

# **TWISTING AND TURNING**



**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE  
CHRISTCHURCH WOODTURNERS  
ASSOCIATION INC.**

**TWISTING AND TURNING**  
The Christchurch Wood Turners Club Inc.

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## **PREFACE**

### **John Nimmo**

This booklet is not intended to be a definitive history of the Christchurch Woodturners Association Inc, but rather a reflective overview of the life and times of that organisation as it has progressed though the first twenty years of its existence. (Members refer to the organization as 'The Christchurch Woodturning Club', and I will use this nomenclature throughout the publication).

It is very much a snapshot of the Club in its 20th year. It is a point in time at which the veil of its past will be lifted for many members who were not around in its formative years; a reflection point for long term members and a source of inspiration as the Club moves on to embrace the challenges it will face in its third decade of existence.

Most of the content has been sourced from past and present members orally or in written form. One highlight of this booklet is the conversation involving a group of foundation members sharing their memories of bygone turning days. Oral history provides a rich dimension of emotions; the joys, challenges, regrets and a sense of comradeship. These are woven into a historical tapestry that the subjective historian would never commit to paper.

Particular acknowledgement must be given to Bruce and Celia Irvine who have collected much of the content material on my behalf, and also to Joe Hayes who provided the majority of the photographic material. Their assistance has made my task in writing, compiling, illustrating, editing and preparing this booklet for publication, much easier.

This booklet has been prepared to coincide with the 20th birthday celebrations of the Christchurch Wood Turners Club. I hope that it will provide some stimulation during the festive weekend and serve as a useful source of historical perspective for formative and more recently joined members of the organisation.



**PATRON**  
**Soren Berger 2000 – 2016**



I have had an unusual and special connection with the Club, where although I have not been involved in the day to day running of the club's affairs, I have been involved in its development from the beginning. Having been a full time woodturner since 1976, I had lots of experience to share and was very happy to contribute to a group of such passionate people in my role of 'Club Technical Advisor'. I had also had the benefit of belonging to and working with the American Wood Turning Association, founded in the mid 1980's.

I was struck by the enthusiasm of the core group who worked hard to get the Christchurch Woodturning Club started and moving successfully forward. Their generosity of time and their extent of knowledge sharing has been amazing.

The Aoraki courses have been most successful. Over 70 students have graduated from these since 2006 which is most pleasing and a wonderful tribute to their tutors Noel Graham, Bruce Irvine and Rex Marshall. Celia Irvine has also been a keen supporter. The Thursday evening classes have also been valuable in providing a practical hands on approach for skill development.

Demonstrating and teaching have been fundamental parts of developing the array of skills in evidence amongst the club's membership. Monthly display table displays bear testimony to this. I have been most impressed with what I have seen. Recognising skills and encouragement are great motivators for developing excellence. It augers well for the future success for the Club.

## **FOREWORD**

**Peter Clemett**

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to introduce this booklet, commissioned in the year of our 20th anniversary, to capture our Club history. Inevitably in an organisation such as ours, it is the events of the day and immediate issues which occupy the focus of members, and it's all too easy for the records of outcomes, milestones, and personalities to be retained only in the memories of individuals or personal artefacts.

Recognising that much time has passed since those first days and with the sense that our past is not well represented, the Committee recently resolved to produce this journal, and in the process collect and retain as much memorabilia as possible. Our goal is that this publication will serve as an enduring record of the past and provide the foundation for future additions.

The first 20 years in the life of our Club can be viewed from many perspectives. On the one hand it represents a grand journey from inception to the current day, full of the trials and tribulations experienced by any emerging organisation. Another perspective might see it as nothing but a fleeting moment in the history of our craft - from the first recorded use of a lathe around 300BC in Egypt to the present day. What is certain though is that the Club has lived and grown through a most exciting period, experiencing a rapid evolution of tools and techniques, and seeing the elevation of lathe formed work beyond the plain and utilitarian.

Nowadays the diversity of work produced on the lathe or from lathe turned elements is astounding, and in the hands of top proponents, yields pieces which are truly sublime. If the journey thus far tells us anything it is that the creative process will continue to fuel the evolution of forms and methods, expanding the scope of possibilities for our craft and providing new inspiration for the next generation of turners.

When the founders of the Christchurch Woodturners Association first conceived our organisation and took the necessary steps to write the constitution and formalise its existence, they had a clear idea of what they wanted the Club to become. Reflecting on where we are today, I feel positive they would judge the Club has stayed true to its original aims and their vision has been well and truly realised. Although very few of that first group now remain in the Club, their legacy is a healthy, thriving organisation which embraces and promotes sharing, learning, innovation in the craft, and fellowship across the wider woodturning community.

I am very positive about our club's future, and have every intention of staying involved - perhaps even for the next 20 years. Happy turning everyone.

