



# WOODBITS

## NEWSLETTER

### Issue 213

### February 2024

### Welcome

## SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to the February 2024 newsletter. This month has the feel of a “Training Special”, so please let us know if you would like to take part as a trainer or trainee in future events.

### MARCH MEETING

Our next meeting is on 12th March and the Eagle- Eyed amongst you will already have noticed that our demonstrator has been changed from Terry Vaughan to Les Thorne. Les has kindly stepped in at short notice and if you are yet to see to one of Les’s demonstrations, you are in for a treat. If you are familiar with his work, you’ll appreciate that this is not one to miss.

### SPREADING THE WORD

Harvey Alison recently added an Instagram link to our website. This WILL attract some wider interest, but we’ll need some content. Please send us pictures of your work for publication – anonymously if you wish. - <https://www.instagram.com/hertsbedswoodturners/> or email pictures to me.

### TRAINING NEWS

The AWGB accreditation course was a great success, with all four candidates achieving Approved Tutor Certificates. Allen has written a summary for this edition. This has prompted us to start booking the future training events, whether for beginners or for those wishing to learn a skill in more depth. The club also subsidises training days with professional turners. For more information, please contact Mel Williams. - Details inside.

### COMMITTEE CHANGES

After many years’ service Julian Cooke has stepped down from his role as Club Ambassador and is replaced by Malcolm Wickens, whose profile is included in this edition. Malcolm and Chris Squires now make up the Ambassador Team, so if you are new to the club or new to turning, please contact them via club meetings and they will be happy to help.

The AGM is fast approaching in April. If you feel an urge to contribute towards running our club please contact ANY committee member. We are a growing club and more hands would be appreciated – in any capacity.

Please also notice that we have an extra special demonstrator booked for the AGM in April. More details inside.

FINALLY – an opportunity for a day out: On 10th August the club will be taking a trip to the first day of the Woodworking Weekender at Spalding, Lincs. - Tickets are rapidly selling out. Alan Wiggington and I are offering lifts to any member who would like to join us. Anyone interested should see the notice in this newsletter.

See you on the 12th March!

Adam Blackie  
Chairman

## CONTENTS

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN .....	1
Club News .....	4
December Competition.....	4
Display Table .....	7
Meetings Calendar.....	8
Competition Subjects.....	8
New Ambassador .....	9
Woodturning Weekender – Last Chance.....	10
Demonstration Emma Cook – Review by Tony Taylor.....	11
Training support from the AWGB .....	13
Herts and Beds Training News .....	14
Reviews of Past Events.....	14
AWGB Beginners Training event.....	14
Training the Trainers – Allen Kaye .....	17
Future in-House Training Opportunities – Mel Williams.....	20
How to Make - Projects.....	21
Garden Dibber – Harvey Alison.....	21
A Spurtle – Adam Blackie .....	22

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# Club News

## December Competition

### Beginners

1<sup>st</sup> James Blackie



2<sup>nd</sup> Pete Pocock



3<sup>rd</sup> Stephen Hills

**Advanced**



1st Tony Taylor



2nd Harvey Alison



3rd Phil Walters

Open

1<sup>st</sup> Harvey Alison



2<sup>nd</sup> Melanie Williams



3<sup>rd</sup> – Peter Kemp



## Display Table

This month I am also including photos of some very nice well-turned items placed on the display table. They were not labelled but if those who turned them could let me know please I will edit the newsletter for the website edition.

*Allen*



## Meetings Calendar

### 2024

Mar	12th	Les Thorne	<a href="#">No Turning Back</a>
Apr	9th	AGM + Nathanael Griffiths <sup>1</sup>	<a href="https://nathanaelgriffiths.com/">https://nathanaelgriffiths.com/</a>
May	14th	Terry Smart	
Jun	11th	Club Night	
Jul	9th	Simon Hope	
Aug	13th	Anna- Marie	
Sep	10th	Club Night	
Oct	8th	Steve Heeley	
Nov	12th	Mick Hanbury ?	
Dec	10th	Christmas Social	

