

TURNING TALK

Newsletter of the South Auckland Woodturners Guild

Number 125 : July 2004

Coming Events

- Participation 2004, at Tanner Engineering, setup 6 Aug.
Turning 7 and 8 August 2004
- Annual Taringatura. Southland Woodworkers Guild, 20 to
22 August 2004
- National Woodskills Festival 2004, Kawerau, 10 to 12
September 2004
- Wonders of Wood Craft Day at Rangiora, 18 September
2004
- TURNZ entries close 20 September 2004
- TURNZ entries received by 6 October 2004
- Tauranga Woodcrafter's Club Festival, Baycourt Festival
Hall, 8 to 10 October 2004
- TURNZ 2004. The National Woodturning Exhibition,
Putaruru, 16 to 20 October 2004
- Spinaround Waitaki, 29 to 31 October 2004
- Christmas Sale, Papakura, 13 to 24 December 2004
- Collaborationz. At Whangarei, 4 to 12 March 2005
- Timber and Working With Wood Show, Auckland, 8 to 10
April 2005
- NAW Woodskills Symposium hosted by Christchurch
Woodturners at Kaiapoi, 16 to 18 September 2005

Guild Correspondence to: 4/4 William Ave., Greenlane,
Auckland. email cheers@slingshot.co.nz

President: Terry Scott 297-7051
Vice President: Dave Harmes 579-8722
Secretary: Mike Clausen 525-3586
Editor: Dick Veitch 298-5775
Treasurer: Cathy Langley 630-2091
Committee: Len Bacon, Mac Duane, Bill Hartley,
Rex Haslip, Terry Meekan,
Colin Mitchell, Brian Petterson,
Les Sivewright

Newsletter contributions to: 48 Manse Rd., Papakura.
Or dveitch@kiwilink.co.nz or fax 298-5775

Our Website is www.sawg.org.nz

Programme for the Third Term 2004

We meet at our clubrooms, in the Papatoetoe Stadium Community Centre, Tavern Lane, Papatoetoe, at 7:00 pm. For those who wish to make use of the machinery, do some shopping, or get extra advice, the doors open at 5:00 pm.

This term sees the continuation of a Table Prize for each term – so keep your good work and lessons learned flowing to the show-and-tell table each meeting night.

21 July A wall clock. Clock making is our term project. Mac Duane will demonstrate the making of a wall clock but you may follow up with the clock of your choice.

28 July Plain pens. Cathy Langley will show us her way to make a simple pen.

4 August Hands-on making a clock. Term project. Bring wood and tools – plenty of advice available.

7 and 8 August Participation 2004. Bring your lathe to this great sharing event at Tanner Engineering. Entry forms are available in the clubrooms.

11 August Multiple demonstrations. Every lathe operating: a simple bowl; a bud vase; a fence batten bottle; and more to be announced. Prepare your questions and seek out the demonstration – these people are demonstrating to help your woodturning.

14 August Working bee. Your chance to help your clubrooms stay nice and tidy.

18 August Resin & inlay work. Bill Blanken, user of resin and inlays to great effect, shares his knowledge.

25 August Hands-on night. A captive rings challenge – most; best; smallest rings; and things like that.

1 September Imported timbers. David Liggins of Rosenfeld Kidson, timber sellers, tells us about the woods they have.

4 September Upskills day. Everyone has a skill that needs improvement.

8 September The hollowing tool. Rolly Munro, wood artist and hollowing tool manufacturer comes to visit.

11 September Working bee. Your chance to help your clubrooms stay nice and tidy.

15 September Craft market items. Terry Scott turns the little things that people like to buy.

This is also the show and tell night for the clocks that you have made.

Term four for 2004 starts 6 October.

Club Night 9 June 2004. Back to Basic Bowls

from Rex Haslip

I presented a demonstration on bowl turning, from the perspective of mounting the wood by various methods, rather than how to use the gouge. Throughout the demo, several little gadgets were also introduced to the audience.

Starting with a square blank, we found the centre using different methods (centre finder, diagonal lines etc), and then discussed the merits of different ways to mount the blank in order to turn the back of the bowl. Faceplates, screw chucks and pressure mounts, and even a vacuum chuck can be used, each with a right time and place.

After settling on a faceplate (cause I forgot the right sized drill for a screw chuck mount) I roughly turned the back, leaving a foot to hold onto when turning the inside. We discussed dovetails and spigots, and size and proportion, then roughly turned the inside. As explained earlier, the goal was to cover mounting, not gouge techniques.

