



WOODBITS

NEWSLETTER

Issue 217
June 2024
Welcome

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In May we hosted Gordon Cookson from our neighbouring club in Middlesex. Gordon presented a session called "Critique, or You be the Judge" in which he guided us through the process of judging a turned item. A useful session for all who attended, and the money collected on the door was donated to Gordon's chosen charity.

JULY MEETING Our next club meeting is on 9th July. We have been fortunate to book Simon Hope for our next meeting. He is a registered Professional Turner, Freeman of the Turners Company and a multiple prize winner. His demonstration will focus on the use of Pewter as a decorative material in woodturning. This is a new subject for the club, and I am looking forward to it.

MORE TRAINING NEWS - Last month we announced the idea of a "matchmaking" service to enable more experienced turners to train our beginners in their own workshops. AKA "A Day in my Workshop". This idea has been successfully tested and is formally launched in this month's newsletter. It will run alongside our normal training schedule. This month we also have a report from Phil Scoltock who attended a club-subsidised advanced training day with Phil Irons. Both Phil's have interesting webpages as follows: <https://www.facebook.com/HobbyTurner/> and <https://www.philironswoodturning.co.uk/>

JULY COMPETITION TABLES In July beginners are asked to bring a Plate or Platter and the advanced competition is Something Stained or Painted. Please also bring any item that you have made for the Open or General display tables.

MEMBER REPORTS - We have a number of reports from members this month including Peter Hoare's report from Harpenden's Art on the Common, which resulted in a significant contribution to club funds. I also know that others have attended or are planning Craft Fairs this summer, so please let us know and maybe you could send Allen a report for the next newsletter. Allen's new email address for the newsletter is on the next page.

We have another regular contributor to the newsletter - David Evans. He will be running a series of "OffCentre" pieces starting in this edition . Looking forward to seeing you all in July.

Adam Blackie - Chairman

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Club News

June Competition

Beginners

1st James Blackie



Advanced



1st Harvey Alison



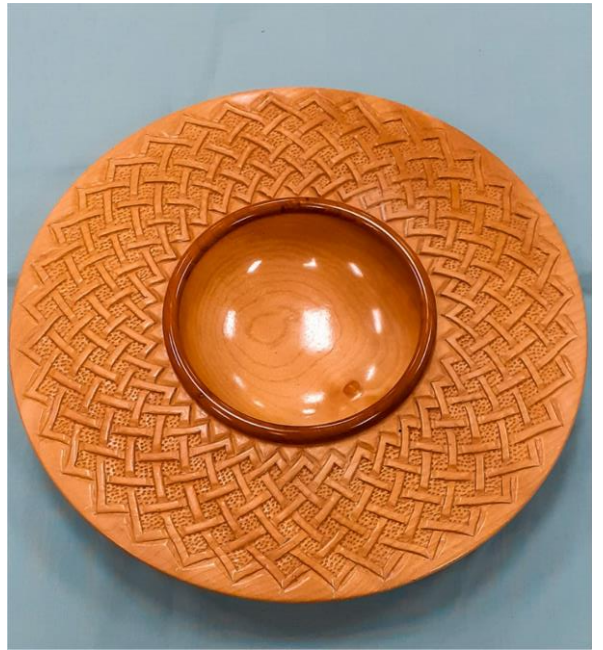
3rd Phil Walters



2nd Peter Kemp

Open

1st Peter Kemp



2nd Harvey Alison



3rd Tony Taylor

Meetings Calendar

2024

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

	Beginners	Advanced
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

Raffle purchase Diary for 2024-25

I am the raffle coordinator for the forthcoming year and need to fill the diary for the purchase of prizes. To ensure we get a selection of prizes we ask different members of the membership to the club to buy the raffle prizes. This ensures we have a variation every month.

As a guide we have increased to spend on prizes to £ 80 - £100 per month with a maximum number of 5 prizes in total. There is some flexibility as this is offered as a guide.

Full receipts are required for each spend made.