### 2025

Jan	14th	Gary Rance?
Feb	11th	Steven Kearvell
Mar	11th	Stewart Furini

## Competition Subjects

### 2024

	<u>Beginners</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Mar	Ring Finger	Something Offset
Apr	Egg Cup	Egg Shaped Box
May	Dibber	Goblet With One or More Rings
Jun	Candle Holder	Lidded Box
Jul	Plate or Platter	Something Stained or Painted
Aug	Any Style of Rolling Pin	Bowl on Feet
Sep	An Apple or Pear	Hollow Form
Oct	Paper Weight	Two or More Woods
Nov	Bud Vase	Pen/Pencil/Brush Holder
Dec	Xmas tree decoration	Pair Candle Holders

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<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel began turning at the age of 13 and two years later won the Young Turner of the year award from the Guild of Master Craftsmen. He has exhibited at the Royal Academy's Young Artists' summer shows and was a runner up at the Company's 'Wizardry in Wood' competitions in 2021. In 2022, he received a bursary from the Company to undertake further training. He won series 3 of 'Britain's Best Woodworker' on Channel 4.



## New Ambassador

*Malcolm Wickens is now a club ambassador and is available on meeting nights to help both new and old members with questions about the clubs' activities.*

*So that members can recognise him and know something of his background he has kindly provided the following information.*

*Allen*

Malcolm Wickens – Club Ambassador

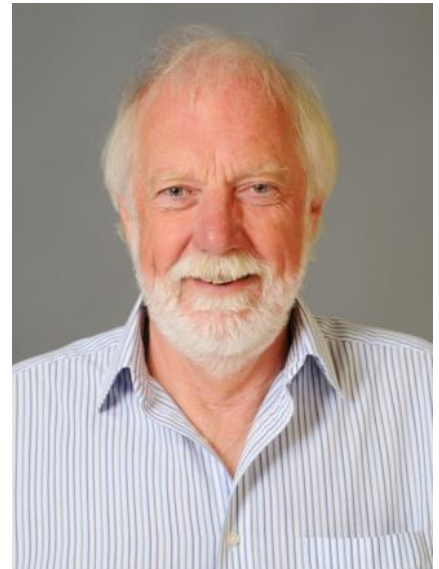
I am an electrical / electronic engineer by qualification and spent a lot of my early working career being posted to various countries around the world with the latter years mainly in Europe and America. I was abroad most weeks until my retirement in 2014.

When I was working the weekends were very precious and I spent a lot the time on the golf course and “playing” with my classic car which I still have. I bought her in 1976. It was during the planning for my retirement that I built a “man cave” and fitted it out with “stuff” associated with woodworking and turning.

Since this time, I have turned my hand to repairing items for neighbours to the making of bowls, platters, trays, lidded boxes, baby rattles, pens and anything else that has inspired me.

I have sold some items and made specials for presents including birthdays and anniversaries. I have been a member of our club for about 9 years.

