine about 300mm long and 45mm square, which he rounded down to about 43mm diameter and marked off each area with a ruler. The head end had two centres marked and the foot end had four centres marked, 5mm apart and these ends were carefully preserved.

The timber began centred and turned to a round before the offsets phase began. A steb centre was used at the drive end and a point at the tailstock end this was Peter's choice for ease of moving between point centres.

Peter then went through the various stages of the offset turning, creating the various parts of the body. He began with the waist and shoulders, with the headstock at 10mm and the tailstock at 5mm. Once he was happy with the waist and shoulders [apparently our waists are supposed to be narrower than our



Demonstration



add a captive ring necklace.

The final cut of the neck was the last offset, with the headstock at minus 5mm and the tailstock on 5mm. This is where the head is shaped forward on the neck, setting the jaw, and ensuring to not take too much off the neck to avoid a hunchback effect. Rounding or tapering the crown of the head was the last job before sawing off the ends with a fret saw, topping off an excellent demonstration.

shoulders] then reset the offset. Remember to sand before changing the offset; Peter said that he sanded the figure by hand along the grain to keep the crisp edges.

The second offset, to turn the legs, brought the headstock back to 5mm, so it was

parallel as at first. The knees were given a slight bump and the calves can present challenges. Peter continually reminded us that all these measurements are flexible, depending on the desired shape of the figurine, from a stocky build to slim. Peter's advice is to play with the increments to vary the shape.



The third offset was the original centres, that is, with no offset, and the neck was sloped up off the shoulders, a little bit at least. Caution is required with the neck, and it certainly would not be wise to do it earlier. Experts can challenge themselves to

The Show Table this month was for a bowl up to 200mm diameter: another excellent assortment ranging from 20mm diameter, the tiniest bowl I've seen [sounds like Keith Gardiner – ed] up to the maximum, winged bowls included.

Bruce Irvine's striking Indonesian rosewood bowl took first place and James Smith's winged bowl came second. Bravo to the tutors, practising what they preach.

Rick Bolch, Ray Morgan

President's Column

On August 30th we celebrated the graduation of classes 4 and 5 from the Aoraki Polytech woodturning course. I would like to add my congratulations to all those who have successfully gained their certificates. The graduation pieces were a revelation in quality and diversity and the whole evening was most enjoyable. This is my chance to express my personal thanks to the tutors, Bruce, Rex and Noel, those who assisted, especially James, and thanks to Celia for her background work, particularly in organising the graduation evening. Lastly thank you to my course-mates for their friendship, company and sharing of ideas in the last three years.

The committee has reluctantly decided to increase the door fee at the monthly meeting from \$2 to \$3, effective from next February's meeting. This has been prompted by the trebling of our cost to hire the room each month. Even at the new rate we are still getting good value for

money, especially with the projection facilities available. However at the new rental rate, we would need over 50 attendees just to cover the room rental, let alone other costs such as supper as well, so the new charge will enable us to at least cover the costs for each meeting. Door fees have not risen in my 12 years in the club, so increases are not made lightly.

We have just purged our membership list of those who have not paid their subs, reducing our membership to just over 100; a significant drop over the last year. Naturally, if you are reading this on the website or a friend's copy, we would love to reinstate you as a member on payment of your 2012 subscription. Naturally we would like our membership to grow to provide an inflow of fresh ideas and skills.

The committee is exploring what could be our best recruiter since the Aoraki course began: an entry in the club section at the 2013 Ellerslie International Flower

Show. No, the cost would not be prohibitive, and yes, we would gain exposure to a significant number of people including those with the right attributes to be future club members: those interested in doing things with their hands. A subcommittee is presently working through concept designs and trying to confirm how we can use wooden artifacts in place of living plants. Once a design is accepted, we will need to do the detailed design. Then we will need club members to contribute turned or carved items. My plea is to be ready to put your hand up to help create the pieces needed once we specify them. It will take a concerted effort from many members to generate what we will require. We will spread details by whatever methods seem best, including email, so if you are not certain that we have your current email address, please update your address to the club secretary (bruce.irvine@xtra.co.nz).

Happy turning

Pat Jordan

Ten Questions for Merv Sim

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

Most of my turning these days is kauri baby rattles, with a few captive rings on them. They go all around the country and even the world when people tell me of a newborn. [Merv said he'd made a couple of hundred, but his wife Elaine says 2000 plus is a more likely figure – having seen 50 or so stock-piled at home, I'm going with the higher figure.]

Favourite wood/s?

Kauri is great but yew is best.

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

30 years. Dad was always a woodworker, making brilliant furniture, so I was around wood from a young age. But Allan Bond got me into the local Guild in my early 60s, and while I loved the variety of the Guild, it's only ever been turning that I've done.

Have you had any training?

I did three terms with Max Malesi, at the Polytech. Other than that I've taught myself



using books. Everyone is always so helpful, generous with wood and skills and time.

What's something you've turned with which you are very pleased, or most proud?

