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From the Editor.

A Happy and Productive New Year to you all.

This is an interim Newsletter, which I am producing just to make sure that you all are fully informed about our Workshop evenings in February and April.

Sharp eyed members will have noticed on recent competition tables some box lids which have been decorated with intriguing patterns. I have published pictures of these too. They were produced by Tony Champion, who has become interested in Ornamental Turning. Ornamental Turning was a rich man's hobby in Victorian and Edwardian times, when very expensive equipment was designed and hand made machinery was invented for the pursuit of the hobby. Today, such machinery changes hands at phenomenal prices. £30,000 can be paid for an ornamental turning lathe and its equipment!

Of course at such prices these machines are often bought by wealthy collectors, and are never used again for their intended purpose, which is a great shame.

Tony Champion has tackled ornamental turning from the perspective of a not very rich retired engineer, and has made his own version of an ornamental turning machine, which can be attached to a standard wood turning lathe. I am very pleased to tell you that he intends to bring it to the **February workshop evening** and demonstrate what it can do.

Tool Sharpening Clinic

Beginning turners often ask how experienced turners are able to produce flowing shavings and equally flowing shapes with such seeming ease. The answer is simple They use really sharp tools. But tool sharpening seems to be something that beginners, in their rush to turn something, frequently neglect. Nothing, not even turning technique, is more important than properly sharpened tools. People spend hundreds of pounds on a lathe and a set of turning tools, including some tools which they will seldom if ever use, but will not spend the relatively small sum needed to set up proper sharpening equipment. They buy an inexpensive grinder, of course, but they stop there, not realising that it takes years of practice before tools can be properly sharpened freehand on a simple grinder. In the **April workshop evening**, we shall be demonstrating the art of proper tool sharpening, and the simple equipment needed to guarantee good results every time. Please bring your tools along if you think that they need to be properly sharpened, and we will show you how it is done.

What exactly is Ornamental Turning?

In ornamental turning, the material being turned is cut by rotary cutters. The cutters are constrained to move with geometrical precision by a system of metal slides, with stops to ensure repeatability. Accurate spacing is ensured by the use of dividing plates. The whole process is one of mathematical precision, and engineers amongst us would describe it as 'milling',



which is a common way of precision cutting metal. In ornamental turning, the cutters are often of the type known as 'fly cutters' and specially shaped "D bits' Now all this is probably gobbledegook to non engineers, but all will be revealed in February! Meanwhile, I show pictures of a fine Ivory needle case which has been in my family for several generations. The needle case is only eight and a half centimetres long, and needs to be seen 'in the flesh' to be really appreciated. I shall have it with me.

Alan

Christmas Party

There was a good turnout for the Christmas Party in 2014. Plenty of food was provided as usual by the Athletics Club, and there was plenty of opportunity for socialising. The Competition Table was in evidence, and the scores for this evening were added to the totals for the year. It was no surprise to find that Ben Dick had the highest aggregate score, and was awarded the trophy for 2014.



The main event for the evening was of course the "Ready, Steady, Turn!" competition. The object to be turned was a Christmas Cracker. Cylindrical blanks were provided by the Chairman, and marker pens were on hand on all the lathes so that decoration could be added. There was much furious turning! Only Ben Dick bravely produced a cracker that could be actually pulled. (It was of course a box.) and everybody produced a reasonable representation of a cracker. (Regrettably, I was so busy assessing the entries on the competition table that I failed to hear the name of the winner. Ed.)