



WOODBITS NEWSLETTER Issue 230 July 2025

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Our last demonstration by ornamental turner Colin Spencer was something different for the club and was attended by 46 members and guests. We also welcomed six new members which brings our membership to almost 100.

On June 25th we delivered the first woodturning session for spinal injuries patients at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Middlesex and a review of the event is included inside. A second lathe will be delivered on July 23rd after which we will be all set for regular monthly sessions.

On the 19th of July Dave Washer organised a Celtic Knot training session at Aylesbury. Attended by five members and run successfully by Paul Boyes; we have a new set of skills available at the club. Looking forward, our next meeting is on 12th August and includes a demonstration by Greg Moreton, based in Surrey his work can be seen here - <https://www.moreton.co.uk/>. There will also be another workshop clearance event, so bring some pocket money – You know you're worth it.

The competition subjects are a pair of Coasters for Beginners and a Natural Edge Vase for Advanced – both are best sellers at craft fairs.

A reminder that the Harpenden AOTC event was cancelled due to poor weather. The good news is that it has been rescheduled for the 30th / 31st August. You can help if you have any surplus items that could be sold for club funds by donating donate them at the welcome table at the August meeting.

That's all for this month. See you on the 12th

Adam Blackie

Chairman

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Club News

July Competition

Beginners



1st Patrick Stileman



2nd No Name

If this was your handle –
please let me know and I
will update the newsletter
version on the website .

Allen

Advanced



1st Tony Taylor



2nd Peter Kemp

Chairmans
Choice



3rd Phil Walters

Open



1st Keith Goddard



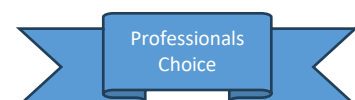
2nd Steve Hart



2nd Peter Hoare



Platter – James Blackie



Meetings Calendar

2025

Aug 12 Greg Moreton
Sept 9 Club Night
Oct 14 Kade Bolger (from Canada)
Nov tba
Dec tba

Competition Subjects

2025

Beginners

Aug Pair of coasters
Sept An Apple
Oct Spinning top
Nov Kitchen Roll holder
Dec Dice shaker

Advanced

Natural edged vase
Box with finial
Pair of goblets
Mug
Winged bowl

Linked charity

At the AGM a suggestion was made that the club adopts a charity to support. The committee is supportive of this in principle and is now seeking views of the wider membership.

In particular we would like to know if you agree with the principle of having a linked charity, and if so whether you have recommendations for specific charities, and how we could actually support them.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions, please email these to me:

secretary@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

We shall discuss this further at the next committee meeting.

Many thanks
Patrick Stileman

Letter to members – Helen Sheaf

Dear Herts and Beds Woodturners.

As many of you know, Michael was a founder member of this club, and who would have thought it would still be going strong over thirty years later? He looked forward to coming to the meetings in Hemel.

He didn't miss many and once received a fine for speeding because he thought he would be late. I got used to seeing the large boxes of polystyrene cups ready to bring for the tea breaks; in fact, I called him 'The Tea Boy'.

Michael was pleased as punch when he came home with a raffle prize! He was always keen to lend a hand and to ask for advice. His treasured collection of woodworking tools is now available. All proceeds from these sales will go to Prostate Cancer UK.

I would like to thank Harvey, Adam, and everyone for their assistance in managing to get the sales going.

Kind regards,

Helen Sheaf



Note: All items for sale are listed on page 15 of this newsletter.

Behind the Scenes

I thought members might be interested to know of some of the work that goes on 'behind the scenes' at the club. This month it is the work of three people (James Blackie, Andrew Street and Harvey Alison) and who together capture, process and make available the photos that very clearly demonstrate the work of members. They each describe their part below:

Allen

James Blackie:

For my part I was asked by Adam to take on the role of Photographer only recently and although I'm not a photographer I have dabbled. I found that using my Sony Alpha camera on my first go was not a great success under the fluorescent lighting so resorted to using my Samsung S23 ultra phone. It seems to do the job fairly well presumably due to the built in AI intelligent optimisation. I don't do any editing so I leave that to Andrew. It's quite a challenge to capture a flavour of the demonstration events and I'm not sure I've mastered any of it. However, I'll continue as best I can and hope the resulting images do justice for the outstanding work our club members continue to produce.

