



# WOODBITS

## NEWSLETTER

### Issue 216

### May 2024

### Welcome

## SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In April we saw Terry Smart from Chestnut Products complete the demonstration he began last year (it's a long story and you need to have been there) A review of which is in this newsletter. As the weather is beginning to improve and getting warmer, I am spending more time in the workshop, trying new finishes. I trust that you are too. Our next club meeting is on 11th June. It will be a Club Night, and we have planned a session with Gordon Cookson from the Middlesex club where he will be running an event called "Critique or You Can Be the Judge" The idea is for us to jointly review and rate some pre-prepared works and then discuss the techniques for judging turned items. It should be an interesting evening. Also, we ask that you bring an item that you have made to go on a display table so the club can apply what they learned to some of our own output.

### 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". By the time you read this newsletter we will have delivered the first four of these events. A review by David Evans is included within. Note that this scheme is still in development, and we expect a formal letter will be circulated soon. If you are interested to know more, please contact Mel Williams.

### SALES TABLE EVENT

Harvey Alison has been contacted via our website to help clear a workshop in Buckinghamshire. He will be bringing the items to the June meeting. As I write we don't know what will be available, but you are advised to bring some pocket money as there are bound to be items in the collection that you didn't know you needed.

### JUNE COMPETITION TABLES

This month, beginners are asked to bring a Candle Holder and the advanced competition is a Lidded Box. Please also bring an item that you have made for the Open or General display tables.

### THE SEASON OF ART FAIRS.

Three members will represent the club at Harpenden on the 8 th – 9 th June and this month's newsletter includes an article on Peter Clark's stall at the Baldock Festival. If you are selling at a craft fair this summer, please let us know so we can publicise it and maybe even turn up to see you.

Looking forward to seeing you all in June. Adam Blackie (Chairman)

## CONTENTS

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN .....	1
Club News .....	3
May Competition .....	3
AGM Minutes .....	6
Meetings Calendar .....	8
Competition Subjects.....	8
Raffle purchase Diary for 2024-25 .....	9
Woodturning Weekender .....	9
Chestnut Finishes – Terry Smart .....	10
Training support from the AWGB .....	12
Club Training Update - Mel Williams .....	13
Beginners .....	13
A Day in My Workshop – David Evans .....	14
Craft Fair report – Baldock 19th May 2024 .....	16
Poetry Corner.....	17

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# Club News

## May Competition

### Beginners

1<sup>st</sup> James Blackie



2<sup>nd</sup> Sash Smith

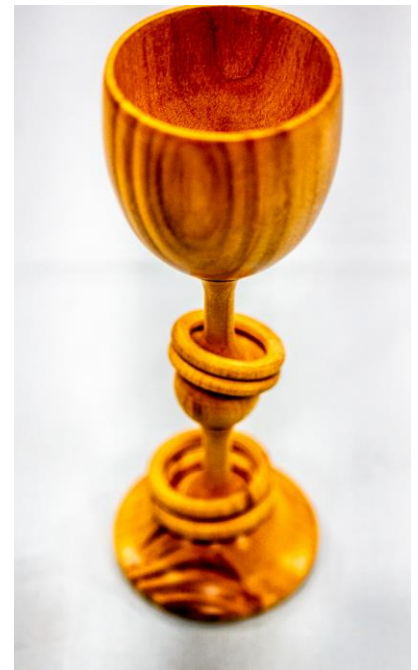
Advanced



1<sup>st</sup> Harvey Alison



3<sup>rd</sup>= Peter Hoare



2<sup>nd</sup> Peter Kemp

3<sup>rd</sup>= Keith Harrup



Open

1<sup>st</sup> Harvey Alison



2<sup>nd</sup> Chris Bentley



3<sup>rd</sup> Adam Blackie

### Minutes of Annual General Meeting. Held on April 9th April 2024

#### 1. Apologies for absence

A number were received including Richard Burton, Alan Lewis and Stephen Hills.

#### 2. Minutes of April 2023 AGM

They had previously been circulated and no issues had been raised at that time. No further issues were raised on the night.

