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Splinters

June 2025

*The newsletter of Christchurch
Woodturners Association Inc.*



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Do woodturners use a skew to sharpen a pencil?



No, because apparently they get totally carried away and you end up with something completely useless!

Club News

Reminder

The next Club meeting is **Wednesday 25th June** 7pm at the Harvard Lounge, 31 Corsair Dr, Wigram, Christchurch.

Come along and join us and bring one of your creations for the show table.

Club AGM

The following Club meeting on **Wednesday 23rd July** (7pm, Harvard Lounge, 31 Corsair Dr, Wigram, Christchurch) will be our AGM. Notification will be emailed out to all members and nominations for the Club committee positions are most welcome. The AGM will be held alongside the usual monthly meeting activities and a turning demonstration. Someone mentioned there might be more than biscuits with the cuppa!

Support your club - come along and join us and don't forget to bring one of your fabulous creations for the show table.

For Sale Club Fundraiser - still some timber left

Olive root balls, Cherry Laurel (wet and needs cutting in half) and Oak timber for woodturning. These are for sale - \$25 of a olive root, or @10 for cherry laurel and oak.
First in first served... contact Nigel E on 021 186 2768.



Upcoming Events Calendar

Christchurch Club Sessions

- Wed 25 June** Club night demonstrator: Mike Ginty - spirals / barley twists
Sat 28 June Workshop session with Mike on spirals and barley twists
Wed 2 July Miniature turning workshop session
Wed 23 July Club AGM, Cake and Demonstrator: Andrew Biggs - embellishment
Wed 6 Aug Miniature turning workshop session
Wed 27 Aug Club night demonstrator: Kyle Burns - more embellishment ideas and techniques
Sat 30 Aug Workshop session with Andrew Biggs - making wig stands (See flyer at the end of the newsletter)
2026 Collaboration Workshop (**30 Jan - 1 Feb**) put this in your diary

Regional Events

- 22-23 Aug** **Camp Run Amok** Southland Woodworkers Guild (Invercargill)
20 Sept **South Island Fun Day** (Ashburton)
31Oct-2 Nov **Spin Around Waitaki** (Oamaru)
A 3 day woodturning event featuring demonstrations by guest demonstrator Paul Barton. Each demonstration is followed by time in the workshop so that those attending can have a go at the projects demonstrated. To see examples of his work, visit Paul's Instagram page: [@paulbarton_woodartist](https://www.instagram.com/paulbarton_woodartist)



The Art of Wood Exhibition 2025

A National Association of Woodworkers Inc Event

Placeholder for The Art of Wood 2025
Please visit <https://exhibition.naw.org.nz>

An Event of The National Association of Woodworkers NZ Inc.

"Promoting, fostering and encouraging art and craft in wood"

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.

2025 Competition will open for entries in August 2025

May Club Meeting - Show table...



Peoples Choice this month...

1st Peter - Model Train

2nd Kapila - Bowl with lid

3rd Mike - Spiral Goblet





May Monthly Meeting Demo

Peter Clemett - Multi-access Figurine Turning

Peter has been turning figurines for more than 10 years now, beginning with single axis figurines. Over that time he has refined his design and progressed to multi-axis figurines.

Please watch the demo video as you read through the points below as not only is Peter videoing the lathe work he is also including a presentation detailing what he is referring to.

The full plan set is up on the website and the video is available on this link... [Club_Demos](#)

A few key points from Peter:

- Encourages everyone to not regard anything (eg. Turning figurines) you do as 'I tried it, didn't really like it so that is where it ends' – put it aside for a while, come back to it and think about why you didn't like it, with the intent to refine aspects such as shape, timber you use, sanding, or how you finish it, and make it better.
- Keeping motivated to come back and do it again is the challenge.



- The drives you can use vary (traditional spur drive, Steb drive, etc.), but for this demonstration Peter used a live 'cup centre' at the tail end and a matching 'cup drive' (aka ring drive, cup, or safety drive) at the head-stock end of the lathe.
- A centre pin in the cup drive enables you to locate your work on the exact centre you want, it has no other function when driving the wood.
- Cup drives revolve the wood using friction and are great as they won't force their way into the wood end grain and if you do have a catch (high probability in multi-axis turning) then the wood just stops and the drive will spin in the end of the wood (hence its popular name 'safety drive').
- Prior to marking out the different axis points at each end, you need to decide which end would be head and which would be the foot of the figurine. Look at your piece of timber and decide if there are interesting grain patterns, burrs, knots etc that would be best as part of the figurines' dress, rather than on the head. The blank is mounted between centres with what will be the base of the figurine at the headstock end.