Andrew Street:

James adds the photographs he takes at the meetings to the club shared Google site (great photos James) and I process them. By this I mean I use Adobe Lightroom to enhance them a little by usually cropping, changing exposure, contrast and colour saturation where necessary.

I then return them to the shared folder for Allen and Harvey to use them in the newsletter and website. I also add a selection of the photographs to the club Instagram site. I agree although quite a few people do look at the Instagram site it would be a good idea to signpost it in the newsletter. Harvey has already added a link to the website.

Harvey Alison

My part of the process is then fairly straightforward. I create a new gallery widget on the club website gallery page for this months competition winners (<https://hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk/galleries>). I also add the winners each month to the mega 'inspiring pieces' gallery, which now has over 150 pictures in it of great work by our members.

Finally, I change the homepage image to what I think is the most photogenic of the images. The key thing is the great comms between us, and the speedy turnaround of production of the 'web ready' images by Andrew and James.

Bottle Stopper with Celtic Knot Training

Report by Dave Washer

Following a disastrous weather forecast for Saturday morning we all managed to reach the Queens Park Centre in Aylesbury, for an in-depth instruction for making Celtic Knots.



You may recall that Paul (third from the right) demonstrated the basic principles of the Celtic knot at a club night a few weeks ago and after several members asked if we could have further instruction Paul was booked for a day at Aylesbury.

The morning started with Paul showing us the marking out of the timber providing us with a top tip to ensure that the timber is dead square, this adds to the accuracy of the and layout of the pattern in the finished item. Once the timber is marked it is cut and the veneer is glued into position making sure the veneers are layered to the same thickness as the saw blade kerf used to cut the timber.



It takes a little practice to slightly open the cut in the timber to then slide the glued laminate into the slot without scraping off the glue, something to watch out for.

To save time, as this process can take several days waiting for the glue to set on each side of the timber, Paul had made a blank for each of us with veneers all glued and ready to be turned on the lathe.

We all chose a lathe in Phil's excellently equipped and well laid out workshop and set about turning our own interpretation of a bottle stoppers, Paul provided further advice on sizing shape and of course the final finish.

The group all managed to make at least one bottle stopper, some even managing to turn three all being different shapes and sizes.

Our thanks go to Paul Boyes for all his time and effort in preparing and presenting another great Herts and Beds Woodturning Training day.

Dave Washer

Training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk



RNOH Stanmore - Report

Three of us, David Wilks and Peter Leach, who observed, from Middlesex Woodturners and myself, went to Horatio's Garden at the spinal unit of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital Stanmore to teach woodturning.

Our clubs are jointly organising monthly events to introduce spinal injury patients to a craft that supports their mobility and confidence during recovery. These sessions will complement other craft workshops offered to patients.

We had two patients with totally different physical disabilities which gave some idea of the problems that can occur. Keith my tutee and Chang who was taught by David. Keith had some mobility and good manual dexterity. He was able to use the woodturning tools. With my assistance he produced a bud vase which he found very satisfying. As a finishing touch I gave him one of my roses.

Chang had mobility and dexterity problems, and it soon became clear that he did not have enough strength to hold a woodturning tool and so in the end David demonstrated the production of a pen.

The afternoon was very useful, and we learnt a lot. It demonstrated the importance of the wood being prepared as much as possible as we only have one hour with each patient. We now have two lathes and at the next session we can teach four patients.

The next event is on 1st September. If you are interested in helping or want more information, let me or Adam Blackie know and I can explain the process or connect you with the organising team.