If you wish to discuss any of this information with me feel free to do so at the next meeting or email/phone,

Steve Beadle

Herts and Beds Raffle Coordinator

Tel 07720 677456

Email Stevebeadle1960@hotmail.co.uk

Art on the common (Harpenden) – Peter Hoare

Adrian Peter, Adam Blackie and I took part in this year's AOTC, manning a gazebo for the Club on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th of June.



The weather was not particularly good, the sun shone Saturday afternoon, but the chill wind was with us throughout the weekend. Even more importantly it didn't rain (except a few spots on Saturday).

Business was constant throughout both days. We had chats with lots of interested members of the public and handed out Club leaflets to those who wanted to know more, along with an open invitation to "come along and see us." It was good to see a number of Club members there too; giving their support.



As with last year, physical cash in people's pockets and purses is in limited supply, so we were very glad of the Club's card reader and an Internet connection!

Over the day we spoke to members of the public who just liked wood, but didn't know what woodturning was, those interested in taking up woodturning as a hobby and those who already turned but didn't know there was a local club. We hope to see some new faces appearing at the Club as a result of our efforts.

We also met a few local celebrities including Andrei Lussman, owner of several local restaurants who was keen to talk about the restoration of a staircase and the prospective Conservative candidate for Harpenden, who was enthusiastic about turning. Members donated lots of items for sale at the event and we would like to thank those members for their contributions. As a result, we are happy to report that we made more than £500 for club funds over the weekend.

Our next planned club event is at Frogmore at Christmas and we look forward to a similar result there, so please start making Christmas Trees and Mushrooms with any scrap wood you have to hand as these are always best sellers at Frogmore.

Finally, based on our sales for the two days, we were pleased to be able to support Cancer Research UK (who support AOTC) with a donation of £154, contributing to the overall.

Training

Club Training Update – Mel Williams

Beginners

Mel Williams has arranged two further dates this year at Aylesbury.

- 19th October
- 9th November.

These sessions are rapidly filling up so be quick and book a slot with Mel Williams (training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk).

If these dates are inconvenient, we are launching a new option for beginners soon.

Yet more beginners options

Launching in late 2024

We are aware that Aylesbury is not an ideal location for those members who are based in the east of our region, so we are exploring a joint venture with **Letchworth Men In Sheds** to use their facilities. It's early days and negotiations are ongoing, and we should have more concrete plans by the end of the summer.

Mel Williams can be contacted on training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Training the Trainers Tuesday 18th July – Paul Boyes

Myself, Mark Aizicowitz, Keith Goddard and Bruce Edhouse (a previous club member) successfully completed our Tutor Assessment at Adeyfield on Tuesday afternoon



The four of us rotated in being the trainee for each other although the AWGB assessor pointed out that it would have been better for us to use a complete beginner - noted for future sessions.

Our examiner, Graham Legg who stepped in at the last moment due to illness travelled all the way down from Ashbourne in Derbyshire to assess us. We are grateful to him for generously giving up his day and the long journeys) His background in

teaching as a Headmaster really shone through - he was very professional

We all thoroughly enjoyed the day and came away with new confidence in our abilities as Tutors

The club now has seven AWGB Approved Tutors



Paul

Training support from the AWGB

As a member of the AWGB, all members have 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.

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

Advanced Training – Phil Scolteck

Two members attended some advanced training with one of the best! – Phil Irons RPT



On 24th & 25th April 2024, Chris Bentley and I attended a 2 day training course near Stratford-upon-Avon, that focused on Hollowing (used to make vases, hollow forms, pots etc) with one of the best hollowers in the UK – Phil Irons RPT who has been the president of the AWGB, on the demo circuit and a tutor for quite a few decades.

Chris and I are, both members of our club training team (and the club normally uses them to teach hollowing whenever a trainee wants to learn hollowing). We both enjoy making hollow forms, have a wealth of experience and hollowing skills – but nonetheless it is always good to improve, focus on perfecting techniques, explore some aspects where improvement is desired and pick up some tips and tricks.



