



From the Editor.

Just some news items which didn't quite make it into the last edition of the Newsletter, on the one hand because I just ran out of time, and also because some details have become available only within the last week.

The Chilterns Show

It has been confirmed that the Chilterns Show, which is held in July, will go ahead this year, and the good news is that MWA has again been invited to put on a display with demonstrations at the show. We are expecting to have our own marquee as before, and we shall be able to sell our work if we wish. In previous years the weather has been excellent, and our contribution to the show has been very successful, likewise our sales of work. We shall give out more information during the June meeting, so think about getting organised!

The Middlesex Show

Do you remember the old Middlesex Show? MWA had a large stand at the Middlesex Show every year from the late 1980s until 2004, when the show, having become too commercialised, lost money and was discontinued. During that time, MWA won the "Best Stand" cup each year from 1990 to 1994, and after that we were told simply to keep it! I have it by me as I write. We were proud of our efforts, and really sorry when the show was discontinued.

There have been rumours locally in Harefield where your Editor lives, of the Middlesex Show being revived, but I was still surprised to see only a few days ago, boards in and around the Uxbridge area advertising the Middlesex Town and Country Show for the weekend of June 23rd and 24th. Times are 9.30 pm to 6.00 pm on both days. Tickets are £6.50 for adults and £3.00 for children. The Venue is Park Lodge Farm Centre in Harvil Road, Harefield, on the edge of the village. It will be a smallish affair, but with lots of country related activities and some impressive displays. MWA will keep an eye on this one in case there might be a place for us in any future Middlesex Town and Country Shows.

Turn Essex 2007

Most people knew about Turn Essex 2007, which was well advertised in the woodworking magazines. MWA was invited, and the Committee decided to support the show, which was raising funds for Essex Air Ambulance. At rather short notice a small group of enthusiasts got their kit together and drove over to Chelmsford, bringing with them items selected from the splendid display of the Instant Gallery at the MWA Seminar in May. These were to be entered in the Club Competition. We managed to get set up in time, only to find that we would not be able to use our M330 lathe! Luckily a turner from another club said that he had a Carbatec lathe in his van, and would we like to borrow it? Would we? Not half! Of course many of us had brought stuff we knew we could mount on the M330, but of course, the Carbatec is a very small lathe, so much of our material had to stay in our boxes. Luckily we had enough small stuff between us to keep us demonstrating throughout the day, hampered on;by by a chronic case of slipping drive belt for which there was no obvious adjustment short of a rebuild of the set up. There was some superb woodturning on display. We did not win the Competition, although our display was very good. It was just that another one was better! Altogether it was a very good day out for all of us. I hope to have some pictures to show you in due course.

MWA Seminar 2007

About fifty people were present. Setting up was a smooth and well practised operation, and we were ready in good time. Julie Heryet came prepared for any eventuality. Seldom have we seen such thorough preparation! In her presentation she covered turning techniques ranging from basics through to her speciality of hollow forms. We learned how she tackled her unique signature pieces, and of her interests in musical instruments, particularly percussion instruments. Her final piece was an instrument known as a Guiro. You haven't heard of it? Indeed only a few of us who were music enthusiasts had. In essence, a Guiro is like an elongated closed ended hollow form with a handle on one end. Its surface is turned with closely spaced grooves, and it is "played" by rubbing a stick along it. Not surprisingly it belongs to a family of instruments known as Rasps! As it is closed at both ends, it has to be made in two thin walled halves glued together. This called for neat planning of the correct sequences of turning. Different wall thickness and groove spacing alter the sound of the instrument. It is a rhythm instrument, much used in South American music.

Apart from the "bread and butter" turnings, Julie demonstrated her rather beautiful spinning tops. These were no ordinary tops of which thousands must have been made; they were boxes, made in two parts which screwed together. Again, great care was needed in planning the sequence of operations so that each part of the box could be chucked and finished all over. The photograph shows it all.

During the day, Julie found time to judge the Instant Gallery pieces. Standards were very high, and Julie commented favourably on several very good pieces. She had to select two outstanding pieces. From the MWA entries, Eddie Morgan was selected to take the Ken Graddage Trophy for the most outstanding work by an MWA member. This was presented by the daughters of the late Ken Graddage. His beautiful square bowl is seen below. The other prize for best overall went to a member of a neighbouring club. Regretfully such was the pace of events that I did not manage to record the details.

During her presentation, Julie invited questions on any turning topic, and was never stumped for an answer, often producing pre-prepared material to illustrate her replies. Judging by the amount of pre-prepared material she had, her preparations must have taken at least as long as her presentation, perhaps longer, which is how she managed to cover such a huge range of turning topics in the day. Looking back on previous Seminars, Julie probably packed more into her presentation than many other presenters have done. And throughout it all, her sense of humour and composure shone through. It was a high value for money performance, one of the best we have had.

Mention should be made of the sterling work of the Committee members throughout the day, not forgetting Mary & Eddie who made sure that we were fed and watered at appropriate intervals. There is room for only a few pictures here. There will be more to come in due course.