Keith Goddard



<https://www.horatiogarden.org.uk/the-gardens/horatios-garden-london-south-east/>

Herts and Beds GROUP VISIT to Wizardry in Wood

Plaisterers' Hall, London EC2. Wednesday, 29th October 2025. 11.00am arrival

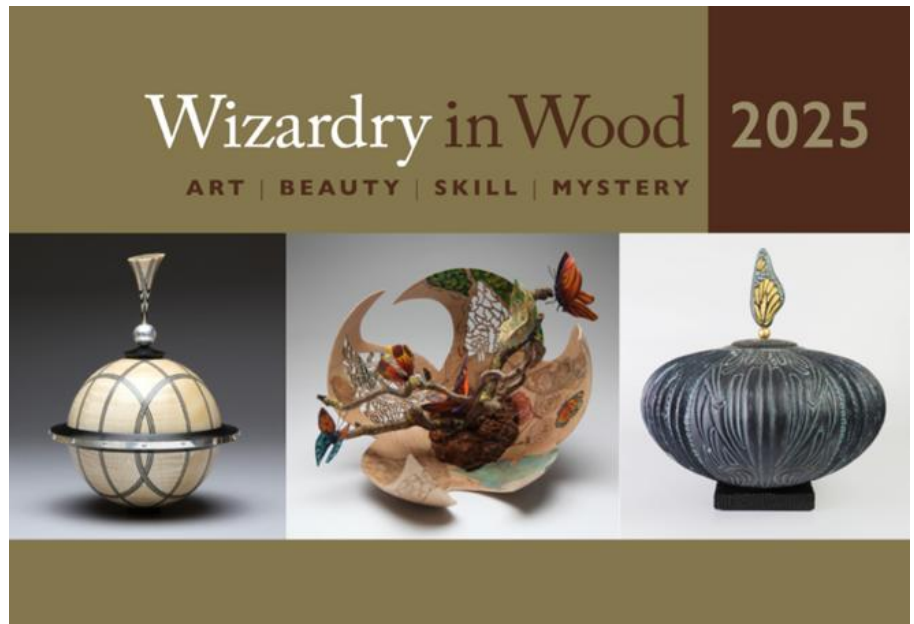
We are delighted to be organising a group visit on Wednesday, 29 th October to the prestigious Wizardry in Wood Exhibition organised bi-annually by the Worshipful Company of Turners

<https://turnersco.com/wiw/>

Held in the beautiful and interesting surroundings of Plaisterers' Hall in the City of London we will meet at

11.00am in time to view the exhibition before heading for lunch (optional) at a nearby venue at around 2.00pm

<https://www.plaisterershall.com/>



Costs

Entry ticket of £12 will be booked by the club in advance.

Lunch (optional, excluding drinks) will be around £35 per head.

Payment will be required by 30th September 2025.

Registration

If you would like to come, please let me know as soon as possible and I will add you to the list. Harvey Alison, James Blackie, Keith Goddard, David Ireson and Phil Walters have already registered their interest. Please join us for what will be a great event.

Attention: Members who wish to enter the Wizardry in Wood Competition!

So many of you are more than qualified to submit outstanding work to the Wizardry in Wood competition and it would be great kudos for the club to be represented. If you are considering entering, then do let me know and the club will endeavour to assist with the entry process if required.

Follow this link for more details: <https://turnersco.com/turning-competitions-2025/>

Adam Blackie

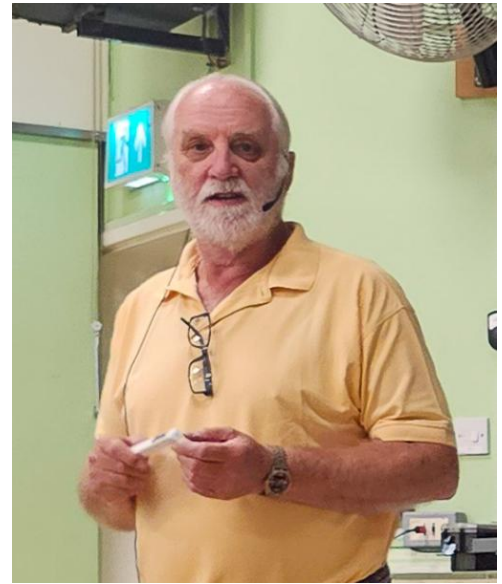
July 2025

Demonstration by Colin Spencer - Review by Tony Taylor

Colin now lives and works in Lincolnshire having lived in Orba on the Costa Blanca, Spain for 18 years. He turns a wide range of pieces, but his special interest is in ornamental turning and this was the subject of his presentation.

