

TurningTalk

Turning Tomorrow's Treasures

Issue No 182

Newsletter of the South Auckland Woodturners Guild

November 2009

Richard Raffan Returns

Turners from all over the upper North Island turned out to watch and learn from the internationally acclaimed master wood-turning demonstrator, Richard Raffan who appeared, courtesy of NAW, at the South Auckland Woodturners Guild Clubrooms this past Labour Weekend.

Arguably also the world's best known Wood Turner (as Creative Wood recently suggested), Richard shared not only his comprehensive knowledge and expertise but also his gentle English-cum-Aussie humour as he conducted firstly on the Saturday, a Demonstration day for 65 turners followed by a Masterclass on the Sunday for 6 turners and 12 observers.

Demonstration Day

Despite his outward calm, Richard acknowledged that he still gets nerves quoting David Ellsworth "Don't ever look 'em in the eye". Well, there was lots of eye contact and some very enlightening insights not only into technique but also commentary on how to make and market pieces, advice on making and learning from your mistakes, critically evaluating work and listening to the market (however acknowledging that sometimes there can be "little rhyme or reason for what does and doesn't sell").

Having started production turning in 1972, early on in his career Richard recognised the need to be able to quickly turn out pieces suitable for gallery sale but warned about "getting ahead of the market" recounting the difficulty he had selling 600 bowls turned from camphor laurel.

"You learn an awful lot cutting bowls in half" Richard says. Another piece of advice we have all heard and that Richard repeated was "not to undervalue your work" (as we contemplate our own Christmas Sale offerings).



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Wed nights - 7.00 pm
(Doors open - 5.00 pm)

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Club calendar

All the activities listed here are in our clubrooms in the Papatoetoe Stadium Community Centre, Tavern Lane, Papatoetoe (see www.sawg.org.nz for directions).

On our regular Wednesday evening meetings, the official meeting starts at 7.00pm and is followed by a "Show-&-Tell" session where members can show and discuss their work.

For those wishing to make use of the machinery, do some shopping, check out our library, get a little extra advice, or just socialise, the doors open at 5pm.

We have a Table Prize for each term. This is members work on display - lessons learned (half-finished, flawed, or failed) to the best you can do that has been brought to the "Show-&-Tell" table during the term.

TERM 4 2009

9 December. **Ready Steady Turn.** Terry Scott, Dick Veitch & "Mystery"

12 December. **Working Bee** followed by Ornamental Turners Meeting.

16 December. **Last night of the year.** Awards, Packing for Kidz First and a few stories

An up to date Calendar of Events can always be viewed at www.sawg.org.nz

Mini Lathes - FREE Loans

The Club has a few mini lathes available for use by members, at no cost, in their home workshops, club events or in the clubrooms.

They come ready to go (just plug & play) complete with a Nova chuck and a set of tools.

Usually they are available for two weeks, but depending on demand, extra time can be arranged.

Turning blanks and a variety of finishing materials are available for purchase at the club shop.

*- Enquiries to Mac Duane, Tom Pearson
or a Committee member.*



Mac's Maxim of the Month:

"Feel the fear and do it anyway"

-Mac Duane



The South Auckland Woodturners
Guild

is a member of the
National Association of
Woodworkers NZ Inc
and the
American Association of
Woodturners



(Continued from page 1)

Not thrown by the odd hiccup along the way, Richard dealt very professionally with unexpected problems in the demonstration— whether it was encountering worm holes, making a hole too deep, dealing with a hand wheel coming off or simply a chuck that would not expand enough. Rather than “design opportunities”, Richard refers to his “dynamic design” approach!

Every entertainer has their “party trick” and many were delighted and impressed with Richard demonstrating, in a continuous rolling motion, his beads without the tool leaving the work piece. Carol Knowles, who reports on the following days “Masterclass” and other attendees at the Masterclass were taught to do this so we might expect some proficiency in the future from others in the Guild.

