



WOODBITS NEWSLETTER

Issue 243

August 2026

Shavings from the Chairman

Welcome to this month's newsletter.

Geoff Hannis gave an excellent demonstration of pole lathe turning in August; our thanks to Tony Taylor for the write-up in this month's newsletter. Our next meeting is a club night and, by popular demand, will focus on pen making and its many variations. We will also discuss the AWGB competition, the latest news from Horatio's Garden, and ongoing developments at Letchworth Men's Shed. If you have views or ideas about any of these club activities, please come along and share them.

This newsletter includes an appeal for Horatio's Garden volunteers. The commitment is monthly and teaching woodturning, not gardening, may be less demanding than you expect and is very rewarding.

The AV upgrade is now complete and will be demonstrated at the September meeting. We will also plan for the Christmas craft fair, and Peter Clark will update us on his experiences at Arlesey Summer Fete.

This month you'll also find a craft fair checklist which may be useful if you run a craft fair every now and again or if you wish to borrow the craft fair kit from our tool lending library.

September's competitions are candlesticks for all categories. This is the final call for contributions, as we need to assemble our entry for the AWGB October competition. Please bring along anything you have made so we can enjoy judging one another's candlesticks during the evening.

The Letchworth Men's Shed lathe upgrades are now complete, and I'm pleased to say the facility is being used weekly by many of our club members.

The tool library has also been significantly updated this year. Inside you will find a complete list of the items available to borrow from the club. The list is also always available on our website.

And finally, this month we've introduced a caption competition, and there will be a prize for the best caption to be announced at the September club meeting.

There is so much happening at the club that it can be hard to keep up, so I would like to thank everyone who has helped make it all happen.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 8th of September.

Adam Blackie

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A note from the (new) editor

The tools in your workshop will be different to those in mine. We all make choices, depending on personal skill, specific need, available space and available cash. For some tasks, there may be only one tool that does the job best, but I suspect that for many of us, some degree of compromise is usually necessary. I have tools, as you will, that are seldom, or never, used. For instance, I have several saws, some of which belonged to my father, a Stanley No4 plane that belonged to my wife's father, and a try square that belonged to her grandfather. I can still read his name, faintly, stamped into the wooden stock probably more than a century ago. Some we keep for sentimental reasons, others because we haven't got around to taking them to a museum or because "It might be useful sometime!" Some tools we have are capable of much more than we ever use them for. Multi function tools, like Swiss Army penknives, look impressive. Does anyone use, or remember, the Shopsmith multi function woodworking tool? I always thought that a really great idea, but practically one would probably spend much valuable time reconfiguring it to switch between functions.

As the new editor of the Club Newsletter I firstly want to thank Nikki James for serving the Club so well as Editor over the last few months. I am now trying to learn to use a word processor tool in ways that I have not done before. The most I have ever used one for to date is to produce an outline bulleted list. I have known it could do clever things like a "Table of Contents", but am struggling to learn how this works. I therefore ask for your understanding if the Newsletter looks different, or doesn't navigate the way it did last month. I promise to try to learn how to make it better!

Peter Clark

Club News

August Competition Results

Beginners

1st Gary Atkins



2nd Alison Bigsby



Advanced



1st Peter Kemp

2nd James Blackie



3rd Phil Walters



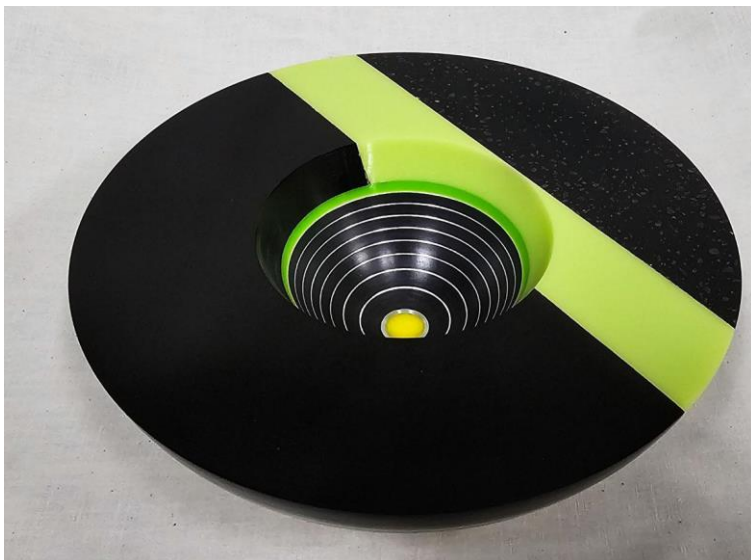
Open



1st Grahame Tomkins



2nd James Blackie



3rd Graham Lester

Meetings Calendar

2026		
September	8	Club Night
October	13	Steven Kearvell
November	10	Richard Peers
December	14	Club Night
2027		
January '27	11	Gary Rance
February	9	Andy James
March	9	Steven Gordon
April	12	AGM+
May	11	Ian Ethel
June	8	Club Night
July	13	Frans Brown

Competition Subjects

2026		
	Beginners	Advanced
September	Small AWGB festival competition candlestick	Medium or large AWGB festival competition candlestick
October	Platter	Bowl on Feet
November	Xmas Decoration	Wall Plaque
December	20 to 30cm Long Spurtle	Textured Platter
2027		
January	Paper Weight	Offset Goblet
February	Ring Finger	Wool Bowl
March	12 to 15cm Dia. Bowl	Natural Edged Vase

Turners Cockpit Award

Patrick Stileman has news of an opportunity for aspiring turners.

This is open to all members of the club.

Please contact the committee if you are interested and we can support your application.



The Turners Company

Dear Members and Yeomen

The Turners Cockpit Arts award is open for applications from 24th August until 27th September.

The Turners Award offers a year's studio space and use of a lathe and workbench, for an aspiring or established turner working in wood or other materials.