I made a dark walnut bowl that was exhibited with many club items at a show in Durham Street.

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

One at a time now. I keep it simple, use small bits of wood as the strength for bigger jobs isn't there. I went through a wet turning phase and fooled around with all sorts of drying

methods, but now I just keep it simple, and do one at a time.

How do you plan what you turn? That is, with detailed diagrams, or letting it flow and evolve?

It comes out of my head, I've never been much of a planner. Sometimes it's good and sometimes it's bad.

What does your wife think of your turning?

She is my most severe critic and also my most appreciated. Elaine also does a bit of craft herself, cross-stitch and so on.

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

Gardening and grandchildren: we have five local grandchildren to dote on.

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

I left school at 14 to work as a blacksmith's striker, and spent my early 20s in the War. But most of my work has been done in sales and the grocer's trade, before supermarkets, back when a shop was a shop. So turning has been a

wonderfully refreshing hobby

Out and About in Southland: Edendale

One of the lesser-known club woodturning weekends is held annually at Edendale, in Southland. Our James Smith makes sure he never misses one of these, regarding it as a highlight of his calendar. See if he can convince you that it's well worth attending.

This year, eight clubs were represented by about 30 people. Four, like James, were in campervans, and several day visitors came along for a look. There were half a dozen scroll saw guys at it as well as 15 lathes in operation, and Bill Owen there as well.

The Edendale weekend is an all-inclusive time of turning. For \$140 you are housed, well fed, there is a well-sponsored raffle and some



great turning happens around you. You sleep in bunkrooms in a Church Camp onsite, and eat very well. Glenda, a local caterer enjoys the rapport with the wood-turners – and her food is out of this world, says James: three meals, plus morning and afternoon tea.

So once you've paid and got yourself to the venue, every detail is taken care of well. You eat your meals together, and the turning happens in a

large woolshed that fits the event beautifully.

Maybe the best thing, according to our roving reporter, is that instead of an imported pro demonstrator, everyone is a demonstrator and a learner. A local may tap you on the shoulder and tell you that someone over yonder has got a tool that will help you with that particular job. Or he might say that the guy over in the corner wants you to show him how you made this or that. It's a different kind of learning, but James never fails to enjoy the interaction, the co-operation and the fun of it.

James Smith



Timaru's 25th Anniversary Jubilee



A big weekend for Timaru put an exclamation point on 25 years of the life of their club. Their Jubilee was a splendid success with good crowds, great demonstrators, and plenty of interesting action.

About fifty people came along for the weekend, swelling to 75 for the gala

dinner on the Saturday night. Most of the South Island clubs were present: Canterbury and North Canterbury, Ashburton and of course Timaru, Waitaki, Upper Clutha, Otago, South Otago and Wakatipu club members converged to be involved. The hosts also took the opportunity to unveil their new club

headquarters at the Phar Lap Racecourse.

Demonstrators Terry Scott and Giulio Marcolongo worked alongside each other and kept up a banter that made for some entertaining sessions. There was some tool pilfering and gentle competition happening between the two of them.

Apparently it was almost worth going for the silent auction tool sale alone. Friday was all turning, Saturday was a couple of workshops and Sunday was the day for demonstrations. There were exhibitions and raffles and lots of good networking opportunities.

James Smith

Club Night Schedule

October demonstrator: open segmented turning with Don Reeves. Showtable: a geometric shape.

November demonstrator: Jim Lowe, from Paraparaumu. Showtable: any segmented turning.

December's demonstrator will be Soren Berger, and the showtable is your best piece for the year.

DVDs or books are always available from the library.

September Club Night: Pat

Pat began by showing us a picture of a piece from the display table at the 2011 Spinaround Waitaki meeting. It was in the form of an endless spiral loop with a triangular cross-section. The concept inspired him to have a play with a square section ring.

He demonstrated the concept of the endless loop with a piece of paper with a red line on one side and a blue line on the other side. A simple loop of paper has two sides, but if the loop is given a half-twist before being joined, it becomes the well-known Moebius strip with a single continuous side.

Pat marked out a circle on a piece of flat pine and marked



a pencil line across through the centre. A disc of pine wood about 10mm thick was mounted on a screw chuck and turned to 79 mm diameter. The inner diameter was marked with dividers and the disc was removed from the chuck.

The blank was removed from the screw chuck and a soft jaw chuck was then fitted to the lathe. Pat inserted the blank and accurately parted the ring from the blank at 10mm. This gave him a ring 80mm diameter with 10mm by 10mm cross-sectional dimensions. Both thickness and width were checked with calipers to confirm their

accuracy; they should be exactly the same, and they were.

Rex sawed the ring in half on the marked pencil lines and numbered. He then showed us a previously prepared shape consisting of four half circles glued together. Taking the two half circles, he superglued them together at 90 degrees to each other and demonstrated how to sand them using a small drum sander mounted in a Jacobs chuck in the headstock.