A. Profile Axis:

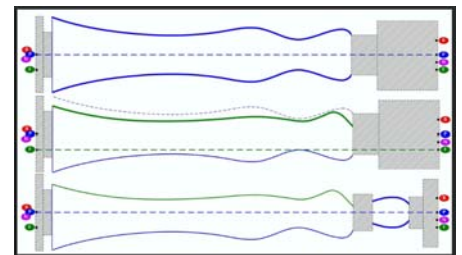
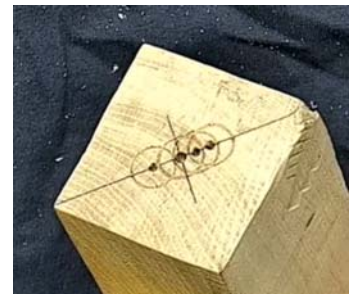
- The first turning is on the primary (or centre) axis at both ends. This is used to turn the timber round and establish the outside profile of the torso.
- Make a story stick to transfer key profile dimensions and layout onto your timber and then size these in – checking with calipers. Then shape the profile starting with taking away the excess wood and coming in from both sides so your tool doesn't catch.
- Aim for flowing form rather than straight lines.
- Remove excess with roughing gouge and tidy up and finish with a spindle gouge.
- As you finish with this axis – sand.

B. Front Axis:

- Don't forget to tighten the tail stock – but not too tight!
- Front axis (most exciting as is most off-centre and excess timber off) – run the lathe as fast as you can without shaking as this will make it easier. Focus on the ghost edge (shadow-line) to assist you when turning on the off-centre axis – helps guide. Make sure you present the tool for a bevel rubbing cut but don't press hard into the wood – you are just guiding the tool where you want it to go.
- You'll mostly be cutting air so move your gouge slowly and smoothly. The better finish you get with the tools, the less sanding you will need to do (generally by hand).
- Once happy with your front shape, stop the lathe and hand sand (100 through to 240 grit) the cut surface and edges to blend them together.

C. Principle Centres to turn the head area

- Won't be turning head completely but this will just help ensure that the head is in the right place.



- Remove excess wood with roughing gouge
- Don't turn too much off the end and accidentally remove one of the axis points!
- Mark top of the head and widest point from your story stick.
Using spindle gouge to complete rough shaping.



D. Back Axis points (opposite centres)

- Shape back of shoulders too small of back and under buttocks with spindle gouge.
- Work using the ghost line to make these cuts.
- Stop the lathe and sand to tidy up and blend edges.



E. Final Axis – Neck area

- Check your marking with your story stick.
- Use a narrow (10mm) spindle gouge to get into the tight space.
- Shape the neck from both sides (working to the ghost line).
- Under the chin try and get it as smooth as you can, to give you your finished surface (very difficult to sand).

F. Main Centre – Blending

- Blend in the shape of the head, then the back of the head into the back of the neck. Check the undercut under the chin is smooth and won't need any sanding.



G. Back Axis

- Clean up the shoulder area using spindle gouge.
- Tidy up the back until you are happy with the shape.

H. Front Axis – last cut

- Remove the last of the excess wood above the bust and going into the shoulders.
- Aim to get a nice curve in front of chest up into the neck area.
- Sand.



I. Primary Axis

- Final clean-up of the head area ready for cutting off.
- Undercut the base so that the figurine stands up without rocking.
- Remove from end pieces using a knife.
- If attaching wings, eyeball a line down the back, below the shoulder blades.
- Drill an 8mm hole for the wing attachment.



Wings

- For the actual wings turn a shallow dish about 1.5-2mm thick (depending on your personal preference), leaving an 8mm spigot in the centre.
- Review the grain of the wood and decide which way you want the grain direction in your wings to be.
- Sketch in a central access across the dish and then sketch out the wing shape you want.



- Replicate it on the other side.
- Use a scroll saw or a coping or fret saw to cut out the wing shape.
- Hand sand.
- Finish with paint or embellish– as you choose.

Great demo with so many steps and things to remember - thanks Peter.



If you want to re-watch the demonstration and get the exact steps, measurements, sizes and depths etc, it is on video.

You can get a copy of this from the [website](#) or by contacting Peter Clemett - membership.chchwoodturning@gmail.com

Suggestions Welcome

We are always keen to receive ideas for demonstrations or workshops and requests for specific demonstrators/tutors. Please email one of the Committee members above with your suggestion.



This months' Club Member Profile...

Keith McFadden

I first became interested in woodturning in 1979, the year I married my wife, Anne. We had a black and white TV and we couldn't decide whether to by a colour TV or a wood lathe. Well, you probably guessed, the wood lathe won.

Together with a skew, a gouge and a parting tool from Smiths City Market, I was ready to go. The lathe was pretty basic, made by Greys Engineering in Ashburton. I made a few simple candlesticks on it between centres and a few ugly looking bowls with the faceplate. I soon got sick of the limitations it presented. And a couple of years later, bought the colour TV!

