



Editor's Comments

Your membership renewal notice is attached to this Newsletter. **Please note:** *If you are a new member and paid your first subscription after 1st October 2004, you will not need to renew until December 2005. If you are in doubt about your payment date, please consult the Treasurer, Richard Bird.* By the way, there is no prize if you notice a couple of spelling mistakes. I only spotted them after I had begun to print the forms. Hopefully I will get it right next year!

We now have a colour version of the Gallery page on our web site. Do take a look if you have not already discovered it.

A new section in the Newsletter headed 'Shop Report' will appear from time to time. It will give up to date news of the Shop, especially when new additions are made to the range of stock carried.

On a later page there is a rather nice poem which should resonate with people who work in wood. I am grateful to Ken Horn who came across it and passed it on to me.

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Annual General Meeting Report

The AGM was held on November 11th. The Chairman, in his report, said that the Association had probably had its best year yet the Association has probably had its best year so far. Membership was approaching 100, thanks to an increased number of visitors, many of whom had decided to become members. The programme of events has brought us some excellent demonstrators, thanks to the work of Ralph Pooley. Other notable developments were the setting up of the Video and Book Library by Gordon Cookson, which is being well used by the members, and the long awaited publication of both the Members' Handbook, and the Hints & Tips booklet. The Association has long needed an effective web site, and the hard work of Christina Bishop has resulted in a new Association web site, which Christina keeps bang up to date.

The Association has been well represented outside the club room by members giving public demonstrations, and also through the Seminar and an Exhibition on the Uxbridge Library. The Seminar was an unqualified success in the charge of Gary Rance, backed up by the hard work of the

Committee and other helpers, without which the Seminar could not have taken place. The Uxbridge Library Exhibition was successful insofar as it broke even financially, but was disappointing in that public support was low, and support by the Association's members was negligible.

The balance Sheet shows a high credit balance, but the Chairman noted that most of this would be used soon for the purchase of new video equipment to replace the ageing and potentially dangerous existing set up with a modern data projector and new cameras. Health and Safety requirements will also make heavy financial demands on the surplus.

Hands on evenings continued to be a valuable part of club activities, but the Committee still needs more input from the members on what these enjoyable evenings should include. The Chairman was also very appreciative of the hard work and support of the Committee members, and of the contribution by Mary and Eddie Morgan who provide the tea and coffee for each club night. Equally, the volunteers who help with the moving of heavy equipment, and who donate raffle prizes, video tapes and books perform a vital service.

The Chairman acknowledged the hard work of all the Committee members, and noted the beneficial effect of having new members on board. As always, the Officers had provided the framework for a successful committee, and cooperation by the club members themselves had been a significant factor in the smooth running of the Association.

Because of illness, the Treasure was unable to be present, neither had he been able to have the accounts audited. However, the Members accepted his Draft Financial Report, and audited versions of the accounts would be produced for inspection in due course.

Election of Officers. There were only enough nominations to fill all the vacancies for officers and Committee. It was noted that as Adrian Needham had been co-opted as Southern Area representative for the AWGB he could not stand again as Secretary, but was prepared to remain on the Committee if re-elected. The Chairman, Alan Spargo was re-elected, and he in turn asked if the members would agree to the en bloc election of all other nominees. This was proposed, seconded and carried without dissent. With the election of Bill Mailes, the MWA has a full complement of officers and committee for the first time in several years. Once again David Moore was appointed to be the Auditor for 2005, and Adrian Needham was nominated as prospective member of the Executive Committee of the AWGB to stand for election at the AWGB Annual General Meeting in the Spring of 2005. The updated list of Officers and Committee is shown on the front page of this Newsletter.

The Prayer of the Tree

You will pass me by and raise your hand against me:
Harken ere you harm me
I am the heat of your hearth on the cold winter night
The friendly shade screening you from the summer sun,
And my fruits are refreshing draughts
Quenching your thirst as you journey on.
I am the beam that holds your house,
The board of your table, the bed on which you lie,
The timber that builds your boat.
I am the handle of your hoe, and the door of your homestead,
The wood of your cradle, and the shell of your coffin
I am the gift of God and the friend of man
You who pass by, listen to my prayer – harm me not.