An excellent day enjoyed by all I spoke to and well worth while not going away for the Long weekend! (and a big “thanks” once again to the ladies from Manukau Toy Library for their excellent catering for this event)

Master Class with Richard Raffan

Carole Knowles

Sunday the 25th October 2009 was here after weeks of pondering shall I go?, am I good enough?. There was also very slow response to enrolments. Richard only wanted six turners and twelve observers, so I put my name down to be an observer. A man of Richard's calibre only ventures "down under" every twenty years or so as I did not want this to be cancelled. As time went by there were still not enough turners up for it so after discussions with senior club members I took the plunge and along with Cathy Langley we became two of the turners with the motive " nothing ventured, nothing gained. "

Richard demonstrated each piece in stages on the lathe. Then we followed it up under his watchful eye. First up was spinning tops using the skew, no sanding required with this method. Next was a side grain lidded box this seemed to be quite a challenge for all, for me new tools and methods, both a big learning curve. Last of all we were shown Richards method of beads on a wet turned bowl, this is a rolling action with the tool never leaving the wood, very quick and no tear-out.

Richard uses his scrapers (of which he has many) to great effect, with beautiful clean cuts with precision, resulting in very little sanding. He changes tools fast and frequently, removing the piece from the chuck and measuring throughout the process. His tools were of course razor sharp.

Conclusion : Despite the initial trepidation, and once I was over the nervousness I was so pleased not to have been overawed by the occasion. I learnt so much and added lots more to my woodturning experiences. I am now quite confident using the much aligned scrapers. I can appreciate the time to spend on preparation and planning of a piece. I can also now see there are more ways of chucking pieces. What I perceived as being a sharp chisel was way off the mark.



Shavings

Gallery Open Day

On 22 November, Terry Scott held a very successful Open Day at his gallery hidden deep in the back blocks of Papakura. This evidently didn't stop many people coming along and neither did the weather as Terry had many buying his and fellow exhibitor Gordon Pembridges' stunning examples of the Wood Turners craft.

Terry holds this annually and to get your own personal invitation to next years event, email Terry at timberley@xtra.co.nz to be added to his email list.

Terry has also initiated his own newsletter in which he keeps subscribers informed of what he is currently up to.

You can also visit Terry on the web at www.timberley.co.nz

Quote of the Month

"Bash, bash, take the Cash"

Terry Scott

Wood Turning Blanks Stock Clearance Sale

A reminder that Jim Downs is clearing his stock of timber with half of all proceeds from purchases made before 31 December going to SAWG funds. Once again Jim, on behalf of the guild, thanks for your generosity.

Further details are in the advertisement in this issue.

Christmas Function

Thanks to Jim and Claire Downs who once again hosted this years Christmas Function for members, partners and guests.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend but I understand that the event went well and no doubt the stories will come out later...

Guild in the News

The English magazine "Woodturner" recently had an article on our Guild and gave an excellent account of our activities. The article is reproduced on page 5 for your information.

Sponsor Thank You

Mike Hunter was very generous in sending down a hunter tool for the

prize for Kids first and some Ice cream scoops for Participation 2009.

To encourage him to do the same next year, members are invited to sign up for his mailing list at www.hunterwoodturningtool.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi/list/test/

or better yet, check out some of his excellent tools at www.hunterwoodturningtool.com

Scraper Tip

Alan Day is a new-ish turner who has found that talking to more experienced turners certainly helps. Alan was experiencing difficulty turning the outside of a bowl in one pass "from go to woah" without leaving small ridges. Another turner suggested to Alan that if using a super sharp gouge and rubbing the bevel did not work, to try rounding the corners of an old Stanley knife by grinding and using that to remove the ridges. Alan reports that it "works brilliantly".



A bit of Kiwi Nostalgia

Most of you will recall with fondness the Country Calendar "leg-pulls" from years gone by- in particular the remote controlled sheep dog. For a refresher, go to www.nzonscreen.com/title/country-calendar-spoof-special-1999.

Bowl "Turning"?

A clip from Discovery Channel is on Youtube that some may be interested in viewing at www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EnERnbrJiU&NR=1 on the "lost art of handcrafted wooden bowls"!.

Teknatool Pricing

Occasionally, prices do come down while value remains high.