Further details are available on their website: <https://cockpitstudios.org/apply/awards-and-bursaries/>

If you, or if you know of anyone who could be interested, please get in touch through the link on their website. And please share this widely!

As part of the application period, they are also hosting an Awards Open Evening on Tuesday 15 September at Cockpit Deptford. The event gives prospective applicants the opportunity to meet the Cockpit team, explore our studios, hear from current awardees and pick up top tips for submitting a strong application.

The booking link for this is below:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/cockpit/2279289>

Best wishes

Becca

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Arlesey Fete

Support a Fellow Club Member at Arlesey Craft Fair

Here's a great opportunity to support a long-standing fellow club member at an upcoming craft fair.

Peter Clark, who has been part of our club for many years, is a regular craft fair exhibitor. He will be attending the Arlesey Craft Fair on **Saturday 5th September**, where he will also be demonstrating using one of our club lathes.

Peter will also be the first to use the Herts and Beds Woodturners craft fair kit, which is now available to borrow through the club library.

He would be delighted to see visitors from the club, and would especially welcome anyone who can spare a little time to help with demonstrations, assist with sales, or bring along their own wares to sell at the event.

Please see the event flyer and web page for further details. <https://arlesey-tc.gov.uk/>

Peter will also be at our club meeting on the 8th of September, so please do have a word with him if you are interested in attending or helping at future Craft Fairs



Harrogate Woodworking Show

Would you be interested in a day trip to the Harrogate Woodworking Show?

Fri 13th November 2026

We're hoping to organise a club day trip to the Great North Woodworking Show at Harrogate Showground, and it would be great to know how many members and partners might like to join us. Once we have an idea of numbers, we can start getting coach quotes.

If you are interested, please email Dave Washer (training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk) with your full name as soon as possible so I can request quotes from coach companies. Exact timings are not yet confirmed, but approximate pick-up times are 7:00 in Hemel and 7:45 in Stevenage. Estimated drop-off times are 19:00 in Stevenage and 19:45 in Hemel.

What to expect

Coach pick-up and drop-off from Adeyfield and Stevenage
Leading woodworking tool and equipment brands and suppliers
Live, hands-on woodworking demos by expert practitioners
Refreshments available at the venue
A great atmosphere, all under one roof



<https://www.harrogatewoodworkingshow.co.uk/>

Dave Washer

training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Horatio's Garden August update and appeal for help.

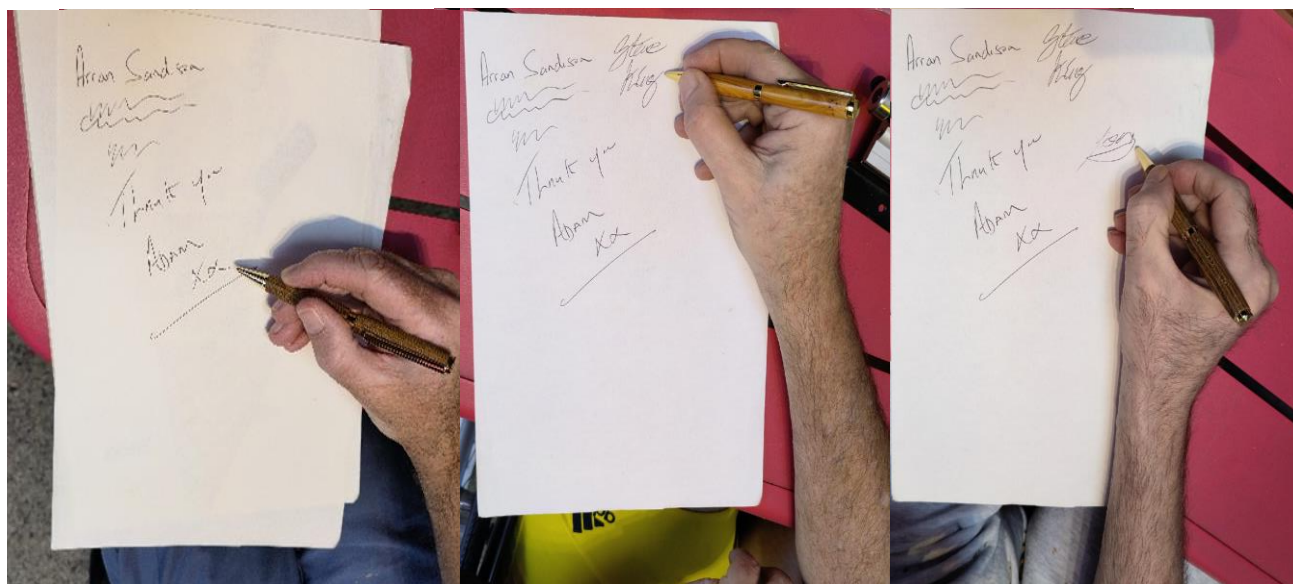
This month's visit to Horatio's Garden had two parts.

First, because the garden was short of volunteers during the hot weather, David Ireson and I spent an afternoon watering. Afterwards, we enjoyed a pub lunch on the way home and used the time to do some planning for my workshop reorganisation.

The following week, Peter from Middlesex Woodturners and I returned to Horatio's Garden for our usual monthly woodturning session with patients recovering from spinal injury surgery. We had five candidates this month but could only accommodate four because we currently have too few volunteers. If the person who missed out is still in hospital in September—though I sincerely hope their recovery means they are not—they will be first on our list to make a bottle opener.

We also need more help with organisation on the day. This includes moving the lathes from the storeroom to the workroom on their specially made sack barrow, and engaging with spectators, many of whom are too unwell or disabled to take part but remain very interested in what we are doing. **If you would like to occasionally volunteer** at Horatio's Garden, either as a turner or simply as an assistant, please get in touch. I would be happy to explain what is involved and how little commitment is needed.