Richard St. Barbe Baker (1889-1982)

An Evening with the President

In October, Stuart King treated us to a Video presentation. Stuart has a large collection of video tapes, most of which he has made while on his travels in search of now almost forgotten wood crafts. Some are records of old craftsmen in England, and others are of what he has discovered still happening in other countries, particularly eastern Europe. For this evening, he chose tapes made in England, and in Europe. In England he showed his records of the almost forgotten craft of Coppicing, to allow the growth of ash, chestnut and other woods to form poles of varying thickness. We were then shown the work of the maker of cleft chestnut for fencing, and after that the methods of making Chestnut Palings. This, for those who have not come across it, is cleft chestnut "sticks" joined together with galvanised wire to make a slatted fencing panel. It is still possible to see remnants of it here and there in the countryside, because it has an incredibly long life. Very simple tools were in use, and the skills with which they are used are now almost lost. The primitive machinery for linking together the palings was quite fascinating, and despite the later use of electric power, the process of making chestnut palings was very labour intensive. Sadly, the primitive factories where chestnut palings were made have now disappeared.

Until more recently some logging was carried on in Europe by small family concerns. Stuart has a record of such a group working in its last years. Again the equipment was basic - a tractor, chain saws and a flat bed trailer to load the timber onto. Essential equipment was the means of brewing tea! The family was led by an elderly woodsman who had spent his lifetime working in the forests. Everyone deferred to him, as he was the reservoir of knowledge for the group. Sadly, when he died, the family business collapsed, unable to withstand the competition of commercial logging.

Perhaps the most interesting part of Stuart's programme was recorded in Germany in the heart of the district which still produces Cuckoo clocks and an innumerable variety of small wooden knickknacks. Many of the methods of simple mass production revolve (pun intended!) around the lathe. In a folk museum the original methods are carried out by native craftsmen and craftswomen for interested people to see. The lathes are quite unlike our own sophisticated possessions. They are very robust - they have to be as the usual chucking method is to bash the wood onto and into the jam chucks with a club hammer! There are no guards on the machinery, and the turning methods used would have our Health & Safety inspectors gibbering and foaming at the mouth, but it is good that the old ways are still available, and the cottage industry still produces vast amounts of inexpensive ornaments. Stuart brought with him some examples of the methods used, and items made in this region of Germany.

All in all Stuart gave us yet another fascinating glimpse into his own personal archive, which is the result of his lifetime interest in old and dying wood crafts. Long may he continue to gather and preserve the memories of days gone by.

Programme for 2005

January 13th.	Greg Morton turns some Monkey Puzzle wood.
February 10th.	Paul Nesbitt does multi-centre work.
March 10th.	Les Thorne A Hollow Form or a Large Bowl.
April 14th.	Club Night. Club events and Celebrity turn.
12th May.	John Berkley. Secrets of some Puzzles.
9th June.	Don Murray. Flute Making.
12 to 25th June.	Major Exhibition in the Cow Byre Gallery, Ruislip.
14th July.	Mark Baker. Editor of Woodturning Magazine.
11th August.	Club Night and Hands On Evening.
8th September	Jason Breach. Resident Woodturner for Axminster Tools.
13th October.	Simon Hope. Turning Outback Timber and Wood Sale.
10th November	Annual General Meeting plus a short Presentation (TBA)
8th December	Christmas Club Night, Hands On.. Bring & Buy. Mince Pies.

Shop Report

In order to keep the shop up and running, I have tried to ensure that it is well stocked and at competitive prices. I have made contact with several suppliers who have been happy to offer a discount on our more popular lines, which in turn is passed on to members.

The shop stocks all the following items:

Before you even switch on your lathe think about your health and safety, Wear glasses and a mask.

When you need to laminate or join pieces together use: Titebond?, or 5 Star Superglue which is perfect to correct any digs in, chips, or fine cracks.

Having turned your timber to achieve the shape you might need to abrade any ridges, defects or sharp edges - you have three choices: Vitex sheet 120 – 600 grit, Hook & Eye sheet (Velcro) 80 – 320 grit, or power sanding discs 80 – 320 grit.

Now comes the most important part, the finish: First apply a coat of sanding sealer with a sheet of our paper roll, then use Friction polish or Wax 22 to enhance the characteristics of the timber.

I also have available an Axminster Catalogue if anyone would like to order items directly from them.

Any new ideas or requests members may have would be more than welcome.

I would encourage all members to continue using the shop as it enables us to make a small profit, which at the end of the day, all goes to the Club.