**PRESIDENT**  
**Rick Bolch**

Here we are at our twentieth anniversary! It is quite an achievement for a comparatively small club, particularly considering the 2011 devastating earthquake and its aftermath. Having been in the Club for some years now, I know that the fact that we have got this far is largely due to many hard working committee members, tutors and demonstrators; in some cases all three. Included, of course, are our many club members who keep coming to the monthly meetings with an amazing array of wood turnings and carvings for the show table.

The woodturning courses have been hugely successful with many of our members having done one of the courses and benefitted in developing their skill levels and ideas. We have had many successes with fun days and other events. Our crowning success was a Gold Award at the 2013 Ellerslie Flower Show here in Christchurch. I hope that with all of our members support, efforts and help, we will clock up another twenty years of woodturning and fellowship. Happy Birthday to us all .

## **PLANTING THE SEEDS**

The Club had its beginnings as 'The Splinters Club', a woodturning class run by the Christchurch Polytech. The tutor, Max Milesi, was retiring and the Club's future was in the balance.

After some deliberation a steering committee was formed in October 1995 to consider where meetings might be held, the frequency of these and a suggested format. Subsequently, Bob Dow, Rex Marshall, Brendan McConnell, Soren Berger, George Forrester, Bruce Irvine and Dennis Phillips, (who offered to write the newsletter, aptly titled Splinters), formed that group.

Lecture Theatre 1 at the Christchurch College of Education was secured as the club's meeting place. On December 7th 1995, Soren Berger was the demonstrator and showed the assembled members how to turn Christmas bells.

The first Annual General Meeting of the Christchurch Woodturners Club was held in April 1996. 26 members attended and there were seven apologies. A committee was elected:

Chairman: Bob Dow

Vice Chairman: George Forrester

Secretary: Dean Phillips

Treasurer: Jim Dunford

Committee: Bruce Irvine, Soren Berger and Peter Neal.

Annual Subs were set at \$25, reduced to \$20 paid by 30th June, and the door charge set at \$2.

There were 31 members at that point of time. Membership increased rapidly to more than 100 members and gradually increased to a peak of 125.

The founding group sowed excellent seeds which have enabled the Club to flourish and enhance the experience of its members over the last 20 years. We owe them a considerable debt of gratitude.



A monthly demonstration evening in Lecture Theatre 1 at the Christchurch College of Education in the formative years.



An example of the Club's monthly show tables in the 1990's.  
Rumour has it that the tables won 1st prize!!!  
(See 2015 show tables on pages ( 40 & 41)

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHRISTCHURCH WOOD TURNING CLUB**

The first Annual General Meeting of the Christchurch Woodturners Association was held at the College of Education Lecture Theatre on March 7th, 1996 at 7.30pm.

A committee of eight was elected, three of whom are still on the present committee. An annual subscription of \$25 was settled on. That was the beginning. The Club started with a membership of 31 and increased to a peak of 125. Currently, there are around 100 members.

Over the years members have joined in many participating events held in the South Island, 'Otematata Experience', 'Spin a Round Waitaki', 'Learn to Turn' Hari Hari and South Island 'Fun Days'

In 2000 we hosted the South Pacific Symposium at Living Springs. This was a great success with demonstrators from the North and South Islands, Australia and Hawaii. Again, in 2005, we hosted another Symposium at 'Blue Skies' Kaiapoi campsite. This time there were demonstrators from New Zealand and the USA.

The Club hosted the 'South Island Fun Day' in 2002 and 2003. This was a fun event with competitive turning involving teams of six in the various turning aspects of the competition. For our competitions we chose constructing skittles and balls, and eggs and spoons. The participants ended playing skittles and also having an egg and spoon race! What fun!



In 2006 we purchased a shuttle trailer to transport lathes, gear, a library, sound equipment, a camera, TV screen and an eclectically operated stand, to the College of Education and other venues.

In September 2006 the Club held a special celebration dinner for its 10th Anniversary. Around this time it established its own website enabling members and the wider public to obtain information about the club and its programme in action.

In 2006 the Club started 'The Certificate in Woodturning' classes as an outreach base from the Aoraki Polytech in Timaru. There were three volunteer tutors: Noel Graham, Bruce Irvine and Rex Marshall. They ran two classes on Saturday mornings. These were held at Cobham Intermediate School in one of its technology rooms.

This became a major preoccupation for the Club. Although student capitation had to cover the cost of lathes, trailers and other necessary equipment and facilities, the income also ensured financial security for the club over a number of years. After Aoraki Polytech withdrew financial support at the end of 2014, the NAW took over responsibility for the organisation and implementation of the ongoing tuition program in woodturning.

Over the ensuing years, the club members have taken part in interclub spin-a-rounds in the Canterbury, Otago and Westland provinces. It has also hosted two inter club events in Christchurch.

In 2013 the Club entered an exhibit in 'The Ellerslie International Flower Show' in Hagley Park. A huge amount of time and expertise were involved in producing a magnificent display themed on the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, entitled, 'After the Tea Party'.

In 2016 members will celebrate the Club's 20th birthday. It has been a fruitful journey tended by the excellent stewardship of its patrons', presidents' and committee members' over the years.