Pat passed around a triangular section ring with a small wooden template for



Jordan's Geometric Shapes



LEFT: As Graeme Aldridge could not be present at the Aoraki Graduation Ceremony, he received his certificate from Bruce and had his graduation piece displayed at the club night.

BELOW: Les Brindley with Quasimodo.

checking the angles. He reinstalled the soft jaws and put in another square section ring. Using a skew chisel, he took a 30 degree cut and checked the angle with the template, before doing the other side of the ring and checking, finishing up with an equilateral triangular shape section. This ring could then be cut and glued into another shape. Your chosen design will dictate how many rings you will require, and whether you make the sections triangular, square or round will dictate the angles at which you set them. Then imagination, Pat noted, is the only limitation.

Thanks are due to Mike Foster for pointing out that

David Springett has written a book (*Woodturning Full Circle*) on making this type of figure and a wide range of related shapes, which he calls streptohedrons. It is still available through New Zealand's on-line bookstores. Always check them all, as prices do vary between them and with time. The Springett book recommends using a split turning with a newspaper joint, rather than sawing a ring into two pieces. The websites listed below are online bookstores where you can find books like this David Springett's:
www.fishpond.co.nz
www.mightyape.co.nz
www.thenile.co.nz

The showtable displayed a

few off-centre turned bowls, rings and just one figurine, a hunchback from Les Brindley. 'Quasimodo' was made with multiple centres, and won the evening.

Rick Bolch, Ray Morgan, Pat Jordan



Sneak a Peek Inside Jack Jordan's Shed

Jack Jordan knew he'd found the right place 18 years ago when he moved to Tennyson Street in Sydenham. A nice big shed told him this was the spot; his wife felt he'd been very fussy up to that point.

Jack mainly carves and turns wood in his shed, although there's some welding gear stashed away too. There's a little lathe by a north-facing window to catch the sun as well as plenty of bench space, tools and stacks of things tucked and stacked away.

A pleasing amount of clutter and busyness pervades, although of course everything is instantly on hand when



Jack needs it. And there's plenty of space to work.

Jack worked in the Toyota Assembly Plant, Buchanans Road, from day one, retiring in 1989, a few years before it shut down.

He had originally done an apprenticeship as a car trimmer, or upholsterer, and was asked by Toyota to set that up for their factory.

Having sorted that out, he went to night school to study production management, cramming a three-year course into just one year. Soon he was production manager, then supply manager, then

operations manager, heading up the whole place.

Although his father was right into woodwork, Jack only ever played and dabbled until





retirement, having inherited his dad's tools. Having decided to get serious, he bought a book and got learning. After a fair few years of turning, a book called *Beyond Basic Turning* turned his eye to segmented turning, which has since been his major focus.

Swimming has always been a joy, but knee reconstruction surgery has put an end to that. A good deal of the design process for turning and carving was thought through while chugging up and down the pool, swimming his age (80 laps was about where that left off). There's still the garden for thinking now.



Jack was in the Christchurch Guild since the 80s, before the turning club existed, and he's still a guild member. He likes both carving and turning, usually having both going at once. More carving tends to happen in winter as he can do it inside in the warmth. He's just put a vice on a small table he can wheel inside and get carving where it's warmer.

Come summer, it's turning that dominates. "When I'm turning, that's the best thing I do. When I'm carving, that's the best thing I do."

Variety of projects comes when either of two daughters provides Dad with a 'to do list'. They're quite handy themselves, and Jack often finds himself making an order, and then repeating it as word spreads.

"I think Michelangelo said, 'the problem is not that we aim high and miss our target: it's that we aim low, and hit it.'" Jack has plenty more projects, but time dictates that he no longer saves the best bits of wood in the shed for some job in the future. "If I've got a great bit of timber, I can't afford to save it up; that's got to be the next piece I use."

May there be plenty of time for plenty more beautiful turning and carving.



Need to Know

The Garden City Market at an indoor site on Buchanans Road. They seek regular or one-off stallholders. Website: www.gardencitymarket.co.nz.

For Sale

For quality secondhand tools valued between \$10 and \$40, see Bruce Irvine.

Credits

Contributing to this edition were Peter Clemett, James Smith, Joe Hayes, Merv Sim, Rick Bolch, Ray Morgan, Pat Jordan, Jack Jordan and Ledua Brooks.



Laney D. proudly displays her first bowl, made from wood donated by Ray Wild. As the shed out at Cheney's is now condemned, club members are invited to instruct young turners before it has to come down. Talk to the editor.

Busy Calendar

OCTOBER 4 – 7: Symposium hosted by South Auckland at Wesley College Paerata. At least one or two of our club members are attending.

OCTOBER 26 – 28: Waitaki Spinaround Weekend, Bruce Fergus the demonstrator. See Bruce Irvine for the forms.

NOVEMBER 16 & 17: Giulio Marcolongo will be in town and turning at Cobham over Show Weekend. He will also be demonstrating all day Monday the 19th at Rangiora.

DECEMBER 6: Christmas evening at Brake St Church.

2012/13 Committee Contact Details

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