I showed a few different tools (callipers) for gauging the wall thickness, and the “finger method”.

It was then onto methods for holding the bowl so as to allow the base to be cleaned. I explained briefly the vacuum chuck principles and the pressure fit again, and then spent some time working through a jam chuck. Key points to remember are:

- use a soft waste wood like customwood, or MDF, but not particle board as it is too hard and will damage the bowl. The inside of another rough turned bowl can also be used;
- take it slow and creep up on the final size of the recess (or spigot if doing an inside jam fit);
- don't give it away if you are “slightly loose” as paper towels, tissues or even damping the surface of the jam chuck will tighten it up.

And that was it.

Show and Tell Winner

I guess we are all winners as we have surely all enjoyed the display of work on the table or have learned from the information supplied by each turner.

Last term 40 members put more than 100 items on the Show and Tell table – about one third of all club members.

Bruce Hannah took out the Table Prize – awarded for quantity, not quality. With Barry Wood and Brian Petterson close on his heels.

Note those rules “Quantity, not quality”. We reward the person who has pieces on the table on the greatest number of club nights. The Show and Tell table is an excellent place to get feedback and help with your projects.

Club Night 16 June 2004. Oval Chuck

Reported by Rex Haslip

Ever wondered how those oval picture frames got that shape, or how someone could “carve” an oval bowl so accurately, well Neil shared the secret of one way to do it with us.

Neil Aston bought an oval turning chuck from Australia. When he got it it was very much still in a development stage, and Neil has continued to refine the chuck, while producing some stunning pieces.

Time taken to set up precluded Neil from actually showing us the chuck in action, but Neil played the video that accompanied the chuck, and explained the concept and principles behind it. Seeing a piece of wood “flail” around like those on the video was impressive to say the least, and an entertaining hour was spent exploring some of the uses that this chuck was put to throughout the video.

The concept in essence is that the gouge stays stationary, while the piece to be turned, moves on a sliding centre, which moves in an elliptical path. That's it, no more explanation, you had to be there. Suffice to say, it works, and the results are truly spectacular.

Not for the faint hearted, but yet another variation available to turners, and an excellent presentation by Neil.

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Club Night 30 June 2004. Sharpening

Keeping our tools sharp is a key to happy work. Jim Downs emphasised this with his detailed talk on chainsaw sharpening. He went through sharpening angles, depth settings, chain tension, and much more.

Problems caused by incorrect or inadequate chainsaw maintenance can have serious consequences but the questions really increased when he went on to talk about the ongoing damage (and cost) that can accrue if basic maintenance is inadequate and the saw continues to be used.

Dave Harmes had a good gathering around the grinding station as he put other peoples chisels to the stones.

Club Night 23 June 2004. Website Night

From Rex Haslip

Well isn't it always the way, how many times have you sat down at home to view the holiday slides, only to find the projector makes all the right noises, but the screen is blank. Well not to be disappointed by technology, the gremlins played the same trick on us at the guild meeting and forced a change of plan as the bulb on the data show let us down.

Some quick thinking by the executive launched a smaller group to view the website on the PC, while the main group were entertained by a video of Richard Raffan making boxes. Well salvaged.

It does go to raise an interesting question though, and that is, "just how reliant are we on modern technology". I know a guy with plans for a treadle lathe, if anyone is interested.

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Treeworkx Competition

Well done Teresa Hopkins (alias Teresa Hoskins and Kay Hopkins) for winning the Treeworkx competition in the March 2004 Creative Wood.

And to Keith Harris for his rimu hollow form which won the June 2004 competition.

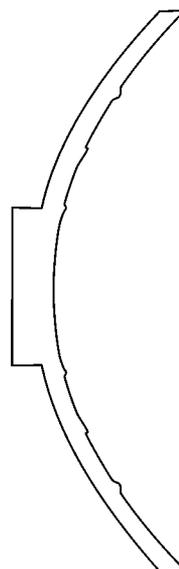
Thanks to Treeworkx for promoting this competition.

Why Not Scrape

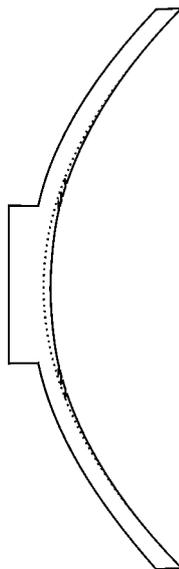
The voices are often equally loud on both sides: "You should never use a scraper" and "I always finish my work with a scraper". As with all woodturning, both may be correct.