The four candidates we were able to accommodate made three pens, which remain incredibly popular, and one bud vase. You can see some of the results of their work below, when all three pen makers used their newly made pens to send us all an encouraging message.



Adam Blackie – chairman@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Training update - Dave Washer

A further **Introduction to Multi-Axis Turning** course is planned for the **24th October**, we have two places left, so be quick and book the date today.

You may also be interested in the excellent training opportunity to the well-attended '**A day in my workshop**' where members can visit one of our members workshops and have a day of one-to-one training, honing your skills and techniques, a small fee is required for the day to cover club insurance and add to the club funds. It's a good way to get to know other club members too!

The club can also offer a discount on all group training delivered by a registered professional turner. This is limited to 50% of the total group cost or a maximum of £70 per person. I can provide further details if you are interested in this option.

Please do get in touch if you have any Training ideas, we are always happy to arrange at Aylesbury or a smaller venue if required

Dave Washer

Training co-ordinator

Mobile No. [07546 612450](tel:07546612450)

<https://hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk/>

Demonstration by Geoff Hannis – August 11th Meeting

Geoff started by explaining that his career started with a degree in Engineering leading to ten years working at Jaguar Landrover. He gradually realised that he wanted a change to a more outdoor life involving more sustainable activity and was drawn to learning to turn on the pole lathe. Since 2017 he has developed his skills and now devotes all his time to his business called From Tree to Treen in Bristol.

For the demonstration he showed the making of a bowl from fresh green wood. Whereas power lathe turners usually rough out the half log blank on the bandsaw, the pole lathe turner works with a very sharp hand axe on a wooden block. The secret of this is to work the axe in a constant plane whilst moving the work piece to form the outside shape, leaving as little as possible to be removed on the lathe. Geoff described it as a good axe stroking the wood, slicing, not chopping.



The blank was then mounted on the lathe through a spiked wooden drive mandrel and a steel dead centre on the tailstock. The drive cord made two turns around the drive mandrel. The tool rest was a wooden bar and the principal turning tool was a home-made hook with a wooden handle long enough to rest on the shoulder. Geoff's lathe was built from a framework of quite massive timbers surrounding the turner. The strain of working the treadle whilst standing on one leg and controlling the tool was eased by having an improvised backrest. Of course, the cut can only be made on the downward stroke of the treadle so the tool must be engaged then and withdrawn on the backstroke. The outside must be finished (save for the foot) as it cannot be remounted, and he discussed the merits of sanding or leaving a more natural tooled finish. He was in favour of not using oil but allowing the wood to naturally acquire a patina through use. He dwelt on the pleasure of using a natural wood bowl as something special to last for years.

Having completed the outside, he turned the piece around for hollowing. He cut down starting near the centre and gradually extended outwards, checking for even wall thickness with callipers. Finally, the central core was thinned down and snapped off. The remnant of this was removed with a carving tool, which was also used for finishing the foot, leaving signs of the hand work making them a feature rather than a fault.



Geoff's pole lathe.

Apart from the Club's lighting rig and the room's floor, every piece of wood visible is part of Geoff's lathe. Geoff developed this lathe from a style commonly used by pole-lathe turners after identifying issues with the original design, many of which related to comfort and posture. One improvement is the diagonal board shown in the picture, which serves as a backboard for him to lean against while turning.

Despite the fact that few of us will ever desert our power lathes for the hard physical work of the pole lathe, the audience were clearly absorbed by Geoff's demonstration and most impressed by his effort in bringing his massive lathe from Bristol to give us a most interesting evening.

I have posted a couple of short videos of Geoff's demonstration on FaceBook. You can see him in action here -

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1HAaJE1rh3/>



Tony Taylor

Craft Fair Checklist – A useful guide

Adam has kindly prepared a checklist for those that have stalls at craft fairs. This starts with the Craft Fair Kit, which is available for loan from the Tool Library that we operate. Peter Clark will be testing this out on 5th September (see advertisement on a previous page)

Craft Fair Checklist and Guide.

This guide is for members and offers practical hints and tips for running a successful craft fair. It is not prescriptive, so if you have better ideas, please let us know.

The Essential Kit available from the Club Library

The club has a 3 metre by 3 metre gazebo, which members can borrow through the club library. A link to the library is available on our website. The gazebo includes the following items:

- A 3 metre by 3 metre pop-up marquee with sides, guy ropes, water-filled weights and plenty of pegs. It is easy to put up, but requires two people.
- Three Herts and Beds Woodturners banners, each 2 metres long by 600 millimetres wide, with enough bungee straps to attach them to a suitable surface or to the front of a table or to the gazebo.
- Three sturdy folding tables, with tablecloths and clips to secure the cloths to the tables.
- Laminated A4 signs explaining who we are and how craft fair sales help support the club financially.
- A card payment machine. You will need to set it up on a smartphone before use. Payments will go into the club bank account and then be redirected to you.
- A range of paper carrier bags in different sizes, plus several rolls of Herts and Beds stickers. Apply a sticker to each bag before the craft fair starts. This is important because anyone carrying a bag with our logo is helping advertise your stall to other visitors.

Displaying items effectively.

Experience shows that products sell best when they are displayed well. Consider adding a tiered shelf to one of the tables to create height and depth. This can make your display more attractive and eye-catching.