Malcolm

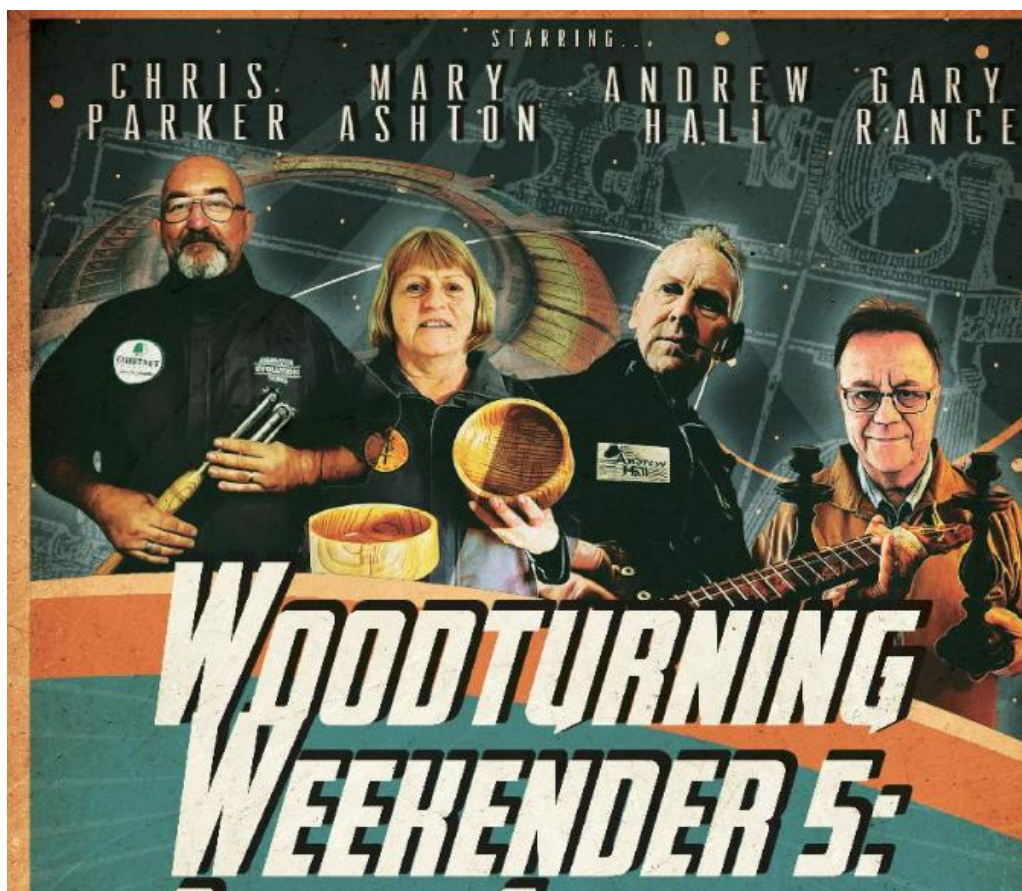


## Woodturning Weekender – Last Chance

As mentioned last month, Chestnut Products are running this event, and a number of our members are already going on 10th August including Alan Wigginton and Adam Blackie who are both offering lifts.

If you want to take them up on that offer please contact them directly on [alanwigginton@me.com](mailto:alanwigginton@me.com) or [Chairman@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk](mailto:Chairman@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk). Phone number for Adam is 07941 270 640

See below for a reminder of the event.



*Note the famous face on the right of the poster. If you want more info about the Weekender have a word with him at our next meeting.*

*Allen*

## Demonstration Emma Cook – Review by Tony Taylor

Emma is well known for her artistically decorated turnings and on this occasion showed her way of turning and decorating a square platter. She started with a piece of Maple about 7 inches square and 2 inches thick, chosen to be as free as possible of knots or defects. With the piece mounted between centres, a tenon was cut with a parting tool and then mounted with this in the chuck.

The surface was cleaned up, taking care not to damage the corners, by carefully cutting inwards whilst viewing the work against a dark background.

The next step was to cut another tenon on what would be the bottom of the platter. The tenon was dished and finished neatly as it would form the foot.

The desired gently curving shape was drawn on the edges and the wood carefully turned back to this, again taking care not to damage the corners. Sanding down to 320 grit was done with an inertial sander held sloping away from the work to avoid catching. The bottom could then be finished according to taste.



The work was then turned around in the chuck and the upper surface hollowed to achieve a uniform thickness – again cutting inwards to preserve the corners. It is wise to proceed in steps inward to leave supporting wood in the centre until the end. Sanding was taken no higher than 320 grit to provide a suitable surface to receive the airbrushed stains.