Ian Fish of Turning Tools advises that with effect from 29 October 2009, new pricing for Teknatool has come into effect as a result of the increased relative strength of the Kiwi \$. More

details can be obtained from Ian- phone 09 418 1312, email at ian@turningtools.co.nz or visit him on the web at www.turningtools.co.nz

Everyone is getting into turning:



(found lurking by Terry Scott)

More Raffan Photos:



“Woodturner” Article

Issue 208 of Woodturner magazine had a profile of our Guild compiled with assistance and input from SAWG President Dick Veitch. It is reproduced, with permission, from a pdf (hence the low quality) for your edification!



South Auckland Woodturners Guild

Dick Veitch, President of the South Auckland Woodturners Guild tells us about this Guild which is the largest of its kind in New Zealand.

The newly established South Auckland Woodturners Guild is situated in the garage of Dick Veitch's home at 41-43, 2nd Avenue, Manurewa. It is open to all woodturners and is a non-profit making organisation. The Guild's main aim is to provide a forum for woodturners to share their skills and knowledge, and to promote the art of woodturning in New Zealand.

Programmes: The Guild offers a variety of programmes for its members, including a full-day woodturning course, an advanced course, and a beginners course. The Guild also offers a variety of other programmes, including a woodturning club, a woodturning society, and a woodturning association.

Meetings: The Guild meets every second Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm at the Manurewa Community Centre.

Contact: Dick Veitch (President)
Email: president@sawg.org.nz
Website: www.sawg.org.nz

COMMUNITY Club profile

The term project for the pre-Christmas term is a simple small bowl or a toy. These are then wrapped and given to the local children's hospital. There are usually far more gifts than there are children in hospital so the health care people spread them to others who have to stay in over the Christmas period.

Equipment
Each of our 13 lathes is equipped with seven chisels, as well as faceplate, chuck and other basics. All these tools are on a table beside the lathe so members can just start turning provided the right people are here to meet our safety standards. The club also has its own library, which contains 130 books, 60 videos and DVDs, and many years' worth of journals. We also have our own wood store and the wood comes from member donations, families of past members and freshly cut wood.

We have raised seating, which allows up to 89 people to have a good view of the demonstration lathe, and they are close enough to hear, too. Two video cameras put a picture onto two wide-screen televisions behind the demonstrator.

All this setup has allowed us to take on the Aoraki Polytechnic Certificate in the woodturning training programme. This is a four-level training course with 20 compulsory and 11 elective modules chosen from 27 options. For each module the student has a day with tutor supervision and at least one day of homework to complete. We are now in our second year of this training and have 30 students enrolled. This has resulted in a notable increase in member confidence and woodturning quality.

The future
I have no doubt that having club rooms is a superb bonus and having a structured training programme will further enhance club activities. We attend large public gatherings to raise the club's profile as well as visits to schools and smaller events where we are present with a couple of lathes and hand-out material to prospective new members. As a club we need to recognise member preferences and cater for them. Our average meeting is just one-third of our membership so we ensure through our website and newsletter that all club members are informed about the programme to come and activities they have missed.

LEFT: Ornamental turnings by Dick Veitch
RIGHT: Vase by Mike Tevis



DETAILS
Contact: Dick Veitch (President)
Email: president@sawg.org.nz
Website: www.sawg.org.nz

The Guild library subscribes to this magazine but for your own subscription, currently available at a discount, go to www.woodworkersinstitute.com and follow the link to the magazine.
(Can someone explain why a “Visitor from Hawkes Bay” is the featured demonstrator?- congratulations Robbie)

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(From Jack McKenzie's workshop where it was on the wall for many years – Submitted By Mike Clausen)

Stock Reduction Sale

Woodturning Blanks, Slabs, Planks
50% of proceeds go to SAWG funds

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Club Night Action

9 September

An evening with Peter Coatesworth

Barry Knowles

It was a change from the norm on Wednesday. Instead of flying pieces of wood and a presentation of woodturning techniques we were treated to yet another scintillating talk by Peter Coatesworth recounting his experiences during a 28 day voyage around Australia on board the good ship Sun Princess over the period March 5th to April 2nd 2009. (Members will recall the wonderful talk Peter gave us on his journey walking the length of New Zealand)

The Sun Princess has a passenger capacity of 1950. Gross tonnage 77,000, length 856', Crew 900, Cabins 975, and a cruising speed of 21 knots.