How you display items for sale will depend on what you are selling and how much stock you have. These general guidelines may help:

- Everything must have a clear price sticker either on it or near it. For most turned items a small price sticker underneath is the best option, because it encourages customers to pick up the item and that is a very important part of the selling process.
- If you have several bowls of similar sizes in different woods, stack them from largest to smallest and individually display only a few of the best examples. This shows customers that you have more items to browse and encourages them to handle the work.
- Small items, such as light pulls, bottle openers and bottle stoppers, can be displayed in a large bowl with prices shown nearby. Consider offering a discount for multiple purchases.
- Pens can be displayed in several effective ways, but customers need a good selection to browse, ideally at least 25. Provide a few sample pens for testing on paper. A club leaflet is a useful choice because it also promotes who we are.
- If you have a tiered shelf, place your standout pieces at the top and centre of the display. Arrange complementary items on either side. This draws attention to the quality of the main pieces and helps attract the right buyer.
- Keep the display tidy while still encouraging visitors to handle the items. Check it throughout the day and reorganise it whenever it starts to look untidy. The aim is to avoid giving the impression of a jumble sale.

- If the event permits and you have another person to help, a live lathe demonstration can be a strong attraction. Be mindful of safety and use the lathe only in open space or for occasional demonstrations during the day. Even the presence of a lathe can draw customers and potential members to your stall. The club's small lathes, tools and related equipment can be borrowed through the club library.
- Weather permitting, place one table outside the gazebo and two inside, arranged so the outside table naturally draws visitors towards the others.
- Finally, think about how you present yourself on the day. This is a woodturning craft stall, so a clean, tidy smock with a club badge, and ideally an AWGB badge, helps create a professional impression. Aim to look neat, approachable and suitably dressed for a craft event, as this can help customers feel confident buying from you.

Sales technique for those who are unfamiliar with it:

1. Greet the person. Smile, make eye contact where possible and say hello. Prepare a short introduction that you can say confidently, such as: "We are Herts and Beds Woodturners, and everything on this stall has been made by one of our members to help support the club. Please ask if you have any questions." If you start to feel you have repeated it many times, that usually means you are doing it well. Remember, each visitor is hearing it for the first time.
2. Ask an open question. Start the conversation with a question beginning with who, what, where, when or how. For example: "What has caught your eye today?"
3. Match their interest. Pick up an item they have mentioned or been looking at, then start a conversation about it. Ask what they like about it, hand it to them and invite them to notice how it feels.
4. Close the sale. When the conversation is ending and they have handled the item, ask whether they are happy with the price. Be ready to negotiate if needed, then ask whether they would prefer to pay by cash or card. If they are not interested, thank them politely and move on.
5. Complete the handover. Give each customer a club leaflet and place their item in a suitable bag. Thank them for their purchase, and if they have expressed an interest in the club encourage them to get in touch or to visit one of our meetings.

Follow-up

Finally, if you run a craft fair on your own behalf or for the club, please take plenty of photos and send them, along with a brief description of the event, to the newsletter editor. They will be happy to prepare an article celebrating your success.

Project Ideas– Bottle Stoppers

I watched an online video recently and, to my surprise, it struck me just how much is hidden inside something as seemingly simple as a bottle stopper. In theory, they look straightforward; in practice, they can be surprisingly involved. This design by Jason Breach is a perfect example: attempt it, and you'll suddenly find yourself using three different tools to make one small stopper.



Jason Breach's design for Bottle Stoppers

Watch his video here <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1EjGpPtLs9/>

Adam Blackie

Project Ideas - Honey Dippers

Honey dippers are, I thought, a fairly simple project. Simple bit of spindle turning, what could possibly go wrong?

That was until I had a conversation with a local bee keeper at a craft fair where I was selling pens and he was selling – you guessed it – honey. He had a small jar of little honey dippers. The usual sort that you use to transfer honey to your toast.

Original normal design



He commented that, in his opinion, we have all got it wrong with honey dippers. The problem, as he saw it, is that the dipper is left standing in the jar, so stays full of honey. It would be better, he said, if the dipper had a small extended nose so that it can rest across the top of the honey jar, thus allowing the honey to drain off back into the jar.



My first attempt. It worked but didn't hold enough honey.

That idea inspired me to have a go at such a design for a recent Club competition. The basic design is simple, but I soon learned that it is quite important to balance the weight of the handle against the weight of the head so that it doesn't tip backwards off the jar. When the dipper still has honey on it it might be OK, but as it drains, the business end gets lighter and you have a situation where you may end up with a sticky mess on the table cloth!



Second attempt. (competition entry)
Useable, but "snout" not long enough.

What is the ideal number of "honey cells" (?) and how deep / far apart makes for the best experience? I'm beginning to think that there may be a reason for the traditional design!

If you are inspired to have a go at a "snouted" one, I'd love to know how you get on.

Peter Clark

Project Ideas - Napkin Rings - Part 1

Napkin Rings for My Daughter's Wedding

A few years ago, when my son got married, it was gently suggested that I might make napkin rings for the wedding breakfast. This opportunity appeared shortly after we visited his future in-laws on their small farm in Cornwall, where a recent storm had kindly deposited several native-species trees on the ground. In other words: free wood, and therefore no possible excuse not to turn it into something useful.

I duly set about making roughly 100 napkin rings, though the project soon expanded—as these things have a habit of doing—into turned gifts for the best men, bridesmaids, and ushers. My son also came into the workshop and turned a cake stand for his wedding cake, which was a lovely thing to be involved with and, mercifully, did not collapse under the icing.

Time has moved on, and my second child—my only daughter, and therefore by definition my favourite daughter—has announced that she will be getting married in April 2027. She asked whether I would provide a similar service for her celebration. I am now old enough to recognise an instruction when it is disguised as a request, so I readily agreed.

Having learned a few lessons the first time around, I decided I should consult a professional before charging headlong into another large-scale napkin-ring campaign. At the beginning of August, **I visited fellow club member Mike Fitz**, a lifelong woodturner with a well-earned reputation for finding the quickest route to mass-producing turned items. He also owns what may be the world's most splendid stock of exotic woods—though, naturally, access to it depends on whether he is feeling generous, optimistic, or temporarily distracted.