Phil (above) and Chris (left) at their lathes

And who better to teach it than a master at Hollowing - Phil Irons, as well as teaching and on the demo circuit, one of his primary product lines as a production turner are cremation urns (a hollow form with a threaded lid) of which he has probably made 1000s and his oversized Monkeypuzzle hollowforms feature in top end art galleries.

Our combined training objectives for the 2 days included:

- Try Phil Irons end to end process for turning hollow forms, learn from his tips and tricks from PIs lengthy experience and production approach.
- How to get the insides smoother straight off the hollowing tool (without resorting to scraping / sanding) = avoid creating the ridges and grooves
- Uniform wall thickness when hand-hollowing
- *After first turning and hand hollowing wet unseasoned wood; then it dries and warps so it is now way out of round, how to do 2nd hollowing to get it back to round using hand- hollowing tools
- Try Phil's preferred hollowing tools that would be new to us – The Woodcut Pro-Forme (reputed to be one of the best shielded cutter systems – Chris normally uses the Hamlet Big Brother, whereas I normally uses Crown Revolution) and the John Jordan HSS scraper-hollowers (also reputed to be one of the best). Also get to try Vicmarc and Robust lathes.

It turned out to be a great session. We made large open “flower pot” type vases in order to polish our technique and explore the use of the Woodcut Pro-Forme (and yes it is a better system!). Then a more mid size closed hollow form was done (in Iron's signature shape) using the JohnJordan hollowing set. Overall, all our training objectives were satisfied, and it was a very enjoyable two days.

The Herts and Beds Woodturning club kindly helped via a £70pp contribution each (approx. 20% of the total costs: training, travel and accommodation). Subsidised training with an RPT of your choice is available to all other members – talk to Mel or Adam if you have ideas. Chris and I have donated many days to help other club members improve their turning skills, so it was good that the club was able to help us here to further improve our skills.

You can see more of Phil's work on his website [Phil Irons Woodturning works of art, from Vases, Hollow Form Vessels, Urns and Writing Instruments](#) but some of his work is below.



Man's Shed (MS) Progress – Steve Hart

The H&BW clubs' outpost at the Letchworth Man's Shed (LMS) The club's outpost at Letchworth is progressing and building momentum.

A meeting was held at Man's Shed (Standalone Farm) on Thursday June 20th to discuss and agree on what basis we would want to initially set up and manage the facility and with those who attended who initially would lead each area.

The MS as a condition for using Standalone Farm must adhere to their operational procedures, we will as a condition of H&BW agreement with the MS establish and supplement these with additional rules and procedures to ensure safe woodturning.

There is a lot of interest within the MS both from their members and committee to us establishing the workshop for woodturning. We have had a site visit to tour the facilities, followed by a meeting to discuss how the workshop would operate and under what conditions. It will be helpful to explain the structure of this arrangement to understand our approach and how the workshop will operate. Standalone Farm is owned and managed by the Letchworth Heritage Trust (a registered charity) and the MS (a registered charity) has an agreement with them to run a workshop (in allocated area's)- free of charge, on the condition they do odd jobs around the farm. We are effectively sub-contracting from the MS the workshop for woodturning. This hierarchy determines the order of control and responsibility which our use of the workshop will adhere to.

Having said that I want to make it clear that a condition of our club's involvement and agreement is that the workshop, when used by the H&BW club will be run under our policies, operational plan and rules.

In summary the following details our conditions to establish the facility (maybe subject to change).

1. Workshops will be held fortnightly on 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, between 10-16:00. The 1st Thursday will be for Training Sessions, and the 3rd Thursday open sessions. Each Thursday will have a designated lead – who will be responsible for the workshop, who attends, and at his total discretion what projects are undertaken and by whom.
2. On the designated days the workshop will be used solely for Woodturning by MS members. Should the MS have any alternative need then it will notify the woodturning section via the WhatsApp group giving ideally a days' notice or with permission from the Woodturning lead on the day.
3. Workshop - 4 Lathes/ Workstations/ - Max number of 8 people in the room at anyone time– (lead Graham Hill)
4. Equipment/Tools – Inventory - (lead Dave Washer, Colin Newman)
5. Wood/Turning Sundries (lead Chris Squires)
6. Workshop Booking – (lead Steve Hart) we will setup a group and use WhatsApp.
7. Standalone Farm – site and workshop access/key safe – Alan
8. MS Membership (£12)– Security check - (lead Steve Hart).
9. Formalize Agreement with MS (- lead Steve Hart).
10. Health & Safety (lead Graham Hill).