Peter and his wife joined the cruise at Darling Harbour. Embarkation was quick and efficient. They were pleased with their cabin allocation and soon set out to explore their new home for the next 28 days. Peter's fellow passengers were of a mixed variety, with the majority Australian, some 300 Kiwis and 150 from both USA and the UK. There was a good age mix with a larger than usual proportion of walking sticks, walking frames and wheel chairs.



The Sun Princess sailing under Sydney Harbour Bridge

The ship sailed from Sydney with wonderful sea conditions and views of Sydney. The first Port of call was Brisbane, where time was allocated to take in the local sights. After Brisbane they were scheduled to visit the Whitsundays but due to unsuitable sea conditions and Cyclone Hamish they continued on to Yorkeys Knob (Cairns). From Cairns they sailed a couple of days through the Great Barrier Reef. It was necessary to take on board a Barrier Reef Pilot to guide them the ship through the narrow reef passages.

The next port was Darwin. Peter recommended that visitors consider very carefully before taking a swim. The area is famous for Crocodiles, stingers, water snakes etc. Peter called into the Military Museum at Darwin and would highly recommend a visit.

From Darwin they sailed to Broome and Peter spoke of the Pearl Divers and their experiences with diving and the "Bends". From Broome it was on to Exmouth. The main point of interest were the huge towers at the Harold Holt Communication Centre. This is basically a US centre for Submarine Communications. Next it was to Bunberry, Albany and then on to Adelaide, Melbourne and then Burnie on Tasmania's North Coast and then for two days at Hobart.

Peter explained that as he is an early riser he would take the opportunity to walk around the deck twice daily. This equated to a mile. He would duck into the kitchen and partake in a plate of porridge and then go down to the cabin, wake his wife and then they would both go to a hearty breakfast.

Peter described the dining and food experience and was most impressed. Lunches were 'themed' with an assortment of Italian, Caribbean, Mexican etc. There was also the opportunity for formal dining. The waiter service was very professional. Entertainment on the voyage was superb. There is a 500 seat movie theatre and a 500 seat auditorium where live shows were presented. There were plenty other activities including lectures, trivia and crafts. Peter recommended that one be aware of the 'hidden' costs of travelling on these tours especially when purchasing alcohol.

Peter finished his talk by taking questions of a general nature.

I personally enjoy this type of change from the usual Wednesday night activities whereby people share their experiences with Club members eg; Dicks' many journeys.

(Editors note: Apologies to Peter and Barry for this not appearing in last months newsletter- this article was one of a number lost last month when my computer "crashed").

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14 October

**Term Four Project - Gifts for 'Kidz First'
Demonstration by Bryden Thorpe and Tom Pearson**

By Dick Veitch

Bryden provided a lively and entertaining demonstration of his favorite type of wood turning, making wooden toys. He began the evening's demonstration by first of all displaying the wide variety of wooden toys that he specializes in producing. These toys included: tractors, cars, helicopters, float planes, and various spinning devices. All the toys on display were designed and constructed with great care and attention to detail and with consideration for the safety of the child when playing with the toy.



Bryden "Wheels" Thorpe

During Bryden's demonstration he expertly drew our attention to the special purpose-made jigs that he had developed. These allow for the turning of the various wheels needed for each of the different toy vehicles that he makes. This particular wheel making device is able to be held using the normal 50 mm Nova jaws. Setting the lathe running at 1500 rpm, Bryden is able to turn blank segments to round and at the same time he checks with calipers for the correct wheel diameter.



Bryden likes to use the point of the skew chisel to make a series of grooves on the outer edge of each wheel giving each one its own tread.

Once the tread grooves have been completed using the skew, he then burns each groove with wire, as this is able to darken up the tread on each wheel. Once this procedure has been completed with all of the wheels, the jig is then removed from the jaws of the chuck. A second wheel jig is then attached to the chuck jaws. This will allow each wheel to be embellished on its sides.