#### 3. Matters Arising from Minutes not covered by items below

None

#### 4. Chairman's Report

The chairman's report was circulated to all members prior to this meeting and so not duplicated here. It was a positive report and described some key aspects of the year's activities and changes in the committee – this included the training programme started by Phil Scoltock last year and now ably taken on by Mel Williams who has planned a number of opportunities in the last 6 months or so. Steve Hart, the new Membership Secretary, was welcomed as indeed was Chris Squires and Malcom Wickens who are now the two Club Ambassadors. Paul Boyes is also a new addition to the committee this year and is taking forward the Training the Trainers programme for the club from Allen Kaye. Also mentioned was Harvey Alison (website), Steve Beadle (Raffle) Andrew Street (Photographer who works with Harvey on social media), Peter Hoare (Competition manager) and Rob Wissgot who runs the sales table.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was also circulated to all members prior to this meeting. Key takeaway were that the club is still solvent. Money used this year to subsidise our own training programme, external training and items for the club library. Started year £6740, ended with £5750.

#### 6. Election of Officers

##### a) Chairman and Treasurer

Adam Blackie is currently in post and seeks re-election on both. No other nominations were received.

Motion to e-elect Adam as Chairman and Treasurer

Proposed by Chris Squires, Seconded by Brian Stanton

Carried by member show of hands.

##### b) Hon Secretary

One nomination received Peter Clark.

Motion to elect Peter Clark as Hon. Secretary

Proposer: Malcolm Wickens

Secunder: Tony Taylor

Carried on member show of hands.

## 7. Election of Ordinary Committee Members

All other committee members have stated that they wish to continue – no other nominations were received and a proposal was made to re-elect them in one go.

Motion to re-elect existing committee.

Proposer: Tim Pettigrew, Seconded: Brian Stanton

Carried by member show of hands

## 8. Election of Inspector of Accounts

Keith Goddard is willing to continue in post. No other nominations were received.

Motion to re-elect Keith Goddard as Inspector of Accounts

Proposed by Peter Hoare

Seconded Steve Beadle

Carried by member show of hands

## 9. Other Motions

Proposal to Increase subscription from £38 to £40 to begin starting this year.

After a question it was confirmed that any new members signing up tonight would pay £38 and thereafter £40

Carried by member show of hands

## 10. AOB

- Keith Goddard noted that he now cannot attend the Chestnut Finishes Weekender and has a ticket. Please contact him if interested.
- Request from the floor to circulate names and photos of the committee.

### **Prizes**

Peter Hoare thanked the members for their contributions and entries this last year. He noted that there has been discussion about making some changes to how the competition is managed and how prizes are awarded. If any members have comments or ideas please let Peter know.

### **Annual Prizes 2023-24**

#### **Beginners**

3rd Phil Walters, 2nd Mel Williams, 1st Pete Pocock

#### **Open**

3rd Peter Kemp, 2nd Peter Hoare, 1st Tony Taylor

#### **Advanced**

3rd Tony Taylor, 2nd Harvey Alison, 1st Peter Hoare

Meeting closed at 8.30pm. The chair thanked all in attendance and introduced our demonstrator for the evening Nathanael Griffiths.

## Meetings Calendar

### 2024

Jun	11th	Club Night
Jul	9th	Simon Hope
Aug	13th	Anna- Marie
Sep	10th	Club Night
Oct	8th	Steve Heeley
Nov	12th	Mick Hanbury ?
Dec	10th	Christmas Social

### 2025

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

## Competition Subjects

### 2024

#### Beginners

May	Dibber
Jun	Candle Holder
Jul	Plate or Platter
Aug	Any Style of Rolling Pin
Sep	An Apple or Pear
Oct	Paper Weight
Nov	Bud Vase
Dec	Xmas tree decoration

#### Advanced

Goblet With One or More Rings
Lidded Box
Something Stained or Painted
Bowl on Feet
Hollow Form
Two or More Woods
Pen/Pencil/Brush Holder
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.