Please contact me (or other leads) if you want more information or have comments and want to get involved.

Steve 07508004511 sahart@btinternet.com

Sunday Demo - Darren Breeze on Sunday 21 July 2024.

Come and watch

DARREN BREEZE

Demonstrating in person
at East Herts Woodturning Club on
Sunday 21 July 2024 10 till 4
at Sawbridgeworth, Herts, England

Cost £25 to include sandwiches, tea, coffee and biscuits

Simon Hope and Martin Pidgen will provide retail opportunities

Spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first come basis

For more information and ticket purchases contact

glynn.goodwin@gmail.com

Philip Francis, a profile of a retired but busy woodworker

Many members will already know Philip through the training sessions organised by Mel at the Queens Park Arts Centre (QPAC) in Aylesbury. The club is grateful for the access he provides to the well appointed workshop he runs there.

He recently was given the '**Kings Award in Volunteering**' for his efforts in both fundraising and training at the centre both for QPC and for Bucks Adult Learning.

To give a flavour of his activity, in the past month alone he has taught no less than 13 woodworking courses and attended 5 events and fairs selling his work. Philip always has time to attend the woodturning club as well.



An accomplished woodworker and woodturner, the sheer volume and quality of the items he makes can be seen in the photographs on the pages following.

When asked recently what his favourite things to make were, he said 'On reflection, I do like to make lamps, but what I really like is the challenge of making something from unusual pieces of wood that invariably I've been given. For example last month I was given a newel post which I turned into a lamp and sold for £145, profit from which has gone to the dust extractor fund for QPAC. This week I've enjoyed making a bowl and some 't' light holders from some burrs I was given.'





Geoff Selley solves a problem

Adam was asked by Andrew Scheer at the Harpenden Craft fair if we could help replace a lost pawn from his late father's chess set and given my recent competition entry he put him in contact with me.

I said I would contact him and have a go. Here are the pictures. Turns out that the set is probably Bakelite not wood, but I managed to stain some yew, reproduce the pawn, and replace a castle which was from another set. All pieces now finished with a melamine varnish and the two new pieces weighted with lead to match.



The pieces to be replaced with yew blanks behind

both finished and one stained



full set with finished ones at front

the two new pieces



Andrew sent his thanks to Geoff as below:

I am so grateful as this is a key part of my life growing up with my recently deceased father. We often played chess together with him supporting me in competitions as well as when I played for my school and county.

My maternal grandmother gave he and I both Staunton chess sets which we played on together and with others. Indeed my father played on this set into his nineties with a neighbour and my children.

Sadly, my set was stolen during a house move so only my father's remained. His set was well loved and kept proudly on display albeit in full sunlight. Time was not kind to the set, nor was we think my parent's cleaner as two of the pieces were lost a pawn and a castle. The replacements were sorely out of place, making the set quite forlorn what with the sunlight damage too.

When visiting your exhibit at the Harpenden art fair recently, an idea quickly became a plan which with Geoff's efforts has now come to fruition.

I am fortunate to have many happy memories of my father, but Geoff has now helped bring the physical embodiment of those back into full health.

I am in awe of the skills and so grateful for the time and trouble Geoff has expended. I have always been wowed by the skills and impact of the BBC's Repair Shop and I now feel I could have been on it.

Thank you Geoff so much for making this special moment happen and thank you Adam for introducing me to Geoff.