Once the wheel turning had been completed, Bryden then sets up his sanding jig. At this point in the proceedings Bryden recommended that all members who did not have such a sanding device contact Mac Duane who would take orders. The wheels were duly sanded using the sanding disc that was attached to the lathe. A second method of sanding using a sanding drum that had been inserted into a Jacobs chuck was demonstrated for sanding the round sections of each toy that was being prepared. This is to ensure that the toys do not have any unnecessary sharp edges.



**Tom -
"Let me check my notes"
-Pearson**

The second demonstration for the evening was by Tom Pearson. Tom presented to the audience his enviro -friendly car design, it reminded one of a cross between a 'beetle' and a 'bambina'. The design did have a driver and passenger that could be included with the car.

Tom begins by marking out all the necessary measurements on the round blank to start with. He then attaches the blank to a screw chuck. The blank is first to the required round dimensions. Each face of the blank is turned separately on the screw chuck. The edges are power sanded. Once this has been completed the blank is then cut into two identical half sections using the bandsaw. The driver and passenger are then turned from smaller section of blanks. Finally the wheels are attached using screws.



A very nicely designed and efficiently crafted toy was produced in a short period of time. For ideas on toy designs it is worth checking the web. The key aspects being to keep the design simple and practical, and above all ensure that it will be able to be used safely by the child.

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21 October Lace Bobbins presented by Cathy Langley



As we have come to expect, Cathy gave her usual accomplished presentation. This evening, the subject was turning lace bobbins and Cathy shared her knowledge and experience of lace making as well as making lace bobbins.

Cathy says: “Bobbin lace originated in the 1500’s in Italy and Flanders, and spread throughout Europe and Scandinavia. In countries where the aristocracy created a demand for lace, it became an industry that was concentrated in particular towns that became known for their own style of lacemaking. In East Devon, there were 5,300 lacemakers in 1676. With the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, the aristocracy declined and so did the ability of lace makers to make a living.

In 1818, the first machine-made lace was produced, and this contributed to the decline of hand-made lace. In countries where lace making had developed primarily for personal use (for example Eastern Europe and Scandinavia) it continued for some time, but today it is primarily a craft and a hobby.



Bobbins were made of bone or wood, often with inscriptions that personalised them or commemorated memorable events. They are often decorated with beads, wire, pewter inlay, or even drilled out to create a “mother and babe” bobbin with a miniature bobbin held within the hollow, viewed through a window cut into the side.

Bobbins used in England normally have a circle of beads at the base called a “spangle” to create weight and keep the bobbin from rolling on the hard pillow on which the lace is made.



Online, instructions for making bobbins can be found at www.angelfire.com/ct/mikesbobbins/birth.html, and there are excellent examples on the website of a Tasmanian turner, Malcolm Fielding.

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28 October

Chair Making With Jim Black

Bob Frear



Jim produced a Windsor chair which is a simple design and reasonably straight forward to produce. Consisting of a slab for the seat and mainly turned components, the legs and stretchers between the legs are cut longer to create tension between the legs producing a form of self bracing. For the seat slab, elm was mainly used.

Chairs were the prerogative of the aristocracy and upper classes. They were made to order in both quantity and design by craftsmen in the village...



The Artful Bodger (Jim, Left) was occasionally helped by his Gofer (Bob Yandell, Right)

The lower ranks used stools and benches made by the village carpenters...

With the emergence of the middle class, furniture started to evolve but the supply of solid slabs was very scarce and they were costly to produce. The wood was cut in the forests, brought back to the village, and left to air dry. All the timber was felled and roughly prepared in the forest to avoid difficult and heavy transportation.