He started with an illustrated account of the history and explaining the techniques. Ornamental turning (OT) is a highly specialised form of lathe work that produces intricate surface decoration through controlled movement of the workpiece and cutting tool. Its origins can be traced back to the 16th century, with early examples appearing in Germany and Italy, primarily in ivory and hard woods.

By the 17th and 18th centuries, the craft had developed significantly, supported by the invention of increasingly complex lathes. These machines introduced eccentric chucks, elliptical gears, and indexing systems, allowing turners to create non-circular and repeating patterns.



The turning was done on a rose engine lathe, which uses a rocking headstock guided by profiled discs called rosettes to carve undulating patterns as the workpiece rotates.

The golden age of OT came during the late 18th and 19th centuries, especially in Britain. The most notable manufacturer of ornamental lathes was Holtzapffel & Co., whose machines featured precision-engineered components and modular attachments. Over 2,500 Holtzapffel lathes were produced, and each was sold with a copy of the multi-volume *Turning and Mechanical Manipulation* by Charles Holtzapffel—a foundational text in the craft.

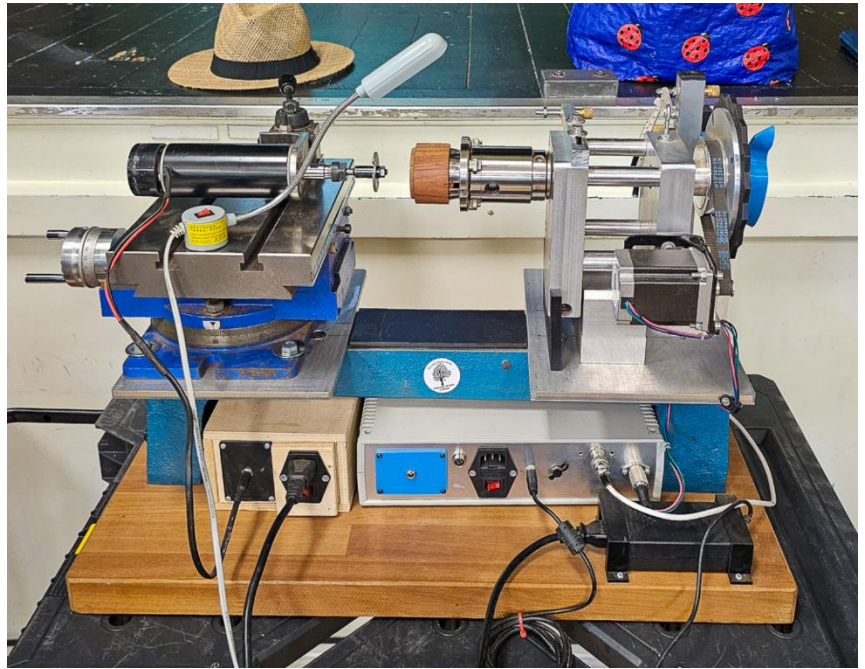
These lathes could perform a wide range of operations:

- Geometric turning using cam-driven mechanisms.
- Rose engine turning, where the headstock rocks in sync with a rotating rosette.
- Milling attachments, for engraving patterns in metal or wood.
- Overhead drives, allowing tool rotation independent of the spindle.

As industrial machinery and mass production grew, interest in OT declined in the early 20th century. However, it has persisted thanks to dedicated enthusiasts and organisations like the Society of Ornamental Turners (SOT), founded in 1948.

Modern ornamental turners now mostly use home-built machines, often with elements of digital control. Original Holtzapffel lathes command very high prices.