I have heard a lot said to support the scraper finish, although often it turns out to be shear scraping (or is it sheer scraping), and, until recently, little to support the never scrape argument.

Now the two drawings below may help you consider this discussion further.



Ridges left by chisel cuts require little sanding to cut them down to the curve of the bowl.



If scraping causes a bit of end grain tear-out then a lot of sanding is needed to take all the wood away to a good curve.

The smart husband thinks twice before saying nothing.

Utah Symposium 2004

Always a great event. This, the 25th anniversary, was even greater. Just to be nice to the customers they had no attendance cutoff point so numbers grew to more than 700. To match that the number of demonstrators was increased to 33 and the demonstration areas went up to 13. So, there was an awesome lot to see.

The greatest problem was to decide just which demonstrations to see. You start with the matrix of 13 demonstration areas each having four sessions per day over three days – minus one at the start and one at the end, and plus a few in the evenings. Some demonstrators had six sessions, others four. Some demonstrators repeated a demo, others did something different each time. Each demonstration was described in just a few words. For all it paid to be early and for many arriving five minutes before start time was not enough for even a seat at the back.

But get there early and there was something to be learned from every demonstrator.

In another room was the instant gallery. Demonstrators were asked to bring examples of their work and participants could also put up to three items on display. In all there were 950 items. Turned, coloured, carved, textured and torched. From 1.7m tall down to thumbnail size. From perfect shape to twisted and broken-looking. There may not have been a technique missing – but I was not counting.

The venue is Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. The symposium always starts and ends with a gathering in a large auditorium. At the start each demonstrator shows a few slides and says a few words. Most participants attend. At the end there are awards, door prizes and thank-you speeches. Most participants attend.

To fill in a few spaces there are other attractions. The Great Egg Cup Race begins on the Thursday evening. Teams of two or single turners can take up this challenge with prizes being awarded for fastest, finest, slowest, worstest, and whatever else the judges deem appropriate.

On the Friday evening there is a BBQ at a park up the mountain slopes a little. A fairly commercial preparation but a pleasant venue with a nice view out over Provo to the lake. After the BBQ is the Bring and Buy. Ute-loads of wood, tools, books, unique toys, and more. People flock around and buy all the bits they did not need.

The day before the Utah Symposium is even better retail therapy. This is Craft Supplies Super Wednesday. They hock off all sorts of surplus items, broken bits, and mismatched stock in the closest you might ever see to a rugby scrum in the USA. To see hundreds of grown men trying to fit through a narrow doorway is a sight to remember.

The buying frenzy lasts only a short time. More sedate retail opportunities are nearby in Craft Supplies real shop and the nearby Treeline carving supplies shop. Then there are half a dozen demonstration areas where there may be vendors with a new product or invited woodturners doing interesting things. Lunch is available and you can wait until 3:00pm to see if you got the door prize.

A Visit to CAW

CAW is Capital Area Woodturners. They are the woodturners of the Washington, DC., area of USA with the pleasure of good membership and an excellent meeting area.

I met with one of their members in Auckland some months back and she offered to pick me up in New Jersey and drive me to the meeting. That was a bold offer and she now knows it is a seven hour round trip to collect me – same again to get me home. But, for me, it was well worth the time.

I don't know how long this club has been going but gathered that development to their current position is relatively recent and due entirely to acquisition of the space they now use. They have three classrooms in a school.

The first room we entered is the meeting room with lathe and chairs for a demo, raffle and silent auction.

The next room had their show and tell table, video library, and shops. Their apparel shop had a large variety of shirts and hats. One shop of woodturning bits and another of pen parts and blanks were, I think, members offers rather than club owned.

Down the hall was a further room with at least eight lathes, bandsaw, thicknesser and other bits of machinery. They use this area for their twice-monthly mid-week Skill Enhancement workshops. I think there is also some weekend use of this area. Any person using any tool or machine in this area must pay a \$5.00 shop charge and also be a member of the American Association of Woodturners or there is no insurance cover.

Club meetings are one Saturday each month, 9:00 to 3:00. I see that the April meeting was a mini symposium with various club members demonstrating. For the May meeting we were treated with a demo by Al Stirt.