Mike and I came to an arrangement, and when I arrived at his house I was presented with more than enough blanks, already prepared and ready for the next stages. These included Tulipwood, Brazilian Rosewood, Satinwood, Mexican Rosewood, Striped Ebony, Honduras Rosewood, Anjan, Kingwood, and Indian Rosewood. Later, I also discovered a couple of Ebony blanks hiding at the bottom of the box, which felt rather like finding a forgotten ten-pound note in an old coat pocket, only denser and more turnable.

The best surprise was that Mike had already completed the first two stages of the process without any prompting. This is the sort of generosity that should be encouraged, ideally by standing quietly nearby and not asking too many questions in case the spell is broken.

Preparing the Blanks

Mike explained and demonstrated how he had prepared the blanks. First, he cut spindle blanks approximately 55 mm square and as long as the available timber allowed. These were then trimmed into an octagonal shape on the table saw, reducing the

amount of turning required later. Each octagonal length was then cut into 30 mm-wide sections, which would become the individual napkin-ring blanks.

To drill the centres accurately and repeatably, Mike made a simple jig for the pillar drill. This consisted of a couple of timber strips screwed securely to a plywood base, which was then clamped to the drill table in exactly the right position beneath a Forstner bit. The set-up includes some coarse grit sandpaper for better holding power. The blank then sits against the two strips and can be held by thumb or clamp, depending on how confident you are with your equipment—and how sentimentally attached you are to your thumbs. Very simple but effective.



The 35mm drill bit was set to cut to a depth of 29 mm, leaving a thin remnant at the bottom of each blank. This prevents tear-out as the Forstner bit completes its work. That remaining millimetre can then be pressed out before turning begins, and the inward pressure helps leave a clean edge. It is a small detail, but one that saves a great deal of muttering later. An excellent quality drill bit is also essential and Mike recommends Colt Maxicut bits.

Mike also recommended that I use a particular type of jam chuck and suggested a set of O'Donnell jaws for holding the blanks

once they have been rounded. That stage of the process will feature in next month's article, once I have had time to make progress and, ideally, avoid adding any new dents to either the timber or myself.

So that is Part 1: the project has officially begun, the blanks are prepared, and I have returned home with a box full of promise, responsibility, and expensive-looking pieces of wood. I thanked Mike, took the box back to my workshop, and began contemplating the best way to honour my daughter's request—while quietly calculating how many napkin rings stand between me and April 2027.

Adam Blackie

A New Turner in his Uncle's Workshop

Encouraging the next generation of turners

This is a photo of an enthusiastic young man in one of our members' workshops. I believe he is the nephew of a member and, although he has been aware of woodturning for some time, he had never really had a proper go at it before. From the look on his face, you can see he was thoroughly pleased with himself — and quite right too. There are few things more satisfying than making a respectable pile of shavings and ending up with something you can actually take home.



Spending time in your workshop, in that meditative little world of familiar tools, timber, dust, and quiet concentration, is one of life's great pleasures. It is your own time, spent exactly as you choose. But every now and then, it is especially rewarding to invite a new turner into that space and help them make something simple, honest, and deeply satisfying — even if you do have to pretend not to notice the slightly nervous first approach to the spinning wood.

I am sure this event created a lifelong memory, several future dinner-party anecdotes, and quite possibly the beginning of a dangerous habit involving tools, timber, and the phrase "I'll just pop into the workshop for five minutes." Judging by the smile in the photograph, I would not be at all surprised if a repeat visit is already being quietly planned.

If you have hosted a younger Turner and can share a photograph please do send them to me. Our objective is to publish one of these pictures every month for the whole of 2026 and I need a few more pictures to complete the year.

Adam Blackie — chairman@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Caption Competition

This month, we have been upgrading the equipment at the Letchworth Men in Sheds training centre.

As part of the improvements, we have invested in two new Record Power lathes. They are larger and more powerful than the small Axminster beginner lathes we previously used for introductory training at Letchworth.

The new equipment also gave us a chance to take a few photos. As you can see, Dave Washer is doing his best to put one of the new lathes through its paces, so we thought this would be the perfect opportunity for a one-off caption competition.