## **AN AFTERNOON OF REMINESENCES**

Bruce Irvine, Rex Marshall, Soren Berger, David Caddie, Peter Neal and Charles Taylor gathered to reflect on the life and times of the Christchurch Woodturning Club during its first 20 years. It proved to be an interesting couple of hours.

Recollections sprang to mind of their time at the Christchurch Polytech woodturning classes, and Max Milesi, their tutor, who produced a monthly magazine titled 'Splinters'. After his retirement, a group including Bob Dow, Rex Marshall and Bruce Irvine set the Club up. Soren Berger came to the Club to demonstrate turning techniques because of his advanced turning skills compared to other members. Later he became the club's patron, a role he has filled ever since. Several Christchurch Woodworkers Guild members also joined.

Wood gathering in the early days provided some amusement. As soon as people discovered a member was a woodturner, they would ask him to cut a tree down and remove the wood. Athol Ferguson, ex bomber pilot turned Forest Service expert tree feller, and at that time in his 80's, was the 'go to' man. Bob Dow, Soren Berger, David Caddie and Athol Ferguson confronted a huge walnut tree. Below was a manicured lawn and close by a greenhouse and the residence. After some head scratching, the 80 years old plus Athol climbed aloft and attached a rope to a solid branch. The other end was attached David Caddie's four wheel drive wagon. David dropped the clutch and the back wheels spun themselves into two very large ruts in the pristine lawn. The vehicle was going downwards instead of forwards! Suddenly the bough let go and plummeted earthwards somehow missing the truck, the greenhouse and the residence on its downward journey.

Soren, Athol and Peter tackled a large plane tree. While they did the felling and sawing up work, other club members were invited to collect some fallen wood for their turning. Soren and Peter had settled on some forked pieces to put aside for projects they had in mind. They toiled away until the task in hand was complete. Then, to their



amazement, they realized there was no wood left over for them! Athol Ferguson was a consummate woodsman. On one occasion a tree had to be cut down beside a poured foundation. Others doubted, but Athol dropped the trunk over the foundation without touching it.

Soren recommended wet turning as great therapy. It was interesting watching it dry out and form its own character. He lamented the fact that it was becoming almost impossible to obtain turning wood from contractors due to OSH regulations and the tendency to automatically chip everything after felling.

Two wood turning symposiums were hosted by the Club on behalf of the NAW in 2000 and 2005. International guest demonstrators introduced new ideas and new techniques as well as high speed steel cutting tools. Soren said that they emphasised the virtues of cutting as opposed to scraping.

A discussion took place about the advances in woodturning over the last twenty years. They included chuck development, variable speed motors, bowl savers, high speed steel chisels, decoration work and artistic creativity. It was agreed that there is more emphasis now on developing skills with the variety of turning tools on offer.

A story was told about a turner who claimed he could complete all aspects of his turning work at the same lathe speed. His wife quietly confided that the silly old fool had never worked out how to move the belt from pulley to pulley.

The group felt that the Aoraki Polytech programme needed to be highlighted. Although the Polytech approached the Club offering the programme, our members had to write the prescription and the course content. Noel, Bruce Irvine and Rex Marshall, in particular, have dedicated large amounts of their time over several years developing the programme and tutoring students. Many of the students have joined the Club, participated in its various activities and served on the Committee.

*This article continues on page 30*

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Bob Dow 1996—1998**



I was part of the group, that was tutored by Frank Milesi at the Christchurch Polytech, who decided to form a woodturning club. I was elected its first President. Once the Committee got to work lawyer member, Brendon O’Connell, produced a constitution and the Club found its first home at the Christchurch Teachers College. Its aim was to assist its members to improve their woodturning skills.

It was amazing how quickly membership numbers built up. Brendon had a client, a local developer, who regularly needed trees cut down to clear his building sites. Over 20 chainsaw wielding members turned up to one tree felling session startling neighbours with the din. They were great times with plenty of wood to share around.

Soren Berger was an impressive demonstrator and inspiration during the club’s formative years. Turning skills improved rapidly as demonstrators shared new ideas. The two international symposiums also provided great impetus. The monthly display tables inspired members to strive to improve their skills and creativity. Current show tables bear scant resemblance to those in formative times.

The friendships formed in those early years are still evident twenty years on. For some members the Club, and its associated activities, have been a significant part of their lives.

I wish the Club all the best for its 20th birthday celebrations.

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Bruce Irvine 1998—2000**



I was elected President at the 1998 Annual General Meeting taking over from Bob Dow, our first President. I think my biggest project was the 'South Pacific Woodturners Symposium'. Before this event took place I had travelled to Auckland 12 months earlier to observe and take notes on how Auckland ran the '1999 Symposium', and how to go about inviting overseas guest turners. The planning committee decided on 'Living Springs', at the head of Lyttelton Harbour, as the venue. Then came the task of who to invite as guest turners. The replies were overwhelming. We settled on Hawaii, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The weekend was a great success.

Another highlight was the first ever 'Fun Day' in Ashburton. That first year we turned three egg cups and three eggs. Twelve months later, again at Ashburton, we turned three mortars and three pestles.