During the demonstration Colin used a rose engine which he designed and built himself with help from an engineering friend. The headstock is mounted on a spring-loaded frame which allows it to rock following the contours of interchangeable rosettes (cam-like discs) mounted at the rear. The cutting tool is a fine router cutter driven at high speed and mounted on a cross slide to permit precise positioning. The rosettes were made from acrylic by 3D printing, so the variety of patterns which can be produced is unlimited.



The piece which Colin demonstrated was a lidded box turned from Mopane, which he decorated with a basket weave pattern on the outside. It was important to make only very small cuts with each pass and considerable patience is required, with no hand work at all other than the set up and the careful use of the cross slide to advance the cutting tool. The final stage was to decorate the inside of the lid with a series of nested concentric designs.

Although this is a very demanding and skilled aspect of turning which few will be able to attempt, the audience were clearly very interested and appreciative of the nicely prepared demonstration.



For Sale and Wanted

Various machines, tools and accessories

As noted earlier in the Club News, Helen Sheaf is looking to sell items from her husband's workshop. See below:

Michael's smaller woodturning tools (and wood) are available for purchase on the club sales table, while the larger pieces of equipment are listed below with suggested prices. All proceeds will be donated to "Prostate Cancer UK" and the "H&B Woodturners club". Please note, large items will need to be collected from Luton (LU2).

1. Tormek 2000 grinding wheel; Tormek accessories - £150
2. Dewalt DW60 dust extractor - £75
3. BVC TH4 dust extractor - £75
4. Hegner multicut-2s scroll saw; stand - £50
5. Myford wood lathe and base; various chucks/accessories - £200
6. Milford 10" double ended grinder (floor standing) - £50
7. Startrite 352 bandsaw (floor standing) with spare blades - £200
8. Ajax pillar drill B-16L - £50
9. Sealey pillar drill GDM200A/12F (new/boxed) - £250
10. Powerline 2 speed bandsaw mk2 with spare blade - £50
11. DeWalt Power Shop DW125 radial arm saw - £200
12. Emco MH26 Planer / Thicknesser - £150
13. Myford wood lathe in parts (not tested) - £Offers

A wide range of smaller items and wood will be available for sale on the club sales table but if you are interested in any of the 13 items above please contact Mike's son in law as below:

Justin Newnam: justin@newnam.co.uk

Phone: 07710 752011

There are too many photos of these items to include here – some of the larger items are on the following page but please find a link below to a google site for the full set.

[Michael's woodturning paraphernalia - Google Photos](#)





Please remember, all of Mike's items are being sold to support the Prostate Cancer charity