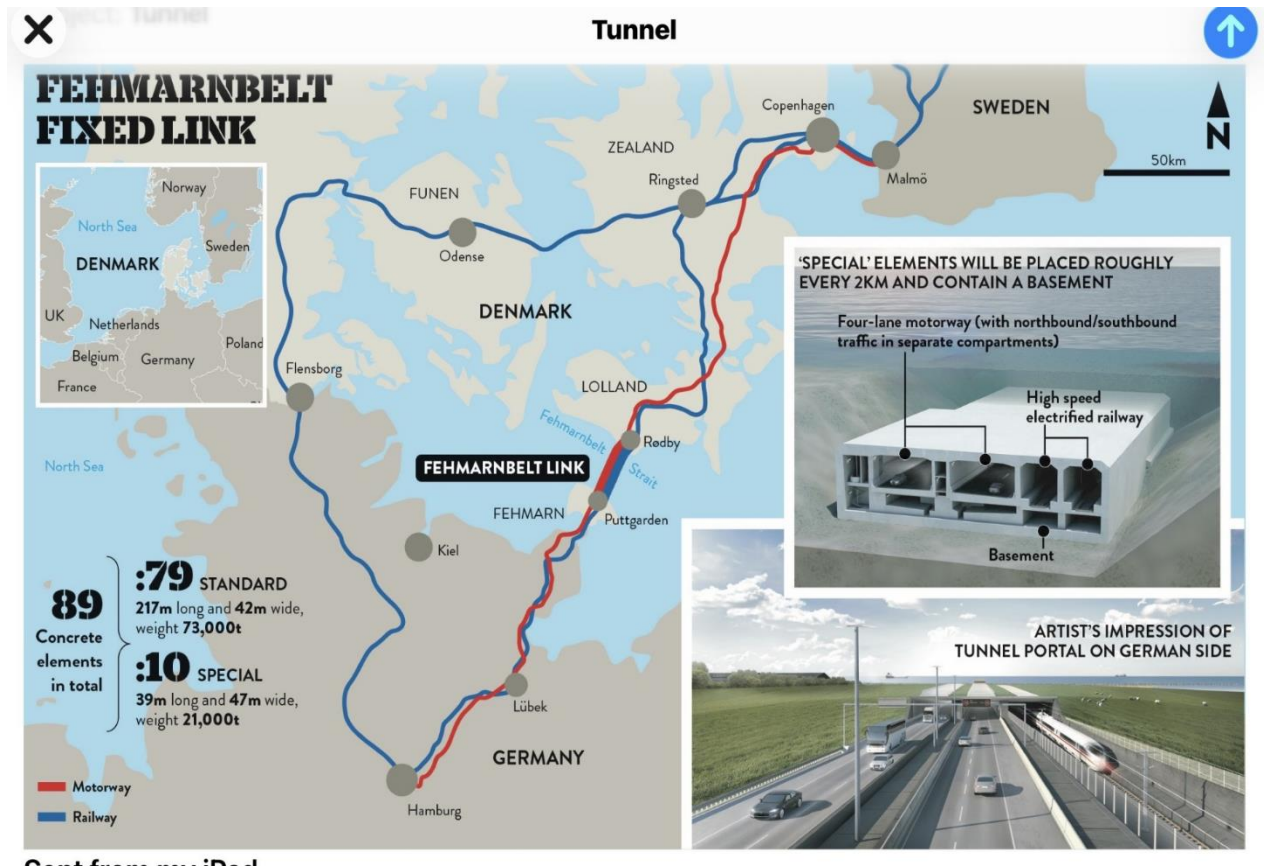
All I will say is that Dave came along to turn wood and gave the new lathe a very thorough workout. With a steady hand, a confident grip and just the right amount of pressure, he certainly looked like a man who knows his way around a tool. Needless to say, there is absolutely no room for innuendo here — but his bowl is coming along nicely.

Please send your captions to our new newsletter email address: hertsandbedsnews@gmail.com using Caption Competition as the Subject Line of your email.

The winning entry will receive a small prize at the September club night.

Poetry Corner

By way of a change I delved into other aspects of life, as ever and spotted this new undersea Avenue being built which caught my attention and prompted the following :-



Fancy a dive into man's ingenuity
 Here's a chance making new continuity
 Travel from Deutschland to Sweden was a complex route
 This 'neath waves submerged tunnel is the answer to boot
 Pre-made in concrete, blocks of such weight
 Put in place taking traffic, as always, in spate

Easing the exhaustive journey, of such time taking duration
 Reducing the need for any frustration's sedation

No 'trains and boats and planes' go through here
 Just trains cars and hgv's to make it quite clear
 Their unique one way tunnel will run smooth and run dry
 Totally immersed, unseen by the eye
 What forethought, making wheeled vehicle's provision
 In this water deep passage from a far seeing man's vision

Martin Sexton.

Tool Lending Library Update

There have been many additions this year. Here is the full list for your information and feedback.

WoodArt Products 35K Micro-drill detailer kit - INC 15 assorted cutters

Suitable for drilling, piercing, carving, and texturing. This handpiece has been developed from laboratory tooling and adapted for craft use. It incorporates two spaced sealed ball bearings on the chuck shaft for strength and smooth running. This is coupled to a powerful high-speed DC motor.

With suitable cutters, this is suitable for drilling and piercing on thin walled wood-turned items, and surface carving / texturing on wood-crafted items.



Robert Sorby ProEdge Sharpening System

The Robert Sorby ProEdge offers effortlessly repeatable sharpening every time. Hugely versatile, this industrial strength machine is built to last and delivers astounding 'factory finish' results without fail. Perhaps the most simple to use sharpener on the market, this system replicates the industry standard of achieving a flat grind using the preferred method of belts over traditional grinding wheels.

Sharpens bench, framing, carving and turning chisels, drill bits, plane irons, knives and garden tools.

Details can be seen here - <https://www.robert-sorby.co.uk/sharpening/proedge/wped01a-proedge-system>



Lion Art Deep Hollowing Tool

Take all the stress out of deep hollowing. Here is the latest version of Tony Taylor's Lion Wood Art deep hollowing jig.

It comes complete with instructions and a user guide.



Crown Spiralling Tool + Knurling Tool

This miniature spiralling and texturing tool brings a new dimension to decorating turned work. Use it to add a multitude of patterns, textures, and effects to enhance your work.

It comes complete with two spiralling wheels; a seventeen tooth and a twenty-seven tooth. The wheels are high speed steel, suitable for both hard and soft woods. Made in England.

More details can be seen here -

<https://www.axminstertools.com/crown-mini-spiralling-tool-952463>



The club also added a standard Knurling tool. Simply adds texture to your work and at around 10 inches in length, very easy to use.

Hamlet Brother System 2 Deep Hollowing system.

It's a monster tool, 26 inch handle and an extension almost as long, virtually limitless depth potential with this.



Details can be seen here - <https://www.toolsandtimber.co.uk/hamlet-big-brother-system-2>

CAPTIVE RING CUTTERS

These are used to produce rings that remain captured in the workpiece. It can be used Left and right handed and are 1/4" and 3/8" in diameter.

Details can be seen here - <https://www.axminstertools.com/crown-cryo-captive-ring-tool-3-8-506467>



WOODCUT BOWLSAVER BOWL CORING SYSTEM.

The Woodcut Bowlsaver Bowl Coring System's simple design is easy to use for turners of all abilities. Core a (maximum size) 14" x 6" blank in less than five minutes.

The options include $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 1" and 25mm toolpost holders and MT2 and MT1 tailstock adaptors. So it should fit most lathes.