The meeting began with everyone in the first room. Announcements, visitor welcomes, introduce the demonstrator, and so on. Their raffle, drawn later in the day, is of tools and other items the club has purchased or been given by businesses. Along one wall was the silent auction of wood, waxes and other bits brought in by members with the money going totally to the club. Some went for a dollar or two but the really worthwhile offerings earned the club \$20 or \$30.00.

Then we shifted to the second room to see the show and tell – just as we do ours with each person explaining their work. There was a good array of very nice pieces. Also just like our club, there were members saying “my work is not good enough for the table” when they would have benefited from the feedback. A special addition this day was a table of probably 20 largish turnings from Mt Vernon. Selected club members had been asked to turn items from a wind-blown tree on Mt Vernon for eventual return to a worthy cause related to that area.

Then it was back to the demo room. Al Stirt was an excellent demonstrator. The morning session was about getting the most out of plain grained wood using little tricks to get the line of the grain looking well balanced in the

finished work. In the afternoon he put some delightful patterns on painted work along with numerous small "how to" tips as he worked. I have many things to try when I get home. I would also like to see Al Stirt at SAWG.

The CAW has about 200 members and almost half were at the meeting. They certainly filled the rooms and the video replay of the demo onto two TV screens was an absolute necessity. With this membership and these facilities they can attract some excellent demonstrators and hold some worthwhile workshops.

It was all great to see.

After Sharpening Comes Shape

Day after day, lecture after lecture, you get that message "Sharpen your chisel". Now, from all the demonstrators at the Utah Symposium, I can convey another repeated message:

"Before you texture, decorate, or colour anything the shape and form must be good and it must be sanded to a good finish."

We have also heard this message from local demonstrators and seen the poor results of texturing over a poor surface, or adding colour to a poor shape.



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Los Angeles Woodturning Clubs

And a bit of retail therapy

After the Utah Symposium, Terry Scott and I visited some woodturning events in Los Angeles. Our original plan was just to go and do this after establishing contact by email before leaving NZ. However, our time in LA was greatly enhanced by a very kind offer from Art Fitzpatrick (and his wife, Jo) for us to use their guest space.

These clubs all meet just once a month, usually on a weeknight. Few have a room to call their own and for some it is a considerable task to set up a demonstration.

On the Thursday we were due to arrive in LA, Art was due to demonstrate at Orange County Woodturners. He planned to leave home at 3:00pm for that 7:00 pm event. So we arrived with time to spare and Terry offered to stand in on the demo as Art was due to do a full day on the same subject at Glendale the following Saturday.

We still departed at three, had an hour or more driving around the freeways, stopped for dinner, and got to the venue by about 6:30. Getting to a 7:00pm weeknight club meeting in LA is a bigger drive than asking people from North Shore to get to South Auckland at that time.

Terry did his usual good demo and had to be hauled to a halt as the questions continued and there was a time limit for the meeting.

I did not do a head count but there must have been 50 people present. This was a room in a community centre. The club stores its lathe there and has a video library. They held a raffle and had coffee available. Their show and tell table was just what we would expect and they also had lidded boxes as a special project.

On the Saturday, Art was the demonstrator at Glendale Club. Their meeting place was a roofed, but wall-less area. A lathe was trucked in and some 30 members turned out to watch. There were two TV screens connected to a video camera but not really enough light to make it all happen. A pity as Art is a well-practiced demonstrator and had put time into preparing his demonstration. There was no sign of any form of library, show and tell, or competition. It seems this club was severely limited by the areas available for their once-a-month use and storage.

The next day, Sunday, we ventured inland to share some woodturning with members of the Antelope Valley Woodturners. This club normally meets at a members house but our visit to Chris Wright's house was a special addition. We both turned and talked and used some of Chris' wood before a gathering of 15 or so club members. A pleasant day and it was great to see how others fit their turning in – in this case the car stayed outside and turning was best done with the garage door open.

For retail therapy Art took us to Woodcraft and Harborfreight. Then the mere hint that my old laptop should be replaced had us into a computer store bigger than any of our supermarkets. If they get to use all of the 24 checkouts simultaneously it must be quite a busy place at times.

Woodcraft and Harborfreight are both stores which do mailorder and can be utilised by New Zealanders. You can also find them on the web. For woodturners, Woodcraft has a wonderful array of interesting and useful toys while Harborfreight is more about tools of general use. Just as well the tools are 110v or our bags would have been even heavier.

