

A Christmas Toy - Trefor Roberts

by Webmaster - Monday, October 22, 2018

<https://sawg.org.nz/a-christmas-toy-trefor-roberts/>



Club Meeting: 17 October 2018

Report by Earl Culham

Members of SAWG were privileged to have Trefor Roberts from North Shore Woodturning Guild as the demonstrator for the first meeting of the term. The term theme is Christmas Toys and Trefor chose to turn a Christmas cracker.

Trefor said that his aim was to present a number of ideas and techniques to the audience, so that the ideas could be used and adapted for members own creations. In his view, and as a rule of thumb, woodturners may use the ideas of other turners but if it is a straight copy, then the originator should be given credit for the idea.

Trefor used a bought Christmas cracker as a guide for sizing and for some bits to add as contents for the finished article, but anything plastic was only fit for the rubbish bin. Examples of what he would use were the exploder, the paper hat and the joke. You can't have a Christmas cracker without it making a good cracking sound or a containing a joke can you!



A turned cylinder with two chuck bites was marked into three pieces, i.e. two ends and the middle. Grooves cut to identify the ends and then the centre piece was parted in the middle. The centre and ends were then drilled out and the centre fitted back together as you would when making a lidded box. A hole was drilled through the narrow part of the ends so that the tail of the exploder could be passed through and glued into place when the cracker is assembled.



In addition to the paper hat and the joke which are the contents of the cracker, Trefor turned a small Christmas tree coloured with felt tip pens, and as another example of toys that can be added, he made a trick spinning top. Some of the nuances of making a trick spinning top were explained during the turning of the top e.g. length of spindle in relation to the end bulb needed to be the same, the curve of the bulb where it attaches to the spindle is essential for the top to flip over. Anything you can think of that will fit in to the cylinder is fine. Trefor produced a box full of a wide variety of spinning tops, quick to make and fun for people to use.



The demonstration provided a good example of what can be made for Christmas with a little bit of thought and planning. How much better would wooden crackers be on the Christmas lunch table than those that we can purchase? And what's more, they could be refilled with new turned pieces for next year.

Many thanks Trefor.