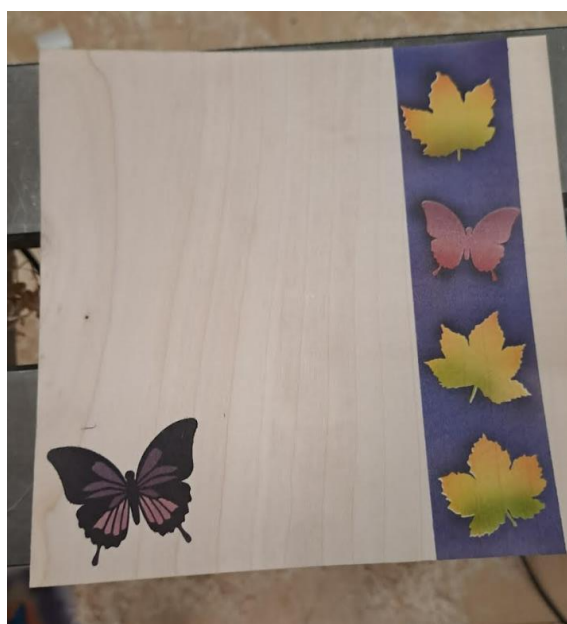
The surface was prepared for colouring by masking with quality masking tape, leaving two strips bare. Emma then showed us how to apply leaf stencils starting with the outers. She then used the airbrush to give an all over light yellow. This was followed by shading with red, orange and green from the outer edge to the stem. Once these colours were dry, the outer masks were removed and the leaves masked, allowing the background to be shaded in. A butterfly stencil was also used in similar fashion. Emma prefers to use simple low-cost airbrushes with gravity feed and it is not necessary to clean thoroughly between colours if you go from light to dark.

The final stage is to remove the masking, to clean up the edges and to apply a finish, which could be oil or lacquer. If using oil then this should be applied just once and left undisturbed.



Throughout the demonstration, Emma maintained a rapid commentary, full of useful tips. The club was very appreciative of her driving so far from her home in Yorkshire to give an energetic and engaging demonstration.

The final platter



## Training support from the AWGB

As a member of the AWGB, everyone has access to the support they offer.

The following list is a national one showing workshops that all AWGB members can attend. For more details see the AWGB website.

<b>2024</b>				
8 March	Beginner - Intermediate	Small plate / Apple / Pear	Gary Rance	Wendover, Buckinghamshire
9 April	Intermediate	Thread Chasing	Simon Hope	Great Bromley, Essex, CO7 7TR
18 May	Beginner	Basic bowl	Les Thorne	The Woodturning Shop, Four marks, Hampshire
18 May	Beginner - Intermediate	Improving tool techniques	Darren Crisp	Shaws Burn Woodturning Studio, Ashgill, Scotland
1 June	Intermediate	Table Lamp	Dennis Wake	Hartlepool Enterprise Centre, County Durham
11 July	Beginner - Intermediate	Novelty animals	Kate Kitchin	Tingley, Wakefield
7 September	Intermediate	Platter	Dennis Wake	Hartlepool Enterprise Centre, County Durham
1 October	Intermediate - Advanced	Bowl & colour	Mick Hanbury	Turners Retreat
11 October	Beginner - Intermediate	Humming Top	Gary Rance	Wendover, Buckinghamshire
6 November	Beginner - Intermediate	Texture and colour	Chris Parker	Leyland, Lancashire

# Herts and Beds Training News

In this section you will find two reports from recent training events as well as some details of future opportunities. If you have any queries at all or want to get involved, please contact Mel Williams for all beginners and member training. If you want to take part in the Training the Trainers assessment and accreditation, then contact Paul Boyes. More information about what these involve can be seen in the material following.

## Reviews of Past Events

### AWGB Beginners Training event

The first report covers the last beginners' event in Aylesbury and is presented through photos of the day. We were eight trainees/trainers. The club is grateful to our member Philip Francis (right) who manages the training room at the Queens Park Centre and who provided the facilities.

Mel Williams led a very successful day. Participants were Peter Hoare, Mel Williams, Chris Bentley, Bill Montgomery, Steve Hart, Sash Smith, Simon Wright and myself. We were well provided by the centre in terms of tea and a café to eat our sandwiches. Philip was present during the whole of the day providing technical assistance and making sure that we left the workshop clean and tidy for the next users. Topics chosen for the day were bowl turning, hollowing and small items using Peter Hoare's specially made gouges.

One slight hiccup with the special lathe designed for bowls only (no tail stock) was soon fixed by Chris – see photo below. Allen



Bowl turning with Simon Wright and Sash Smith with Steve Hart





Bill working on a hollow form



Chris with lathe problem now fixed (left) and Simon (above) working on a bowl recess



Two of the bowls from the day.