Following the AGM I need to fill in the gaps for next year's calendar of volunteers. 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

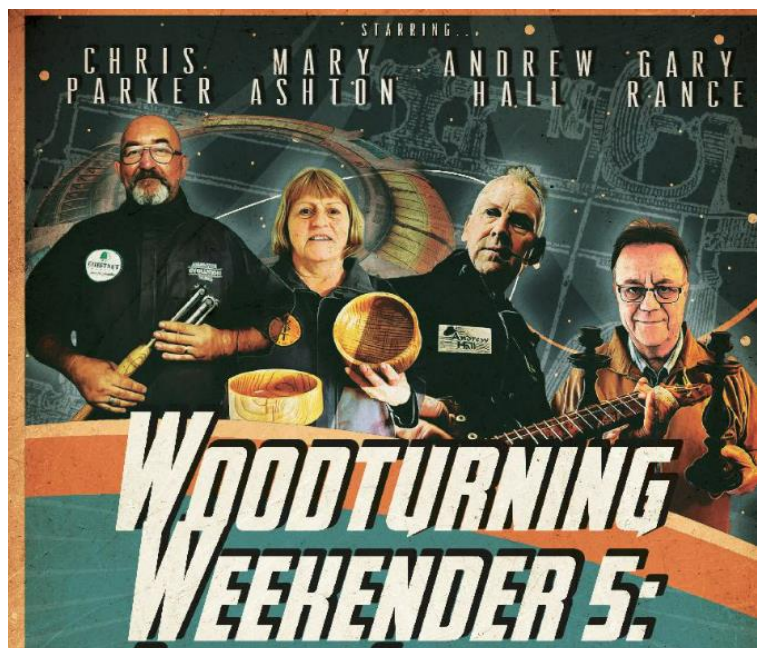
Email [Stevebeadle1960@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Stevebeadle1960@hotmail.co.uk)

## Woodturning Weekender

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

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

The Weekender site has just been updated so if you want the latest info about what is happening and who will be there – use the following link. [Woodturning Weekender 2024 | Chestnut Products - First for Finishes](#)



## Chestnut Finishes – Terry Smart

Terry returned this year with further advice and guidance about finishes.



As I noted in the last newsletter, Terry did off a special 10% reduction for items that were purchased before the evening and a number of members took that opportunity which was welcomed.

Rather than report the detail of the advice offered on the night I thought I would draw members attention to the newsletters published by Terry on his website. As it happens the latest one features Nathaniel Griffiths who as you know was our demonstrator last month. I reproduce the newsletter on following page in full which goes into more detail about how he constructs his segmented pieces.

You can subscribe to receive the newsletters yourself –or you can access the archive of newsletters on his website. See link below.

[Welcome to our Newsletters | Chestnut Products - First for Finishes](#)

As an aside I was pleased to meet Nathaniel again at the Makers Central at the NEC last weekend. He was there on the main stage with all of the Series 3 entrants for the Woodworker of the Year - answering questions from the floor.

He also gave us some insights as to what it was like to be on the show - it apparently took 3 hours to film the entrants to walk into the tent at the beginning! Also, he explained they were given the specs of the challenges 4 weeks before the show so they could work up the designs and also produce cutting lists for the wood needed. Another memory was of the six camera crews that were always in the space with them and their uncanny ability to be filming everyone whenever they made a mistake!



Nathaniel and I during the show..

## Chestnut Finishes Newsletter WEEK COMMENCING 19 MAY 2024

Hi

*We've got something (hopefully) exciting for you today... This week we've got a special guest, Nathanael Griffiths, to write this week's newsletter! Over to you, Nathanael...*

This week, I've been spending a few days with the team here at Chestnut Products to film some social media content (coming your way soon) for the Chestnut socials. As of writing this, we have not yet filmed anything, so wish me luck! Let's jump straight in with this week's featured image.

The first question is one I get asked quite regularly during my demos: 'How can I stop the glue joints raising, and causing a ridge in my finish when creating segmented pieces?'. Due to specialising in segmented work, I have had to deal with and solve this problem myself many times.