“

A Day in my Workshop

Introducing a Beginners Training Opportunity – Adam Blackie

The club offers beginners training at our training locations. We prefer this formal arrangement, and you should try to book one of these planned sessions if possible. We aim to run four training events per year, but these are sometimes held at inconvenient times for trainees and are often oversubscribed. Therefore, we are introducing the idea of a “Day in my Workshop” where more experienced club members can “Host” a “Visitor” and provide beginners basics training in the familiarity of their own workshops.

This is a volunteer-based scheme to introduce new members to more experienced turners. The Visitors will be introduced to their Hosts by the club’s training co-ordinator, Mel Williams. Mel will provide advice on PPE, Health and Safety and a sample training plan. The Host will agree the plan with their Visitor.

How does it work?

If you are new to turning and need some friendly guidance, please get in touch with Mel who will be able to introduce you to an appropriate Host.

There is a nominal contribution of £25.00 towards club funds. This is to ensure our insurance covers the club and its members at any club organised event.

Note that training friends in our own workshops is at our own risk, and not covered by club insurance because it is not a club event.

1. Club Admin and Organisation

- a) Our training manager Mel Williams will explain the process to the potential Visitor and acts as an introducer for the Host.
- b) The club already has a PPE and H&S checklist and lesson plan templates, and these will be provided to both Host and Visitor
- c) Following Mel’s introduction, Hosts will contact their Visitor and agree the timing and content of the session.

2. What are the Hosts roles and responsibilities.

- a) Hosts will initially liaise with Mel Williams, who will track the requests from potential Visitors and match them with a suitable Host.
- b) Mel will arrange an appropriate introduction with the Host’s prior consent each time.
- c) Once a Host accepts a Visitor, they are responsible for planning, agreeing a date and training content / objectives.
- d) Hosts will ensure that their Visitors are aware and have understood the PPE and H&S requirements for their workshop.
- e) Hosts will be prepared to provide refreshments and comfort facilities for their Visitor. Visitors will provide their own lunch.

3. What are the Visitors roles and responsibilities?

- a) Visitors will arrange training sessions through Mel Williams. Failure to do so will invalidate the terms of the Club Insurance policy.

- b) Once an introduction is made via Mel Williams, please respond promptly and politely to any subsequent Host communications. Remember the Hosts are volunteers and are giving their time on behalf of the club. Please don't waste it.
- c) Agree a plan for the day with your Host before you arrive. Have an objective for the day and stick with the agreed plan. This is the best way to learn.
- d) Turn up on time and be prepared to help clear up at the end of the day. This is basic stuff, but it's polite to offer.
- e) Please remember to bring your own lunch. Liquid refreshments will be provided by your Host.
- f) If your plans change and you cannot make an agreed date, contact the Host immediately. You may be able to agree a new date and it's impolite to let down your Host at short notice.

From Colin Newman

After recently joining Herts and Beds Woodturning and as a beginner, I have been very impressed with the members I have met and spoken with. The 'Day in my Workshop' with Adam Blackie was a really good insight into the potential layout, the planning and getting started with my own workshop in the future.

Adam showed us how to Turn Flutes, Beads and Urns etc, with advice about which tools to use. This has given me confidence to put Adam's knowledge and expertise into practice, using the lathe inherited from my late father in-law .

I would thoroughly recommend a 'Day in my workshop' as a base to learning the craft of

From Dave Washer

Having joined Herts & Beds woodturners a month ago and attended Adeyfield Community Centre a couple of times, it has been a pleasure to become a member of a very friendly club, The members I have spoken to have been very friendly supportive and helpful.

I was invited to Adam's workshop for Adam and the clubs new training initiative "Day in my workshop" and what a great day it was.

Arriving at Adam's about 9:30 he gave a brief H&S talk and an introduction to the club, explaining how the tool loan process works, ideal if you have a project and don't want to spend a fortune on special tools, check out the web site to see if the club have the tool you need.