Back in Christchurch we continued to have our club nights at The College of Education, the 'Hands On nights' at Cobham Intermediate and bi-monthly committee meetings. An early challenge was to stop the talking while members were watching a demonstrator. It was a hard battle but I was pleased when it was finally achieved.

The A.G.M. in 2000 saw me stand down as President and become Club Secretary. Noel Graham was elected the incoming President.

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Noel Graham**  
**2000—2003    2005—2007**



My first foray onto the Committee of the Christchurch Woodturners Club was that of President. Bruce Irvine had led the Committee and Club over a very successful term which included an international woodturning symposium. In the months that led up to the 2000 AGM no sitting committee member put up his or her hand to take over from Bruce. I was relatively new to the woodturning scene and was tapped on the shoulder by Celia Irvine. I was too slow in saying no, so got the job!

Initially, I felt out of my depth, but with such a great crew backing me my task was made easier and made me look much better than I deserved. Our members became committed to many activities throughout the South Island such as the 'South Island Fun Day's', 'Spin around Waitaki' and 'Learn to Turn Hari Hari'. It was always great to be part of this family. We were unable to score my successor until Dave Busby took over as President in 2003.

I thought that I had done my dash, but in 2005 I must have been absent when it was decided that I would become President again. This was a time when we were part of a group of South Island woodturning clubs, who got together with Aoraki Polytech with the idea of setting up an education programme; the start of which was to become the 'Aoraki Polytechnic Certificate in Woodturning'.

After the group decided what was to be taught, I was asked to write the learning outcomes and later the teaching notes for about 60% of the certificate. Jim Lowe took over writing the more complicated notes. My part of the writing would have been very difficult, if not impossible, without the advice and assistance of the people around me.

Soren Berger's, "Someone's got to get it started – just get on with it", was some of the best motivating advice for someone who viewed his skill levels were at a rudimentary level. Bruce Irvine and Rex Marshall become heavily involved from the outset.

In 2007 Pauline Morgan was voted in as President. Over both of my terms I was made to look very good by the work completed by the tremendous committee toiling away in the background.

### **WOODSOURCING WORKING BEE**



Noel Graham and Karen Boyd breaking down and milling timber

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Dave Busby 2003—2005**



I first became involved with the Club in early 1999 when Bruce Irvine contacted me regarding the hosting of the 'South Pacific Woodturning Symposium' in Christchurch. I was at that time Chairman of the North Canterbury Woodturning Club. The first of these symposia was to be held in Auckland in May. Bruce and I decided to see what was involved. Suffice to say, we attended. We applied to hold the second symposium in Christchurch and our offer was accepted.

A committee of the two clubs was set up and the next year flew by in a flash as the campsite, at Living Springs, demonstrators, materials and accommodation etc. were arranged. For me, this was my initiation into the well-organised committee of the Christchurch Woodturning Club. Membership of the Club and Committee followed in short order. I soon became Vice-President and then President.

The names of those committee members will be known to all Club members so I will only single out two, Bruce and Celia. They hosted numerous committee meetings (and suppers to follow) as well as keeping everyone informed of the meetings and events.

The Club hosted and organised another 'South Pacific Symposium' in 2005 at the Kaiapoi Scout Camp, which again was very successful. By this time I believe I was back in the Vice-President's chair. I was privileged to be a club member until I moved to Ashburton in 2008.

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Pauline Morgan 2007—2009**



It seems so long ago that I took over as President from Noel Graham in 2007 and then handed over to Ray Morgan in 2009. A president is only the front person for a very devoted hard working team that forms the committee. The Christchurch Woodturners Club has been very lucky to have had such a team since its first meeting 20 years ago. Many of these people were still part of the hard working committee when I was President. This made my job very easy.

The most rewarding part of being involved with the Club has been the sharing of knowledge by all involved, and the quality of demonstrations at the Club meetings. These played an important part in our monthly meetings. We even had a demonstration by Anna Dawes from Sydney. The three club members who committed themselves to teaching the Aoraki courses have ensured that the quality of woodwork being produced by all members has improved beyond anyone's imagination.

The highlights of my time as President have to be the trips to Hari Hari and Oamaru, where we had a chance to meet and learn from others, and catch up with the people from around the country who attended these events.

I would like to finish by wishing the Christchurch Woodturners Club all the best for the next 20 years.

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Ray Morgan 2009—2011**



At the 2009 AGM I was voted President of the Christchurch Woodturners Club. I really did not know what I was in for, but knowing the committee membership from the previous year afforded me great comfort. They were talented and experienced in the operation of the Club and offered me the necessary support and guidance.

Looking back over the period I served as President there were many satisfying times. The Aoraki courses ,run by the club, have proved to be an excellent way to teach woodturning to our club members. I for one had never used a turning tool before I attended my first introductory course.