A New Experience-Variable Speed Lathe From Bryan Peryer

With added data and photos from Dick Veitch

When demonstrating at the Royal Easter show, I used one of South Auckland Woodturners lathes fitted with Motor Technologies variable speed drive. I was sufficiently impressed with the quietness and speed control to investigate further and to end up purchasing the system myself.

I had previously thought that this drive would be of the traditional type which uses a variable resistor to alter the speed resulting in major loss of power at low speed. But no, the system employs sophisticated variable frequency technology to drive a three phase motor which still gives useable power at low speed.

The system employs a special motor, balanced for quiet running, and a separate control box. When retro-fitting your lathe, be aware that various motor attachment configurations are available and some may not fit your lathe. An adjustment knob on the control box enables continuous variation in speed on a ratio of 6 to 1. The exact speed will depend on the pulleys used as all your pulleys remain in use – only the motor is changed.

In my case, I purchased a 1 HP motor running at a full speed of 1750 rpm (compared to the usual 1425). When using the 1800rpm pulleys on my Technatool TL3000, the new system gave a range of 2200 to 366 rpm. At the lower speed there is a small loss of power but this can be rectified if necessary by changing pulleys. In fact by using the various pulleys in combination with the variable speed I can achieve a speed range of 36 to 3675 rpm, enough for any turner.

Because the motor is balanced, there is no need to mount it on vibration absorbing rubber which in turn means that the motor can be firmly bolted to the mounting plate and hence keeps its alignment in use. In setting the system up I have been very careful to align the pulleys using a straight edge. The result is a very quiet running lathe which is a pleasure to use.

However all was not sweet to start with. Initially I found two problems; an annoying whistle from the control box and severe radio interference. The first problem was solved by returning the unit to the supplier who re-tuned the control box with some slight loss in power. The second was partially solved by purchasing a radio suppressor for an extra cost of about \$110. This still did not fully cure interference on AM stations but there is no interference on FM.

One very nice feature is the way the speed of the motor starts off. When turned on, the revs increase smoothly over about four seconds to maximum speed without the sudden clunk my old motor used to exhibit. In addition the motor also acts as a brake on turning off, and resonant vibrations to be tuned out with slight speed adjustments.

Another feature is the reverse switch enabling sanding (or turning if you are game) in the reverse direction.

The system has already proved very popular among turners and is available from Motor Technologies, 62 Sir William Drive, East Tamaki, phone (09) 917 4570. Approximate costs are for a 1 HP system, \$800 including GST plus another \$110 for a radio suppressor. I had no trouble fitting the motor.

This is a very good option for retro-fitting but of course if you are buying a new lathe you should consider a Technatool DVR which is a direct drive variable frequency controlled lathe.



Goblet Competition

Never before in the history of South Auckland Woodturners Guild have we seen such meticulous judging of competition entries. Brent Wray, of Motor Technologies, had his callipers out measuring each goblet pair. He was giving the prize, so he could judge as he pleased (and who am I to question his good judgement).

There were certainly many good entries and one notable entrant who obviously had no show of making a pair, so made a totally different goblet array.

The challenge put forth by Brent was for club members to make the best pair of goblets and he would give away one of his wonderful variable speed adaptations.

In the end there were four prizes: fourth to Brian Petterson; third to Peter Homburg; second to Mac Duane; and first to Dick Veitch.



Changes to SAWG subscription rates

Changes to annual subscription rate

- Beginning with 2005, the annual subscription will be \$40, as agreed at the AGM
- The joining fee remains the same at \$10
- Subs are due on 1 January, and increase to \$45 if not paid by 31 March

Staging of annual subscription

- New members joining January through June pay the full rate
- New members joining July through September pay \$20 plus the \$10 joining fee (total \$30)
- New members joining October through December pay \$10 plus the \$10 joining fee (total \$20)

“Junior Membership”

- SAWG wants to encourage members to introduce young people to turning and to the Guild.
- Members may sponsor junior members for an annual subscription of \$10. There will be no joining fee.
- Junior members must be under 18 and still in school full-time when they join or renew their junior membership.
- The sponsoring member will:
 - be responsible for the activities and manage the behaviour of the sponsored junior member, making good any damage done to assets or premises, or any failure to pay amounts due
 - encourage the junior member's active participation in the Guild's activities
 - Junior members will pay half of the normal charge for upskills days and Guild-sponsored seminars, but will pay full price for shop supplies and all other facilities.
- There will be no staging of the junior member's subscription. A name tag will be provided but not a new member's pack.

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