Peter and Mel

Chris 'fettling' the lathe





## Training the Trainers – Allen Kaye

The club took advantage of a service offered by the AWGB to support and then accredit members as Approved Trainers. It was originally planned to take place before Xmas but some staffing changes at the AWGB and Xmas itself seemed to get in the way. It finally ran a few weeks ago with four of us (myself, Peter Hoare, Adam Blackie and Harvey Alison) supported by Mel Williams, James Blackie, Paul Boyes, Steve Hart and Bill Montgomery as trainees.

We did originally have five people but we were told late in the game by the AWGB that they had one person from a different club they had already promised a place to. Apart from reporting on the day for your interest I hope to give some detail here as to what it involved and how it all came together as we have a plan to run a second event.

I have already confirmed with the AWGB development officer that they will fund another day if we can find another set of 5 people who want to go through the process. Firstly, to note there are no charges due on the trainer. AWGB funds the assessor and their travel expenses and our club will fund the hire of the room.

The AWGB provide some support materials on their website to give people an idea of what they are looking for. It is important to note that they are not looking for 'master' woodturners but competent ones who can work with a learner safely developing their skills. Each trainer has to demonstrate their skills for a session up to 45 minutes and then take a learner through a training session of a similar length of time.

In my instance for my first part, I was asked to use a roughing gouge to turn some wood round, then use a skew to smooth it using a planing cut. I was asked again to use the skew to cut V-cuts and then the inevitable beads and coves although we were allowed to use either the skew or a spindle gouge. Only spindle work was required. I did imagine that the range of techniques asked for would be wider – for example no bowl work however I guess that using a skew on a fairly simple project did present an opportunity for the assessor to check a lot of basic stuff and thus be confident that he had a competent and safe turner in front of him.

There was an expectation that the trainer would verbalise all of the actions – our assessor was particularly keen on the importance of the bevel and even with the roughing gouge we were expected to know and talk through things such as the importance of the shear cut for a good finish where the tool edge is presented at 45 degrees.

Paul Boyes is collecting names for the next group and will be arranging zoom sessions to make sure everyone who comes forward is prepared. Lesson plans are expected but we now have a few that can be shared to help people get started. I regard myself as a competent turner, but I will admit to many hours in my workshop practising the use of the skew as in the past I have tended to use it sparingly.

In retrospect I found the whole process valuable in two ways. Firstly, by reflecting on my own practice I think I am now a better turner and also through the feedback I hope that my communication skills have improved. Having the 'badge' is definitely not a requirement for trainers in club training days but we hope that members will appreciate that the club is actively looking to make sure the training we offer is effective and safe.

We did all have a good day and there was ample opportunity for conversation over coffee while we waited for our 'turn'. Photos follow – the smiles confirm the day was a good one...

*Allen*







### From the top

Peter Hoare with the AWGB assessor and then with Mel

Myself with the assessor and then with Bill

Adam with the assessor and with Steve Hart

Harvey with Stephen Gordon the assessor and James Blackie

Above right is James Blackie who ably helped the day by being a trainee for the Bedford woodturner.

If you are interested in joining the next 'Training the Trainers' event – contact Paul Boyes. His email is [paulboyes1@gmail.com](mailto:paulboyes1@gmail.com) - photo is below.



## Future in-House Training Opportunities – Mel Williams

The arrangements for the beginner's basics training sessions have now been completed. Our new training location is at the Queens Park Arts Centre, Aylesbury.

The beginner sessions will cover the basics of woodturning and some simple projects for beginners. We aim to train 4-5 people at each session, depending on the availability and skills of our volunteer trainers. The beginner sessions run from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm and the cost is £25 a head for each trainee. Training dates have been arranged as follows:

20th April – confirmed date and open for bookings

19th October – provisional date and open for bookings.

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We do also have ideas for future sessions as below. If you are interested in any of these, please contact me.

### **Woodturning Basics**

Intro to the lathe & workshop, Safety & Risk, Dust & PPE, Tools, Sharpening & Techniques, Choice of wood , Grain Direction, Work Holding & Drives, Abrasives & Finishes

### **Sharpening with the Proedge**

Jigs: skew, Proset, fingernail profiling & long-grind, Choice of belts: AliOx, Trizact, Diamond, Ceramic & Zirconium

### **Pen Turning**

Kits, bushes & blanks, Specialist tools – mandrel, assembly press, barrel trimmer, Drilling & gluing, Finishes for handling.