An interesting project the club undertook during my term was to support John Ryan in his effort to assist disabled artisans and craft people in the town of Hoi An, Vietnam. John was trying to establish a network of likeminded people to support him in providing support, aid and instruction for those in Hoi An wanting to learn woodturning so they were able to provide an income for themselves. The Committee and the club members quickly rallied and numerous tools, patterns, turned samples and donations were made.

Over my period as President there were numerous talented turners who gave demonstrations at our meetings. We had Robin Cheng who won the 'People's Choice' at the Australian Turning Symposium in



Brisbane with one of his hats, and Rex Marshall who gained a commendable second place for his lidded box at the Auckland Show.

There were so many capable members, visiting demonstrators and events. The talents and experience our members had were freely offered and their expertise shared. For me, it was a rewarding time to be President. The 2010 December Christmas function competition was for the inaugural Jim Dunford Trophy. Members were asked to make 'wig stands.' Once judged, these were donated to the Cancer Society. It is pleasing to note that wig stands are still made by some members and passed on to the Cancer Society through Noel Graham.

A feature of my term as President was the interaction with other clubs throughout New Zealand. The meeting at the various woodturning weekends organised by clubs, particularly in the South Island, were usually held at Oamaru, Timaru, Hari Hari, Ashburton and North Canterbury. These weekends of turning and sharing of ideas certainly improved my turning but also gave me the opportunity to make some enduring friendships. Our participation at the Avic Hill Craft Fair, held each February, also gave the Club an opportunity to showcase, to the general public, the art of woodturning and also gave them an opportunity to have a go. It was an important public relations exercise which benefitted the Club by encouraging new members.

During the term of my tenure as President we all suffered from the earthquakes which devastated our city, surrounding suburbs and the rural areas of Canterbury. It was a harrowing time for us all; some more than others. But as true "Woodies" we stuck together supporting each other, offering help where we could and sharing what we had. Notably, we only missed one meeting night due to the earthquakes.

What was also heartening at this time was the support we received from our sister clubs all across New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom. It was humbling to know monetary donations came from across the other side of the world from among our kindred clubs to support those in need.



What my term as President has taught me is that 'Woodturners' wherever they may be and whoever they are, are the friendliest, most obliging, caring, thoughtful and sharing group of people. They are the people I enjoy being with for their camaraderie, fun and fellowship, and of course for the knowledge they share about woodturning.

## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOODWORKERS**

The National Association of Woodworkers NZ Incorporated, brings together both amateur and professional people, from all over New Zealand, who are skilled in working with wood. This organisation provides resources, support and advice to kindred clubs and organizations. It is currently responsible for the 'National Certificate in Woodturning'.

It's magazine is a source of advice and direction to woodturning groups around the country. It also has a comprehensive insurance scheme, which provides liability protection, and which clubs can join at cheaper rates than individually arranged policies.

Our members have been active in this organisation over the years. Noel Graham and Soren Berger have been Presidents. Bruce Irvine has served as Secretary and Pauline Morgan as the Membership Secretary.

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Pat Jordan 2011—2013**



I have been a committee member since 2001, apart from one year spent in Sheffield, England. This has enabled me to form close relationships with other committee members, and to appreciate the considerable debt the Club owes to all those who engage in becoming team members by sharing the load and their ideas on how to improve the club from year to year. The input of such a team does much to share the work among the committee and allows the president to focus on developing new activities and ideas.

This was best exemplified when several eager beavers persuaded the club to enter the '2013 Ellerslie International Flower Show'. The drive from Peter Clemett and the Show Committee was such that our entry received a Gold Award. This was an outstanding result, aided by many club members who offered their time and the loan of their pieces to make a wonderful display of 'Alice in Wonderland'.

The awards ceremony coincided with the club's monthly meeting. I was given the honour of collecting our 'Gold Award Certificate'. I had grand visions of accepting the award and then returning triumphantly to the club meeting proudly displaying it to all and sundry. However, when I reached the Clubrooms, the place was in darkness. The club meeting had finished early. For me, it was a salutary lesson in humility.

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Peter Clemett 2013—2016**



I took over the presidency from Pat Jordan in 2013, having served as Vice President for the preceding year. My three years in office have been stimulating, rewarding, and at times challenging. My humble thanks go to all members of the Committee during this period, who through their dedication and hard work have supported me in the role and helped sustain the Club.

Early in my term the club was faced with a considerable challenge to our operating finances. Income from running the 'Aoraki Certificate of Woodworking Course' was due to cease and the cost of renting our monthly meeting venue was rapidly rising. With focus, we were able to address the issues, and in the process secured and relocated to a new venue and also secured the continuation of the course under the NAW banner via student funding. Especially pleasing is that we were able to avoid having to raise the annual membership fee at any stage.

Other significant milestones for the club have included the addition of two new awards: the 'Show Table' for the best results in the competition throughout the year and the 'Peter Hutchison Memorial Trophy' for embellished and colour work. We again hosted a very successful 'South Island Interclub Fun Day' for two consecutive years, introducing a new turning competition format in the process. We have seen the 'Hands-on Nights' at Cobham Intermediate reinvigorated, a new pyrography group start up and the modernization of our website.