A lot of the problems stem from the wood moving (especially on larger pieces) in different heats/humidities. This can cause the [PVA glue](#) to slightly raise above the surface of the wood. It can then interfere with the finish and will leave a slight ridge that can be felt when running your fingers over the project.

The first thing to do is to ensure you are using very dry wood (8-12% moisture content is ideal). If possible, store your wood in a similar setting to where the finished project will be displayed (for at least a few weeks before you start working on it) as this will help eliminate wood movement in the finished piece.

I like to do as much of the work as I can in a warm environment; avoiding large temperature changes and humidity differences stops the wood from moving and allows the glue to dry properly. I bring my projects into the house overnight to stop them from getting too cold/damp.

Once the piece is turned and [sanded](#), I like to raise the grain with a small amount of water. This will raise the fibres of the wood and the [PVA glue](#). Once the water has fully evaporated, the project can be re sanded to remove the raised grain and glue joints.

When choosing a finish, I like to choose something that will flex with any wood movement, this tends to be in the form of either an [Oil](#) or a [Wax](#). A personal favourite is the [Hard Wax Oil](#), as it is easy to apply and dries to a hard-wearing finish that can be built up to a high gloss. I use 3 coats of the [Gloss Hard Wax Oil](#), sanding back lightly with the [Orange NyWeb](#) between coats.

All the same techniques above also apply when laminating wood for turning, just being careful you have the wood grain orientated in the same direction between the glued pieces.

Phew, that was a long one! Thanks for sticking with me.

The next question should be a bit shorter, and it's another one I get asked during my demos: 'How do I get a high gloss finish from my wax?'

When applying the wax, you want an even coat all over. My technique is to use a [Safety Cloth](#) to apply the wax, turning on the lathe and building up some heat through friction. The heat will soften the wax and allow it to be spread evenly across the surface of the piece.

Once the wax has fully set, it's time for buffing. It's important not to generate too much heat (via friction), as it will remelt the wax and go dull. All you need is a light touch using the same piece of cloth you used to apply the finish with. All going well, you should be left with a beautiful deep gloss on your project. My wax of choice is the [Microcrystalline Wax](#) because it is slightly harder than the alternatives, but the same techniques still apply with [all wax](#) types.

I'm very excited to be attending the Woodturning Weekender this year, so if you want to meet me along with a massive amount of other incredible turners, then you can book your tickets here: [www.woodturningweekender.co.uk](http://www.woodturningweekender.co.uk)

That's all from me!

Cheers,

Nathanael

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## 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

# Club Training Update - Mel Williams

## Beginners

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

- 19<sup>th</sup> October
- 9<sup>th</sup> November.

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

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

## More beginners options – launching this year

Following the success of the Aylesbury based training we are exploring two further options for beginners.

This is to provide more flexibility around dates and locations.

We are calling it “A day in my workshop”. Six of our members have agreed to provide training in their own workshops. It’s the same deal as Aylesbury, but more flexible, with mutually agreed dates and one to one instead of a group session. It can be a full or half day – you agree this with the trainer. David Evans was one of the first to take up this opportunity and there is a write up from him on the following page.

The current locations include:

1. St Albans,
2. Walkern (Stevenage),
3. Wendover (x2),
4. Watford

If you cannot book for one of the Aylesbury event days, please contact Mel Williams and she will co-ordinate a more convenient date for you.

## 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](mailto:training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk)

## A Day in My Workshop – David Evans

This is a new club initiative enabling experienced members to share some of their woodturning knowledge with those new to the discipline.

Introduced by the club's training manager Mel Williams, it's a great way for new starters to gain a deeper understanding of the tools and techniques required to become better woodturners.

I was paired with club chairman Adam Blackie and spent an enjoyable Friday in his garden workshop in St Alban's. Adam and I had already discussed what I hoped to gain from the day. I wanted to get a better insight into tool sharpening and practise some coves and beads. Recently, I've taken an interest in the elaborately decorated Japanese kokeshi dolls.

While they might seem simple to turn, there are many different designs, and they provide an excellent opportunity to improve your spindle work. After running through the important health and safety, Adam had me creating a cylinder from a square block using the roughing gouge in the first step to making my doll.