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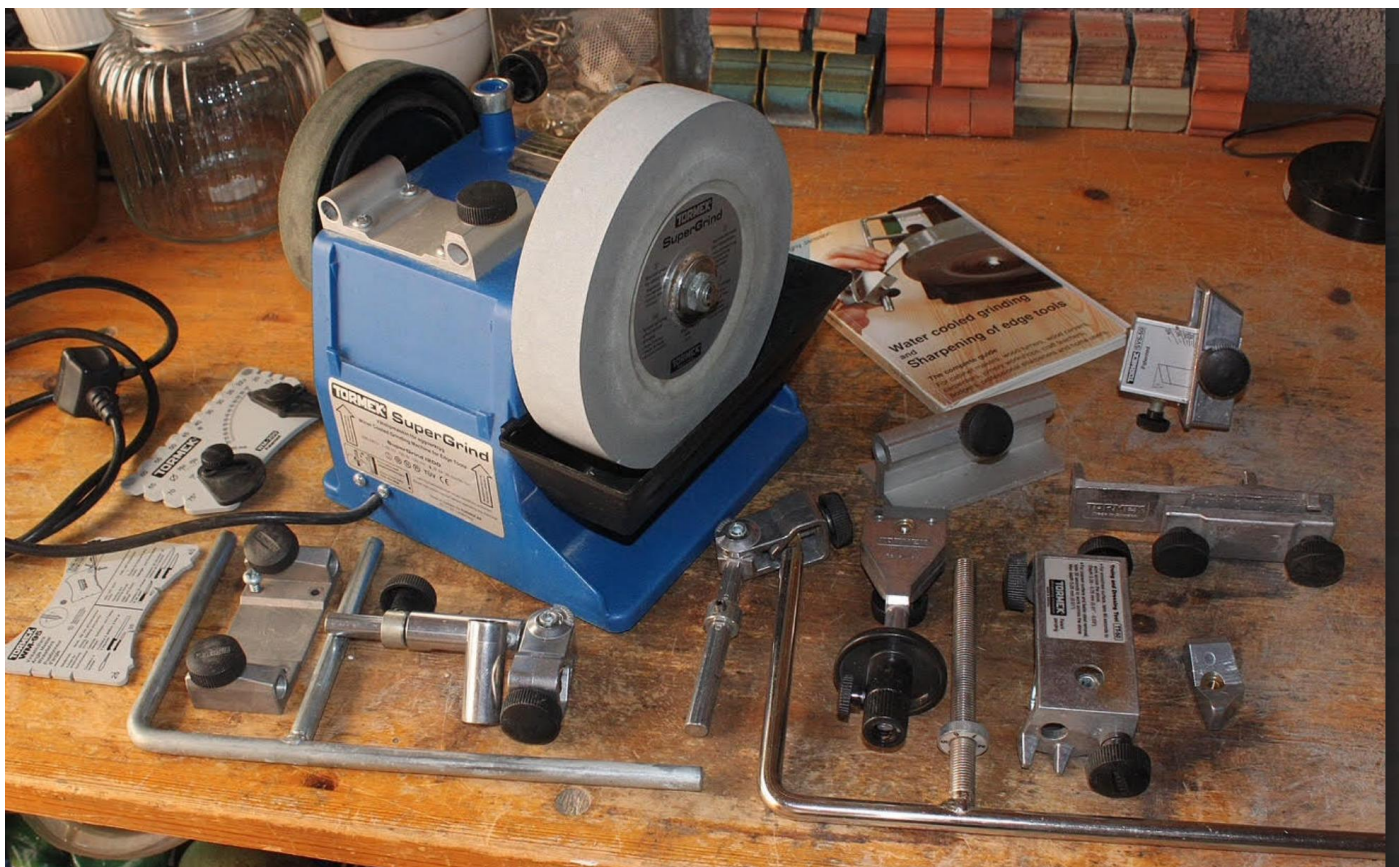
Woodturning Lathe with accessories and Tormek Grinder

David Millen is selling the following

- Record Power CL4 Lathe plus extras £450.00
- Tormek £175.00

Photos follow below and on next page – if you are interested please contact Harvey Alison at harvey@kimbleturning.co.uk





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Various Machines for Sale.

The following items have been offered to the club by the daughter of a deceased turner.
Contact Adam Blackie for more details. – treasurer@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Record Power RDSE2 50 Litre dust extractor In used and very good working condition, missing the hoses
(which are standard stuff available online)

Location St Albans.

Current equivalent - <https://www.bedfordsaw.co.uk/record-power-rsde2-fine-filter-50-litre-extractor>
Suggested price £75.

Record Power BS300 Bandsaw.

The doors have surface rust and would need an afternoon to clean and give a quick flash of paint. – see picture. The internals are sound and clean. No blades available.

Location St Albans

Current equivalent - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Record-Power-BS300EEconomyBandsaw/dp/B001OXGVMS>
Suggested price £100



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Poetry Corner

LORDS TEST MATCH JULY 2025
ENGLAND v INDIA

Last pair at the wicket
So tense, one can't pick it
After five days of critical contest
Testing the skill of the very best
Which way will it go
Be the game fast or slow
Down to the wire as the teams aspire
To induce the win with speed and spin

REALLY, the result should matter not
If honour is carried and keeps the plot

Sportsmanship, chivalry, must prevail, regardless of fame
At the end of it all, it is just a game

The test is greater than the man
Designed to add zest to all fan's lifelong plan

Then again as a devotee
These edicts apply for all to see
In every manor of the game played
For the SPIRIT to be maintained and above all displayed

Martin Sexton July 2025