### **Rotary Texturing and Spiralling**

Types – Spiralling, Texturing, Knurling, Tools – Tooth pitch, Embellishing & burning.

### **Intro to Hollowing**

Grain orientation, Hand hollowing and Jigs, Posture & leverage, form shapes, Cutter types (carbide/HSS – ring, shielded, bit), Cutting sequence & tool presentation, Measuring wall thickness.

### **Turning Small Items**

Turning Small items for gifts and craft-fair sales: eggs fruit key fobs corkscrew letter-openers spinning-tops bottle-stoppers light-pulls, Kits & Special tools, Finishes for handling.

### **Intro to Lidded Boxes**

Box Designs, Work holding, Grain matching, “pop” fit lids, Hollowing out the interior, Finishes.

### **Thin Wall Turning**

Choice of wood, best shapes/designs, Work holding, Measuring wall thickness, Support options to reduce flex & chatter, Finishing as you go, reversing for the foot, thin wall hollowing pots & vases

That's all for now.

Mel Williams - Contact me on – [training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk](mailto:training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk)



# How to Make - Projects

As part of the Training the Trainers day, Harvey and Adam produced a couple of sets of instructions to pass onto their trainees as additional exercises. I reproduce them here for your interest.

*Allen*

## Garden Dibber – Harvey Alison



What you need:

- A suitable woodturning blank. Any hardwood will do, although oak is not generally desirable, as it will darken in contact with the soil. Ash or sycamore are good options. The blank should be slightly longer than the desired length of the dibber, to allow for holding the work, and approximately 1" / 25mm diameter.
- Spindle roughing gouge, spindle gouge, skew chisel.
- (optional) A handled wire for burning lines.

Steps:

1. Rough turn the blank between centres to approximately 1" / 25mm diameter.
2. Mark the transition point in the design, between the handle and the taper. The taper length should be a multiple of a desired number of graduated steps e.g. 1" / 25mm, to allow the gardener to judge how deep the whole is. 4" or 6" are commonly used.
3. (optional) Create a bead at the transition point, using the spindle gouge or skew.
4. Create the taper evenly, using either the spindle gouge or skew, leaving at least ¼" at the thin end to maintain strength.
5. Create a cove above the transition point, for the gardeners' fingers to grip.
6. Create the top of the handle as a large bead to fit the palm of the gardeners' hand, leaving at least ¼" at the end to maintain strength.
7. Mark the graduated steps on the taper and incise them with small V cuts using the skew.
8. (optional) Burn the graduated steps using a wire.
9. Part off the piece.

## A Spurtle – Adam Blackie



### What you need:

- A suitable woodturning blank. Any hardwood will do. Ash or sycamore are good options. The blank should be slightly longer than the desired length of the spurtle, to allow for holding the work, and approximately 1.5" / 35mm diameter.
- Spindle roughing gouge, spindle gouge, skew chisel.

### Steps:

1. Rough turn the blank between centres to approximately 1" / 25mm diameter.
2. Make a tenon on one end, remove from the centres and mount the blank in a chuck, supported by the tailstock.
3. Mark the transition point in the design, between the handle and the taper. The taper length should be long enough for a cook to avoid steam when using the spurtle above a pan of hot porridge.
4. Decide on a shape for the handle. Thistles are traditional, but any shape with a convenient grip will do.
5. Create the taper evenly, using either the spindle gouge or skew, leaving a bulge at the thin end. Do not part off from the tailstock yet.
6. Create the handle above the transition point, using the spindle gouge or skew.
7. The design could include a cove above the transition point, for the cook's fingers to grip onto.
8. Create the top of the handle with a larger diameter to enable the cook's thumb to grip adequately.
9. To improve grip, optionally mark the top of the handle with small V cuts using the skew.
10. Reduce the speed of the lathe and part off the tailstock support then....
11. Carefully support the piece and part off the chuck end – reduce the speed of the lathe to minimum for the final few millimetres of the cut. Sand the ends if any tear out occurs.
12. Finish by hand with any food safe oil finish.