Before the Bodger (woodsman) went into the forest with his Gofer (bobo) to collect his wood, he prepared his tools of trade, which consisted of:

- Club - 150mm dia, 200mm long with one end cut down to 50mm dia to form a handle;
- Maul - the head 200mm dia x 200mm with a 50mm dia x 1m handle;
- Wedges - a series of sizes cut from a log 100mm dia;
- Axe - a wooden handle, with a head made by the village blacksmith. The head was shaped for both splitting and paring the timber;
- Draw knife - a blade 300mm long and 50mm wide, sharpened on the inside edge with a handle on each end which you could pull towards you to par the timber to a near round shape;
- Bib - a timber slab 300mm x 50mm hung around your neck for protection to avoid doing yourself damage with the draw knife;



Clockwise from top left: hand-made offset axe, shaving horse, splitting club, bib and drawknife in use by Jim, finished lathe

(Continued on page 10)

- Shave horse (which Jim made a replica of) - constructed much the same as the saw horse we use today. The top is 200mm wide and 1200mm long. The timber to be worked on is at an angle of 30 degrees up towards the operator who sits on one end of the horse, with the timber facing up to him. Wedged on to the sloping board, he then works on it with his draw knife to form a near round;
- Splitting club - a blade 300mm x 50mm set at a right angle to the handle which is sharpened on to the bottom edge and driven into the end grain of the log, splitting it ready for shaping with the draw knife;
- Band saw - much the same as we use today.

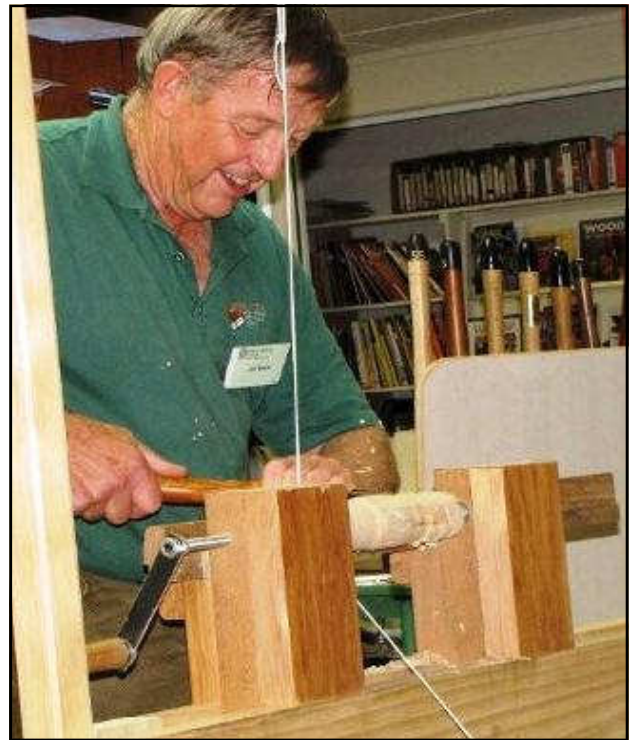
The Bodger and Gofer would load up the gear in a barrow or hand cart and go into the forest for a few weeks, setting up a bivouac and a clear area for working. The wood they collected would be cut into 600mm lengths - mainly Beech, Ash, Liquid Amber and any other wood which has straight grain and splits well.

They would then go back to the village and set up a lathe (treadle lathe), again which Jim had made a replica of. The wood is mounted between poppets (Head and Tail stock) with a cord around it three times, going up to suitable springy sapling (Jim used a bungee cord attached to a post each end of the lathe), and the other end going down to a treadle, much the same as a treadle sewing machine.

After many days of work, it would then be sent to the factory for final detailing and assembly.

For all those who attended, it was a most informative and humorous demonstration, and for those who didn't, you missed a great show.

Editors Note: As Bob says, if you were not there, you certainly missed one of the most entertaining and informative evenings of the year. One of the highlights of the evening was the introduction of "Young Bob" Yandell who, with great patience, tolerance and good humour, played Gofer to Jim "Bodger" Black fetching and carrying and generally doing Jims' bidding as and when required.



Jim proved Bodging was sweaty work (unlike evidently Gofering, as Young Bob never raised an eyebrow, let alone a sweat)



Amused Members of the audience

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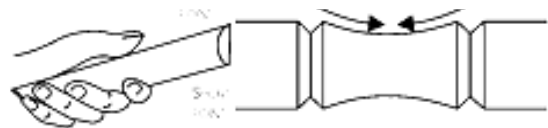
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