## INTER CLUB ACTIVITIES

Part of the camaraderie that is evident in the woodturning fraternity is facilitated at inter-club functions. Over the years these have provided a forum for the interchange of ideas, new techniques and hands on learning, featuring international turning virtuosos. There is also the fellowship to be had when like minds meet and 'chew over the fat' so to speak.

Long term members may remember the Waitaki group's 'Spin-a-round' held at the Iona Campsite at Herbert, 20 kilometres south of Oamaru. Our club has organised two symposiums featuring guest turners from overseas. Hari Hari, south of Greymouth, has been a popular locale for an annual interclub get together and some great West Coast hospitality. Closer to home, the Ashburton, Timaru and Oamaru clubs have played host to several fun and educational days.



**Projects in progress at the 'Learn to Turn' weekend in Hari Hari 2015**



A collage compiled from photos taken at the Avice Hill Craft Fair



Oamaru Turning Weekend 2015







Ashburton Fun Day 2016



## **WOODTURNING TUTORING CLASSES**

The woodturning instruction classes were instigated by Aoraki Polytechnic in 2006. Club representatives met in Timaru to discuss the proposed certificate and the Polytech took it from there.

Woodturners, with experience, were invited to write modules on woodturning subjects. The Christchurch Woodturners Club took up the challenge and the first 16 students met at Cobham Intermediate. It was planned to start with Saturday woodturning classes once a month, between the hours of 9am and 4pm, with necessary breaks for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

To cover all students, Noel Graham was the designated tutor in Course 1 and Bruce Irvine and Rex Marshall were the students. When it came to Course 2 Bruce and Rex were the tutors and Noel became a student. From Course 3 on there were three full time tutors and all went well. Courses 4 to 8 were also very successful. Several graduation dinners have been held and all graduates have been presented with their certificates.

By the end of Aoraki's involvement in 2014, 73 students had graduated with the 'Certificate in Woodturning'. The first graduation dinner was held for Course 1 & 2 on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009. After Course 8 concluded, the Government funding was reduced and Aoraki had to remove some certificate courses.

Our own National Association took up the challenge so that the courses could continue. They are now the responsibility of the NAW. Currently, Noel Graham, Rex Marshall and Joe Hayes run the woodturning courses on Saturdays at Cobham Intermediate School.

It has been pleasing to see women, in numbers, embracing the opportunity to learn the skills of woodturning in recent times. Some members are worried that we are not attracting young people to become members. The good news is that even if we attract people in their 50's or 60s, they will still have 20 or more years to participate in and enjoy the noble art of woodturning.





First Aoraki Graduation Class

Back row: Bruce Irvine, James Smith, Rex Marshall, Les Brindley, Bob Scott,  
George Forrester, Clare Strange, Cliff Strange  
Front row: Celia Irvine Karen Boyd, Bill Buckland, Ray Edwards, Robin Cheng



Second Aoraki Graduation Class

Back Row: Noel Graham, Mike Foster, Peter Lamont, Ray Morgan, Chris  
Albers, John Ryan, Brian Syder  
Front Row: Barry Stevens, Ryan Winchester



Third Aoraki Graduation Class

Back row: Norm Wood, Ray Wild, Denis Phillips, Bruce Osborn, Don Turner,  
Robin Blowers, Kingsley Clark  
Front row: Pauline Morgan, Gay Stenning, Peter White



Fourth & 5th Aoraki Graduation Class

Back row: Derry Gordon, Don Reeves, Stuart Croft, John Scott, Bill Keast, Peter  
Clemett, Rick Bolch,, Mel Orange, Mike Wing  
Middle row: Ian Walls, Pat Jordan, Jim Lunnan, Ian Warren  
Front: Tutors (left to right.) Bruce Irvine, Rex Marshall, James Smith, Noel Graham



**Sixth Aoraki Graduation Class 6**

Back row.: Ian Conway, John Mathieson, Keith Dunlop, Joe Hayes  
Front row: James Hsu, Keith Jenkin, Keith McFadden



**Seventh & Eighth Aoraki Graduation Class**

Back row: Rufus Culliford, Campbell Botting, John Nimmo, David Crampton,  
Keith Whiteley  
Middle row: Peter Smith, Keith Hake, Bill Parsons, Arnold Memelink, Ray Hall,  
David Cable.  
Front row: Gavin Buxton, Murray Hemmingsen, Tedge Memelink, Lee Whiteley

## **AN AFTERNOON OF REMINESENCES (cont from pge 11)**

It was unanimously acknowledged that the tutorial programme has provided enrichment for the club and also contributed to the increasing levels skills across the organisation. Funding from the Aoraki programme enabled lathes and other equipment to be purchased and provided funds for running the club. New members have also been a bonus.

Peter Neal said that his Christchurch Woodturning Club experience had taught him that he wasn't as good a turner as he thought. A watershed for him was when Soren critiqued his bowl and said the turner had used too much sandpaper. It immediately raised his expectations.