Over the next few years the lathe spent most of its time gathering dust under the various garage workbenches of the next three or four houses we lived in. I would get it out occasionally and have a bit of a play, but still felt frustrated by it's limitations.



Sometime around 1996 I went to a woodwork machinery exhibit in Christchurch, and one of the things I found were these Nova Scroll Chucks. But how to attach them to my lathe?



About this time I met an engineer, I think his name is Tom Cholmondeley, who said he could make a shaft for my lathe with a morse taper and a thread for the Nova chuck. So I did that and bought the chuck and it opened up a whole lot of new creative possibilities.

I also learned of the Christchurch Woodturners Association, so decided to join. So I am not sure if I can call myself a founding member but must be close to it.

Someone also told me of the Otematata Experience, which I attended for a few years before it was shifted to Oamaru and renamed Spin Around Waitaki. I didn't go to these for some years, as it cost more for accommodation. I have, however attended, several of these events in recent years.

I am not sure what inspired me to take up wood turning, probably just the enjoyment of working with wood. It is an enjoyable way to be creative, and there are no limits to what can be achieved, other than one's imagination. I also find it an enjoyable thing to do while listening to my favourite Christian music.



Come along to our club nights and enjoy the company of like-minded people.

There is always:

- *tea and coffee with a biscuit (or two)*
- *a friendly person to chat with*
- *show table pieces to look at and vote on*
- *books to borrow from our library (remember to return them when you are finished), and*
- *a raffle.*

We meet on the fourth Wednesday evening at the Harvard Lounge in Wigram at 7.00pm.

National Association of Woodworkers

Wood Expo 2025

The Wood Expo this year was the fourth of this new format event and it just keeps getting better. NAW organisers in conjunction with support from the local club and a great venue combined to deliver a veritable feast for wood enthusiasts over two full days of the weekend.

This year's event featured a larger trade hall and an expanded exhibition of wood art and craft pieces from around the country, including one-off furniture items, on display. Special guest demonstrator this year, Neil Turner from Western Australia, showed off his artistic flair and methods he uses to create some of his signature forms and embellishments on both days. Rolly Munro from New Zealand discussed his inspiration and described embellishment techniques he uses on his latest series of high-end art pieces (tall, footed vessels drawing on Icelandic themes). Other demonstrators who rounded out the programme shared techniques and project ideas to inspire a wide range of interests.

After the success of last year's event in Christchurch it was great to see folk from around the country sufficiently inspired and motivated to make the trek to Upper Hutt. These types of events only thrive through active participation from across the country and are generally not sustainable from just within the host region. Our Club was well represented amongst the 120+ registered attendees – Ben McCormick, Kyle Burns, Patrick Campbell, David Caddie, and Peter Clemett doing the honours.

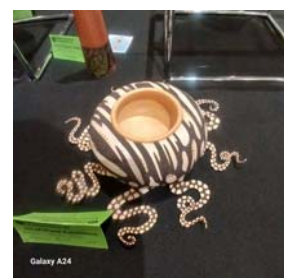
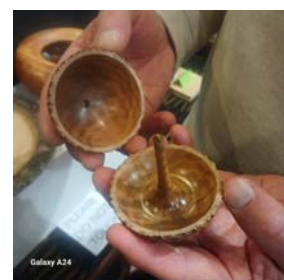
The Expo venue was the Upper Hutt Cosmopolitan ("Cossie") Club which is well set up for a function of this scale. One large hall was open to the public and dedicated to the trade area and display of finished work. Dick Veitch kept an eye on the show table and looked after sales of finished work. He also had his lathe set up and periodically demonstrated turning to interested visitors over the course of the weekend. At other times trade staff showed off various sharpening tools and techniques, providing welcome advice for those needing help to keep their tools performing at their best.

An adjacent hall, although smaller, still provided plenty of space for the formal demonstration programme and was transformed on Saturday evening for the grand Gala Dinner. An auction of pieces donated by each of the demonstrators attracted spirited bidding.

Demonstration slots this year were extended to 90 minutes each, allowing more time to explore the detail and work through all the steps to complete the fantastic creations being presented. Video facilities also took a step up with two, high quality, remotely controlled cameras. Video operator Craig, although never having had any experience of woodturning, did a great job of getting close to the action and the large screen televisions ensured everyone got a great view. There's no doubt this technology is an essential part of delivering a great experience and value for money for all attendees.