Ken Horn

Comfort Masks

At our request, most of our demonstrators are careful to avoid producing more than a minimum of sanding dust, but occasionally a demonstrator will use power sanding, which results in appreciable amounts of dust settling on the front rows of the audience. As you will appreciate, providing efficient dust extraction is all but impossible in our circumstances. For those members who are concerned about the effects of dust on themselves, the Association has provided “Comfort Masks”, which are available on request and free of charge from the Treasurer’s table.

Comfort Masks are offered as short term disposable devices which should not be kept for re-use. They are *not suitable for longer term use in the workshop.*

Comfort Masks are intended to reduce discomfort due to coarser non-toxic particles, where these particles do not exceed the notional permitted exposure limit.

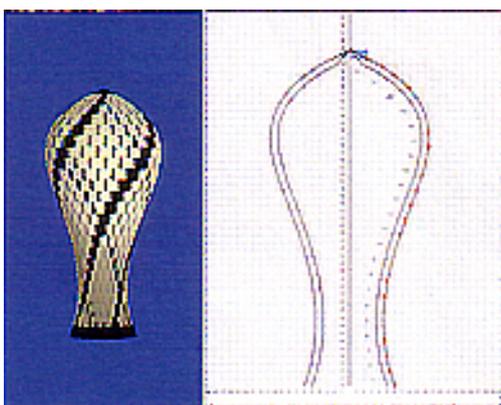
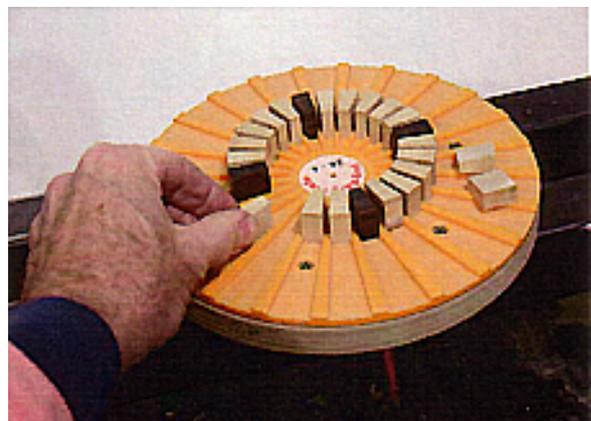
Comfort Masks do not comply with European Directives 89/686 or 89/656 for very fine particles, vapours, gases or paint sprays, and do not have a “P” rating.

Segmented Turning

After the AGM, held at the November meeting, Dennis Keeling was asked to give a presentation on his methods of making Segmented Work. It turns out that Dennis is not only a talented wood turner, but also an expert in the use of Information Technology. He had prepared a superb visual presentation which he gave to us via his laptop computer and data projector. He began with a history of his involvement in wood turning, with excellent photographs of his earlier work, and said that like many turners, he became tired of producing bowls for everyone! Looking for another way of using his growing wood turning expertise, he took a course with Tobias Kaye, tried pierced work, hollow forms and so on., but what appealed to him most was the meticulous work of creating segmented forms. At first he, like many other turners used conventional methods of construction. He found these often to be imprecise, and incredibly time consuming. (

Segmented turning Contd.

The breakthrough came when he visited the USA and saw the work of Bud Latven who produces segmented work of great beauty. Dennis subsequently spent a week with Bud Latven, which has changed his whole approach to his work. The key to Dennis' segmented work now is the use of a brilliant American computer programme which facilitates the drawing of the design, and then computes all the data needed for producing the many blocks needed to realise it. The artistic input is entirely that of the user. Only the drudgery of drawing and calculation is removed by the programme. The subsequent production of the many blocks requires great skill and precision on the part of the craftsman, but help with the final assembly is available by the use of a precision moulded plastic jig, also of American origin. Once assembled, the project is skilfully turned and finished in a largely conventional manner, mounted on a faceplate, but with due precautions to support the fragile assembly. Dennis had produced a print out of his presentation which some of us are lucky enough to have. Some of its illustrations are reproduced below. Dennis is now winning prizes in national exhibitions. He gave a smooth and assured presentation, which will have fired the imagination of others present who have attempted this demanding branch of wood turning. This was one of the best presentations that we have had during this year..



On the left is part of the computer programme which Dennis uses to design his pieces, On the right is the finished work. The rest of the pictures show various stages in his progress, together with the jig which he uses to build each layer of the work.

Photos by Dennis Keeling