Charles Taylor felt the sense of being part of the club had been very important. The members had shared skills enabling standards to rise. He also enjoyed the people, the personalities and the exchange of ideas.

Bruce Irvine said he had enjoyed friendships in and out of New Zealand. The passing on of knowledge, teaching, learning and emulating the ideas of overseas experts, have been highlights of his time as a member.

Rex said being invited to help teach the Aoraki Course rapidly improved his turning skills. The Ellerslie Flower Show exhibit was a particular highlight. His competition placings have surprised him. He has enjoyed the company of some great blokes.

David Caddie did the Christchurch Polytech course in 1993 and attended monthly meetings. He has been unable to attend weekend activities, because of work requirements, but he has particularly enjoyed the demonstrations at the club's monthly meetings.

Soren said that the Club had been an inspiration and the fellowship great. He had been impressed with what the Club has achieved over its first 20 years. It had always been a teaching club and this has been reflected in the quality of work many members produce today. He suggested a great motto for the Club, 'Take the light and pass it on'.

## 2012 GRADUATION PIECES



Graeme Aldridge



Don Reeves



Bill Keast



Rich Bolch



Ian Walls



Derry Gordon



Ewan Allison



## 2012 GRADUATION PIECES



Ian Warren



John Scott



Mel Orange



Mike Wing



Pat Jordon



Stuart Croft



Peter Clemett

**GRADUATING STUDENTS  
CERTIFICATE IN WOODTURNING**

**Class 1**

Karen Boyd  
Les Brindley  
Bill Buckland  
Robin Cheng  
Ray Edwards  
George Forrester  
Celia Irvine  
Bruce Irvine  
Rex Marshall  
Bob Scot  
James Smith  
Clare Strange  
Cliff Strange

**Class 2**

Chris Albers  
Mike Foster  
Noel Graham  
Peter Lamont  
Ray Morgan  
John Ryan  
Barry Stevens  
Brian Syder  
Ryan Winchester

**NAW CERTIFICATE  
IN WOODTURNING**

**Class 9**

Michele Fitzgerald  
Liz McIntosh  
Don Morgan  
Katie Smith

**Class 3**

Robin Blowers  
Kingsley Clark  
Graeme Flett  
Pauline Morgan  
Bruce Osborn  
Gay Stenning  
Don Turner  
Peter White  
Ray Wild  
Norm Wood  
Gerard Sherwood

**Class 4**

Graeme Aldridge  
Rick Bolch  
Pat Jordan  
Mel Orange  
Ian Walls  
Bill Keast

**Class 5**

Derry Gordon  
Peter Clemett  
Jim Lunan  
Stuart Croft  
Don Reeves  
Ewan Ellison  
Ian Warren  
John Scott  
Mike Wing

**Class 6**

Ian Conway  
Keith Dunlop  
Joe Hayes  
James Hsu  
Keith Jenkin  
Keith Mc Fadden  
John Mathieson

**Class 7**

Gavin Buxton  
David Cable  
Tedge Memelink  
Arnold Memelink  
John Nimmo  
Bill Parsons  
Peter Smith

**Class 8**

Campbell Botting  
David Crampton  
Rufus Culliford  
Kenneth Hake  
Ray Hall  
Murray Hemmingsen  
Mike Mai  
Lee Whitely  
Keith Whitely

## EXAMPLES OF CLASSES 7 & 8 GRADUTION PIECES





## WOODTURNING ODE A Wife's Lament



Under the shade of the old cherry tree  
I sit quietly with the cat on my knee.  
The sun is warm, not a cloud in the sky  
It's a perfect day in late July.

The hum of the lathe is the only sound,  
And a burst of song reverberates around.  
Oh happy is the man by his hobby fulfilled,  
Creating beauty with his hands so skilled.

Idly I ponder on what's being made,  
Please! No more bowls, "Cos I'm sorely afraid,  
We will need an extension to house them all soon  
Other people renew kitchens - but we'll build a bowl room!"

All of a sudden, a crises, oh dear!  
His words are not fit for a lady to hear!  
I can guess what has happened, no need to explain,  
His dammed skew chisel has slipped once again!

I put on the kettle then walk to the shed,  
"Would you like some tea dear?" was all that I said,  
And, "Don't worry about it, I'm sure it won't matter,  
Just make it a tad smaller and call it a platter."

I woke up in hospital with a bowl on my head  
And a doctor and nurse by the side of my bed.  
The morale of this story is not very long:  
**Leave him alone when his turning goes wrong!**

## THE ELLERSLIE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER SHOW



What started out early in 2012 as an expression of desire within the Committee to seek more opportunities for promoting the Club and its activities in the public eye, by year's end had turned into a major project, taking us way out of our comfort zone. Presenting a collection of turned work was one thing, but conceiving and realising a full-on themed display to catch the imagination was an entirely different prospect.

A 3m x 3m booth doesn't sound like much, but when you appreciate you actually have 27 square metres of wall/floor area and 36 cubic metres of space to fill, the prospect suddenly becomes daunting. After exploring a number of possible themes, the 'Alice in Wonderland Tea Party' concept appeared to offer the best prospect for including the widest variety of turned and crafted items.