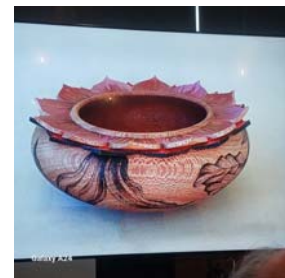
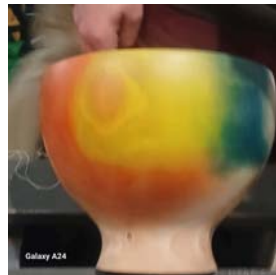
A standout aspect and common thread across the demonstrations of the complex carved forms from Rolly and Neil is the attention to detail and the way this is built up in layers. This also came through in the painting techniques described and demonstrated by Emma. Carving, texture, cutouts, and piercing at different levels on the surface of the wood, and layering of colours, adds depth and a richness of detail which really makes their work stand out.

Neil showed us how he creates at least 3 layers of detail in his coral inspired texturing of his form, whereas Rolly spoke of 5 or more layers in his current series of work. The work and skill level required is high-end, but then the results are truly spectacular. To give an example of the effort required, Neil showed pictures and talked about a large, open platter form he'd created which he'd covered entirely with his coral texture form. The piercing of multiple holes



from both sides of the piece as a final layer of his texture gave the piece a dramatic translucency as some holes from either side joined up. All in all, he said this effect required 300,000 holes which took him several days of solid work to complete. Rolly talked about some of his artwork needing to be completed in stages and taking over a year or more each.

My demonstration was last up on Sunday – no pressure after all the amazing displays of skill and artistry coming before. It seemed to go well and the audience was quite interactive, which always helps maintain interest. There were certainly a few afterwards who came up to me and indicated their keenness to have a go for themselves and I'm aware of a demo of the principles being planned for at least one other Club in the next month. Sharing ideas and inspiring others to try for themselves is what motivates me to show what I do, so in this case – job done!



The recording of my follow-on demonstration at our May Club meeting is available for the next few months at: [Club Demos \(Google drive\)](#).

Plans for the figurine, including the multi-axis turning sequence, are available on our Club website at: <https://www.woodturning.nz/projects/>

Numbers registered to attend this year's Wood Expo were about the same as last year, and whilst it is possible to break even at this level, for the event to be sustainable it needs to thrive and grow. That depends upon the willingness of people around the country to attend and the willingness of volunteers to help organise and run the event. We are very fortunate to have had the enthusiasm and consistency of the current team at the helm of the NAW to have formed the vision and driven it forward for the past 4 years. But that's not going to last forever. The NAW Committee is always interested to hear from those interested in contributing their skills and ideas for the benefit of the New Zealand wood working community. If you have views on how to improve outcomes for members or just an interest in getting involved, please let me know and I'll be happy to put you in touch with a representative to discuss further.

A few links you may be interested in checking out...

Oliver Gomis - check out his star bowls...

<https://www.facebook.com/OlivierGomisWoodworking/>

Brad - Q Branch Woodworks - mastering off-centre bowls

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjzEUI5upHY>

Stuart Furini - all sorts of embellishment

https://youtu.be/UjzEUI5upHY?si=MsbcmRSWIGscX_Ue

Christchurch Woodturners Association Contact Details

Patron: Soren Berger

Life Member: Noel Graham

Committee

President:	Nigel Elson	021 186 2768	president.chchwoodturners@gmail.com
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Members: Keith McFadden 03 352 0333
Joe Hayes 03 385 3910
Mike Ginty 022 164 3322
Abraham Faid 022 038 9919

Club Information

Club Membership	Details and registration, visit https://www.woodturning.nz/membership/
Woodturning Course	For information, visit https://www.woodturning.nz/courses/
Past Newsletters	Can be downloaded from https://www.woodturning.nz/newsletters/

Regular Meeting Schedule

Club Meetings	4th Wednesday of the month. 7pm at the Harvard Community Lounge
Open Workshop	Thursdays 1-4pm, 7-9pm at the Workshop, Auburn Reserve
Miniature Turning	1st Wednesday of the month. 7pm at the Workshop, Auburn Reserve

Embellishment * 2nd Wednesday of the month. 7pm at the Workshop, Auburn Reserve
***ON HOLD** unless confirmed by separate email

Making a wig stand



SAVE THE DATE

Collaboration weekend 2026

At the Workshop, 30/Jan-1/Feb 2026



Block out your diary for this special hands-on event

This will be a fun weekend of craft, teamwork, and learning at our workshop in Auburn Reserve. You will collaborate as a member of a small team to design and create an art piece based on your own ideas and inspired by the theme and guidelines that will be shared on the Friday evening.

You don't have to be an experienced turner or even a woodworker to take part. This is an occasion to bring all of your hobby and craft skills together, as a diversity of ideas, perspectives, materials, and techniques will produce the most interesting results.

Email Peter at membership.chchwoodturners@gmail.com to express interest and be put on the mailing list for information updates.

Registration Details will be notified later in the year



Our Club is affiliated to the National Association of Woodworkers NZ Inc.(NAW).

The National Certificate of Woodturning course is administered by NAW. Visit <https://naw.org.nz/> for more information



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