The skew chisel has a reputation for catching, especially in the hands of a novice like me. With Adam's guidance and the liberal use of marker pen angle lines on his tool rest I (fairly) confidently planed my cylinder smooth.

Next my doll needed a head, which would require skills I'd not used before. Again, Adam explained what wood needed removing and his well-placed pencil lines had me producing what I would consider a pretty good oval head shape.

The traditional kokeshi consists of two turned parts – the head and neck, and the body.

The head and neck are joined to the body using a compression joint. The neck part of the doll is finished with a mushroom-like extension. This is inserted into the doll's shoulders through a fractionally smaller hole and into a slightly larger hollowed-out area. This gives the doll a rotating head that won't fall off. With the body section spinning on the lathe, the mushroom extension is pushed against the outside of the hole. As the two surfaces get hotter, there's suddenly a satisfying pop as the joint is made. As the wood cools it expands, and the joint is secure. You can tell if the fit is correct as the doll should emit a 'chirping' sound as the head is rotated.

Adam confessed that he'd not made one of these dolls before, but this is where his experience of woodturning techniques came to the fore. I was very pleased with the result despite the fact my doll's head has a bit of a wobble. It also needs decorating, which will probably require a day in a completely different workshop.

For the sharpening part of the day, I'd acquired a cheap wheel and belt grinder and wanted an expert's view on its performance. Alongside Adam's Robert Sorby, I soon realised you get what you pay for. While my system would prove adequate, it became apparent that for anyone serious about woodturning there are some things that shouldn't be scrimped on.



Near the end of the day Adam guided me through some simple bead and cove practice. He shared some useful techniques on where my feet, elbows and hands should be at the beginning and end of a cut. For any fans of Strictly Come Dancing reading this, I started my woodturning side shuffle as Anne Widdecombe to Adam's Anton Du Beke. But I'd like to think that by the end of the day I'd moved into John Sergeant territory.

Woodturning requires many different techniques, and every practitioner will have their own way of doing things.



Adam was kind enough to share his knowledge with me. It's true to say that some guidance I have already forgotten, some I may develop to suit my own way of working and others I will follow to the letter. What I did take away was a deeper respect for the wood, tools and those willing to pass on their love of this ancient craft. I would encourage every club member, no matter what their level, to spend a day in someone else's workshop.

David

For more information about A Day in My Workshop contact training manager Mel

Williams at [training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk](mailto:training@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk)

# Craft Fair report – Baldock 19th May 2024

I had the pleasure of attending the Baldock Craft Fair on 19th May to see Peter Clark (our new club secretary) on his stall.



It was a changeable day weatherwise, but the rain stayed away. So I had a great time eating hot dogs, chatting to customers and I also picked up a few items for my new kitchen.

As a bonus Peter and I managed to promote the club by handing out lots of leaflets to potential new members. Opposite Peter's stall was a local chap, selling an excellent range of bowls. It turns out that he is also the leader of a local scout troop and had a good supply of wooden woggles (look it up). – I bought one for my daughter, who is a Brownie pack leader, and I am sure she will like it.

The fair included several teams of Morris Dancers and a medieval re-enactment troop clad in metal armour and wielding some dangerous looking weapons.

Click here for a short video of some of the Morris Dancing. –

[VID\\_20240518\\_111630.mp4 - Google Drive](#)

Looking forward, I hope to see many of you at the Harpenden Craft Fair on 8th / 9th June.



Adam Blackie – May 2024



# Poetry Corner

## A GOLDEN ERA REUNION

A joyous reunion with our old school society  
Tea, scones, no alcohol, a sojourn of sobriety  
But meeting folk from 60 years back  
Reminiscing over the afternoon's snack  
Originating from the same taught stable  
Swapping a lifetime's stories, we were able  
Remembering sporting achievements  
Past forgotten friends and bereavements  
A happy babble of conversation  
Punctuated by musical renderings of today's new generation  
THANKYOU to all who contributed  
This was the first, next year's repeat already mooted  
Let us hope to all be here  
Same time, May time, but next year

Martin Sexton 23rd May 2024