Keys to the success of our exhibit were a clear design vision, the enthusiastic support of the Show convener (Kate Hillier), the engagement and participation of a good proportion of our club membership, generous donations of materials from our sponsors and willing helpers at all stages of the preparation, build-up, and running of the exhibit. A highlight was the openness displayed by the judges in accepting our timber world as not only competitive in the 'Hort Galore' category, but rewarded with a Gold Medal.





The design concept was to show a logical connection between the source of the raw materials and the various craft pieces which would blend into an outdoor fantasy theme. The working title of the exhibit was to be, 'Scenes from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: After the Tea Party.'

The party is over and the guests have departed. The table is in disarray and furniture scattered around. In the garden natural elements and flowers, fruit, birds and insects, all crafted from wood, are integrated with living plants. There was a sub theme depicting the life-cycle of wood from birth to death and then resurrected, or re-birthing, as a crafted object.

The list of objects, made by our club members, included tables, chairs, stools, crockery, cutlery, a teapot, jugs, salt and pepper mills, cake stands, food items, bowls, platters, vases, flowers, planters and flowerpots. There were Wall hangings and ornamentations including hats, a fob watch, plants and flowers, birds, insects, a Cheshire cat and even a birdfeeder.

We discovered there was much "hidden" talent within the club. It was a huge undertaking and could not have been achieved without the contributions of many people. It has been estimated that the total effort represented across all contributors was well in excess of 1000 hours. It was a fantastic point of focus for club activities during 2012 and 2013 and created a real "buzz".

Having members on our stand at all times during the Show allowed great interaction with the public and an opportunity to observe their responses and gather feedback. There were lots of really positive comments about the exhibit and interesting reactions as people discovered 'hidden treasures' amongst the many items on display. We took up the opportunity to run live turning demonstrations during the Show. These were generally well attended and created more great opportunities for public interaction. It was a wonderful occasion for the Christchurch Woodturning Club.



## THE CLUB'S DISPLAY TABLES

From its earliest beginnings the Club has had a display table at its monthly meetings. Over the years the standard of work displayed has improved considerably and provided the impetus needed to encourage members to produce work of a higher standard and ever increasing creativity. In recent years the 'Show Table Trophy' competition has been instigated to introduce more competitiveness. (Compare these display tables with the two on page 7.)







## BEADS OF COURAGE



**President Peter Clemett presents 'Beads of Courage' boxes to representatives of the Canterbury Cancer Society in November 2015.**

'Beads of Courage' is a resilience-based intervention programme designed to support and strengthen children and their families coping with serious illness. Colourful beads are received as meaningful symbols of courage to honour and acknowledge each step of their treatment journey. Woodturners around the world are supporting this cause by crafting special boxes for the storage of the beads the young victims receive at each stage of their treatment.

These boxes, produced by our club members in 2015, were donated to the programme, here in Christchurch, through the Child Cancer Foundation. The Christchurch Woodturning Club was the first in New Zealand to make such a donation.

## COMPETITION WINNERS

## Jim Dunford Trophy

2011	Toys for the Methodist Mission	Peter Clemett
2012	Bowls of sweets for the Salvation Army	Rick Bolch
2013	Wig Stands for the Cancer Society	Ray Morgan
2014	Toys for the Salvation Army	Ray Morgan
2015	Beads of Courage for the Cancer Society	David Cable

### Show Table Trophy

## Peter Hutchison Trophy

2013	Peter White	2014	Peter Clemett
2014	Don Morgan	2015	Arnold Memelink
2015	Robin Blowers		

## 2013 Elleslie International Flower Show Gold Award

**Christchurch Woodturners Association Inc.**



## Inter Club Founders' Trophy



## 2016 Christchurch Woodturning Club

## CHRISTCHURCH WOODTURNERS CLUB OFFICE HOLDERS

### PRESIDENTS

1996—1998	Bob Dow
1998—2000	Bruce Irvine
2000 – 2003	Noel Graham
2003—2005	Dave Busby
2005—2007	Noel Craham
2007—2009	Pauline Morgan
2009—2011	Ray Morgan
2011—2013	Pat Jordan
2013—2016	Peter Clemett
2016—	Rick Bolch

### SECRETARIES

1996—1997	Denis Phillips
1998—2000	Cardie Brooks
2000—2014	Bruce Irvine
2014—	Ray Morgan

### TREASURERS

1996 –1998	Jim Dunford
1998—2001	Bob Dow
2001—2006	Pauline Morgan
2006—2008	Clare Strange
2008—2011	Mike Foster
2011—	Bill Parsons

### NEWSLETTER EDITORS

1997—2008	Bruce Irvine
2008—20009	Pat Jordan
2009—2011	Danny Brooks
2011—	Joe Hayes

### AUDITOR

1996—	Mrs Amy Caddie
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### PATRON

2000—	Soren Berger
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