Details can be seen here -

<https://www.axminstertools.com/woodcut-bowlsaver-bowl-coring-system-951128>

July 2026 Update - This item is currently on loan to Stepan Ptacek.

Axminster AWSL Benchtop Lathe

The club has three AXMINSTER AWSL lathes that club members can borrow. It will be particularly useful to any NEW MEMBERS who do not yet have a lathe and would like to try turning at home. It's a bench mounted lathe so needs very little space to set-up. The lathe also includes a beginners set of woodturning tools and accessories.



More details on the Axminster range of benchtop lathes can be seen here. <https://www.axminstertools.com/axminster-workshop-aw205wl-woodturning-lathe-230v-107699>

August 2026 Update - This item is currently on loan to Peter Clark.

HOPE carving jig.

Fits into the banjo and is fully adjustable. Allows the chuck to screw on and then hold your workpiece at a comfortable angle in front of you to carve and, or paint.

A nice feature is that the axis is indexed so when you loosen the handle to move, it doesn't fall and damage your work piece.

We have the **full range of tool posts and chuck threads**, so it will fit most lathe beds.



More details can be seen here.

<https://hopewoodturning.co.uk/lathe-accessoires/jigs/hope-carving-jig/172/hope-carving-jig-with-m33x3.5-chuck-thread?c=47>

Peter Child Artist's Pyrography Machine

Widely regarded as the machine of choice by many professionals. Powerful enough to create dense textures and patterns. It is slim, light and comfortable to use. manufactured by Robert Sorby, the build quality and attention to detail is of the highest standard.

Perfect for precise detailed work, warms from cold in 2 seconds,. The club model includes a range of pen tips to try and comes with a range of nickel wire so you can make up your own pen tips to suit own project.

More details can be seen here. https://www.ockenden-timber.co.uk/tools-accessories-pyrography-c-107_545/peter-child-artists-pyrography-machine-p-2152



Charnwood Pen and Keyring Turning Kit, 1 and 2 Morse Taper and Bottle Opener Mandrel

This complete 1 MT AND 2MT Pen turning kit contains all the tools you need to start pen turning.

- MT1 and MT2 – Colleted Type Mandrel
- MT2 - Compression Type Mandrel
- 5 x 7mm Bushes
- PENBT – Pen Barrel Trimming Tool
- PENTI – Pen Barrel Insertion Tool suitable for 6mm – 15mm diameter Tubes
- PBD7 – 7mm x 95mm long HSS drill bit
- Bottle Opener Mandrel
- Key, Ring and Bottle opener kits.

The collet type mandrel is quick to adjust and offers a strong action.



The collet that secures the mounting shaft ensures that the shaft is locked and centred in position to guarantee a perfectly centred pen.

The shaft slides inside the collet so that it can be lengthened or shortened to adapt to the length of the pen to be made.

The kit consists of 7mm HSS drill bit, pen tube insertion tool, barrel trimming tool, collet type pen mandrel, bushing set for 7mm pens.

AND here is a very useful guide for making pens - everything you'll need to know if you are new to pen making - <https://youtu.be/E-bzXki7Lf4>

Details about our kit are here. <https://charnwood.net/product/pen-turning-kit-2-morse-taper/>

August 2026 Update - This item is currently on reserve for the September Club Night Demonstrations.

Planet Long Hole Boring Kit Deluxe – MT2

The new Rotur Long Hole Boring Kit comes with a 2MT centre and a 5/16" x 24" Lip and spur boring bit for making lamp stands or drilling out other spindle work on a lathe.

With the lathe running, simply drill into to the workpiece through the tailstock and Hollow rotating centre in small steps until you get about halfway. Then remove the workpiece and change the pointed tip on the drive centre to the counterbore piece, and insert the drilled hole in the workpiece over the counterbore.

Use the centring rod through the tailstock to centre the workpiece on the undrilled end while tightening up the tailstock. Then continue to drill through the remainder of the workpiece.

More Details can be seen here. https://charnwood.net/product/planet-long-hole-boring-kit-deluxe-_mt2/



Paul Howard Sphere Jig

Designed by Paul Howard and now available from Hopewoodturning.

This jig fits onto lathes with a center height of between 125mm (10" swing) to 280mm (22" swing)

For lathes with a center height of 300mm (24" swing), a riser block has been purchased separately.

Developed by Paul over the years into the solid, accurate, and easy-to-use jig.

The standard jig fits onto most flatbed bars. We also have the adaptor for round bar lathe beds.

Please see the videos available to show the setup and use of this jig. There are three videos and they can be seen here. Please watch all three. - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9p3iVSOhiE0>



Ashley Isles 16 TPI UNI-CHASER MALE & FEMALE THREAD CHASING TOOL

16 TPI UniChaser developed in conjunction with John Berkeley.

This one tool chases both male and female threads.

The club kit includes:

- 16 TPI Uni-Chaser Male & Female Thread Chasing Tool
- Uni-chaser (threadchaser) RECESS TOOL
- Uni-chaser (threadchaser) ARMREST

A useful and simple guide to using this tool can be found here [on You-Tube](#)



Tenfer Woodturning Steady Rest for 12 inch Swing Medium Size Lathe

Compatible with 12"/ 310mm swing lathe. The Lathe steady rest is great for eliminating the vibration and wobble while turning long and slender pieces. The base of this steady rest has adjustable spacer blocks providing a secure fit on lathe beds. The non-marring wheels have a wide range of movement so it can be used as a bowl rest as well as a steady rest.

Base to top: 400mm. Center height: 155mm

- This steady rest is compatible with 310mm / 12" swing lathe. Easy installation, no additional hardware required.
- The position of each wheel can be adjusted individually. Which gives it a wide range to easily adapt to any turning pieces from 13mm to 150mm
- Can be used for turning long spindles like baseball bats, table and chair legs.
- The wheels are made of Non marring soft material, and it has high strength to tightly hold the pieces.
- Heavy duty construction ensuring safe and excellent control.