I explained to Adam that I have very little experience wood turning however Adam set me up on his lathe introducing me to some basic tools Skew Chisel, Spindle Gouge and Parting Tool, I then got started turning a section of square timber into a cylindrical shape, the next task was to shape the timber creating beads and contours Adam suggesting ways to hold the chisel and gave great advice all the way through. I finally finished up with a smaller piece than first thought of however it was a piece turned by myself. I now have confidence to dust off my late Fathers small lathe and continue to practise the skills I picked up during the day before moving on to some more complex projects.

Adam Blackie June 2024



Off Centre – woodturning from a different angle – David Evans

All in the mind

We all appreciate the tangible outputs of our craft; the grain in a piece of oak, the smell of green shavings, the smooth and polished surface of a beautifully turned bowl or the quick rush of endorphins as we unwrap a new chisel. But I wonder how many of us stop to consider the intangible benefits. What a couple of hours in front a lathe, concentrating on the job at hand, is doing for our mental health.

Woodturning is generally a solitary pursuit. Anyone looking in from the outside sees a lone individual tinkering in their shed or garage. But if they were to step across the threshold into that world of wood, wax and steel will find a craft that rewards both body and mind.

Let's get some assumptions out the way first. Visit any club or event and you'll find mostly men aged over 60 years. The good news is this is changing. Our own club has an increasing number of women and younger members, and this is something to be proud of. But let's add some facts to our assumptions. In general, men don't talk about their mental health. In part this is due to traditional gender defined roles. And as we've already acknowledged, woodturning has historically been the preserve of men.



Times are changing and this is an area where woodturning and woodturners can make a difference. Studies have found that focusing on the present can have a positive impact on health and well-being. It can help reduce anxiety and depression, lower blood pressure and improve sleep. It's also believed it may help some people manage persistent pain and conditions such as tinnitus or migraines.

Let's take the process of creating something from a block of wood. It starts with an idea and maybe a sketch in a notebook. Maybe you already have a type of wood in mind and that is what is driving your design. You think about the tools you'll need and spend a few minutes at the grindstone to get them nice and sharp. You mount your piece of wood and spend a few minutes assessing how you might tackle it. Then follows a few hours of roughing, planing, gouging, refining, sanding, finishing, and polishing. This entire process requires the wood turner to be present in the moment. Unless you are a highly skilled production turner, a lapse in concentration could result in a catch or worse. It is this focusing on the job at hand, not allowing the mind to wander, that is the key to mindfulness.

It's no surprise then that we've seen a rise in organisations specifically designed to help men dealing with mental health issues. Nationwide the Men's Sheds Association and Turning Corners in Hull are charities promoting positive mental health. Take our own monthly meet ups. The demos, competitions and practical

club nights allow us all to forget about real life for a while. And the chance to chat around the sales table or a cup of tea during the break can and do make a difference.

Without knowing it our craft is helping ourselves and others. So next time you're contemplating a project or asking someone how they are at club night, you're making a difference. And that can only be a good thing.

David Evans works for NHS England and is new to woodturning.

If you've got an idea for Off Centre, come and talk to him on a club night or email me on:

info@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Poetry Corner

WATERY GRAVES, ONCE UPON A TIME, SUNK WITHOUT TRACE

Watery graves, once upon a time, sunk without trace
Happen to adventurers of the human race
Take Shackleton's ship recently brought to light
Not to the surface, ENDURANCE, in disaster's downward depth flight
Past events causing huge sadness to all
When BLUE BIRD lost her fight in a Lake District brawl
Just like CRUSADER with a watery splash
Brought the attempt's end in the fateful crash
KING JOHN'S treasure never washed up for viewing
MARIE CELESTE'S disappearance , who knows what was brewing
TITANIC's fate known but still out of reach
Far too deep to bring to a beach
MALAY'S AIRLINE flight 370 not found
Still under search whose mysteries abound
Off the SANDS OF NORMANDY, what can one say
Hero's to all were present that day
GLEN MILLER and his wonderful sound
Music to all ears which will for ever resound
BERMUDA TRIANGLE and its feared reputation
These are the thoughts in this recent summation
Such are the stories of men's daring do
Common to all but owned by the few.

Martin Sexton June 2024

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