This item can be **made available to members via Peter Clark**, who has generously offered to lend this specialist tool to any member who would like to try before they buy.

It is available via Amazon - Search for "Tenfer Woodturning Steady Rest"



Paul Howard's fluting jig AND index system.

Height-adjustable fluting jig for processing surfaces in long and cross timber. Due to the numerous setting options, the jig can be adapted to almost any workpiece. The jig can be used to make decorative millings, bores, and fluting in bowls, balusters, columns, table legs, boxes, spheres, and other turning work. The device is guided by hand over a plate fixed to the bench bed.

A router is included with the device.

Routers with a clamping neck diameter of 65 mm and 43 mm can be mounted in the holder of the device. Drills, straight grinders, or similar tools with a clamping collar of 65 mm or 43 mm can also be attached to the milling device.

The jig is positioned with the clamped router in such a way that the guide bush touches the workpiece. In order to carry out the milling at the desired position, the apparatus is moved accordingly.

This kit is available via the [Simon Hope Website](#) shop.



July 2026 Update - This item is currently on loan to Graham Tomkins.

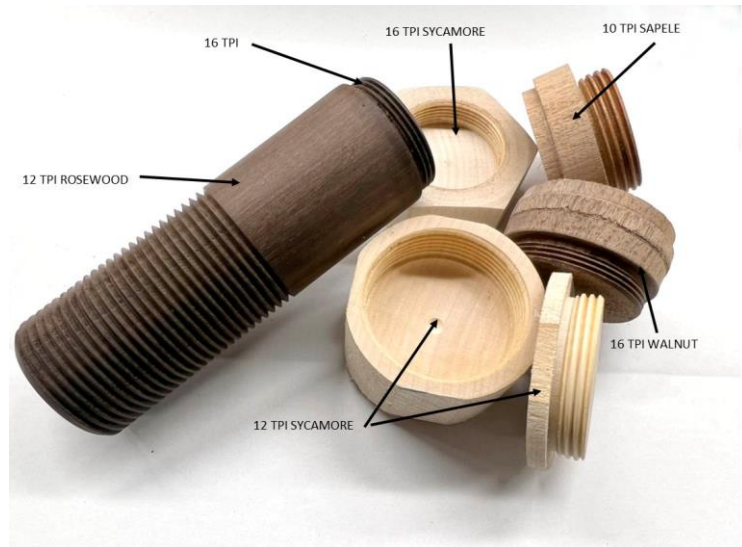
Simon Hope Easy-Set Threading Jig.

Its called the easy-set threading jig because the depth cut is done by simply twisting a handle on the jig to push the workpiece into the tool set to cut the thread. The system has an internal click system so 9 twist clicks give you the depth for the 12 TPI , 7 twist clicks gives you the depth for the 14 TPI, 5 twist clicks gives you the depth for the 16 tpi and 3 twist clicks give to the depth for the 20 tpi. The set-up gives a 6" swing so it can fit to most lathes.

The club library has ALL the options so should fit all lathes. .

More details and instructions can be seen

here - <https://hopewoodturning.co.uk/lathe-accessories/jigs/hope-easy-threading-jig/471/threading-jig-full-kit?c=18>



Crush Grind Pepper Mill kit

The Sorby cutter makes the recess for the Crush Grind kits easy to achieve.



This kit also comes with comprehensive instructions, all the cutters needed to make the correct sized holes and accessories for both MT1 and MT2 lathes. The Crush Grind mechanisms are readily available on-line and recommended links are included in the instructions.

A4 Laminator

For those projects where a set of instructions will be used over and over - and you want them to last. Simple to use and comes with everything you'll need.



Complete Craft Fair set-up

Try Selling at a Craft Fair

If you have never taken part in a craft fair, we encourage you to give it a try. It is a rewarding experience, especially when customers respond so positively to the skill and creativity behind our work.

Support Available

The initial cost of setting up a professional-looking stand can be significant, particularly when buying the equipment needed for outdoor events. To help members take their first step, the club can offer the following items:



- A 3 metre by 3 metre pop-up gazebo with sides and suitable anchors
- Three sturdy trestle tables
- A Herts and Beds Woodturners banner to advertise your stand, complete with bungee straps for attaching it to the gazebo
- White tablecloths and clips to best present your wares.



Two Way Club Contribution

Several club members have experience of outdoor craft fairs and can offer practical advice. A successful day can generate takings of up to £750. We also encourage members to come along on the day to support you, whether by helping with set-up and breakdown or by assisting with sales.

In return for the use of the club equipment, we ask that you:

- contribute a percentage of your takings to club funds
- hand out club leaflets (as if they were confetti)

All helping us improve what we offer to all members.

How to Get Involved

If you are interested, please contact the chairman and we will do our best to help make it happen.

July 2026 Update - This item is currently on loan to Peter Clark

Lending Library Process and Rules

This is intended as a lending library of the more esoteric or expensive tools that turners use infrequently.

The value to the club is that:

Club members can try before they buy or

Club members can borrow a tool for a specific job.

How does this work?

- To borrow a tool, simply contact Adam Blackie who will confirm availability and then arrange for the item to be available for collection.
- Items will be available for collection at the next club meeting, (or in person by arrangement.)

How long can I keep the tools for?

- This depends on the project, but generally we expect the tools to be returned in usable condition at the next available club meeting.
- Longer term loans by negotiation.

How much will it cost?

It's normally free of charge, however:

- If you break it or
- If the tool uses consumable items (inc. sanding pads, grinding belts, stains and polishes, pen kits)

we would expect some contribution towards the replacement.

What else do I need to know?

Once the loan is completed we ask that you share a little about your experience of the tools with the club. E.g. Show and tell what you made or an article for the monthly newsletter.

Tool Library Contact

Adam Blackie

07941 270640

treasurer@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk