

Woodpecker



The newsletter of the Ely Guild of Woodturners



June 2017

The March meeting.

There were 42 members present, with one visitor. We have no name.

Chairman Stephen welcomed everyone, including our demonstrator for the evening, Paul Howard, who previously visited in 2015. He drew our attention to a new TV, which is to replace one of the old ones which had ceased to work. He said if anyone would like to take the old one to see if they could get it going, they were welcome to do so, and perhaps make a donation to Guild funds if they were successful. We are indebted to Chris Collins for his efforts in sourcing a new set so promptly. This set is larger than the previous one, so a new cover will be required. Any offers of material for this will be gratefully received.

There is an ongoing need for instructors for novices, and for audio/visual operators, as it is highly unlikely that Chris Collins will be able to attend every meeting, due to his work commitments.

Mike Marsters has offered to chair Art in Wood again this year, but he does need some help from the beginning. Also, we must think about a Vice Chairman for when Clive Baker takes over from Stephen next year. That means a new competition organiser will be required.

It had been suggested that the contents of the library, DVD's and books, be offered for sale to members, but it appears that Tim Beddoes may take it on to continue it as a library. If you haven't had a look at it lately, there is some interesting stuff there.

The dreaded clip boards appeared again, this time for members to sign up to the April 'hands-on' day, and Art in Wood.

Apparently, Woodturning magazine is available from Tesco, using club card points. Don't you just hate all these ruddy cards?

Adrian Moore has a Dremel flexible shaft to dispose of.

New member George Ashdown was presented with his 'Welcome' pack, and in the absence of President Dick

Brown, Stephen asked one of our more experienced members, Hugh Castle, to make the presentation. George had brought along his collection of walking sticks, all of which he has made. There were forty of them, all made with hundreds of small segments laminated together. I asked if he knew how many segments there were in total, but he did not. He did point out that one in particular had around two thousand separate pieces.



Just some of George's magnificent sticks.

Chris Edwards and Roger Haverson, joint winners of the Medlock Trophy for novices, were presented with the shield. They had both missed out on the presentations at the December meeting.

On to our demonstrator for the evening, Paul Howard. Paul is a former electrical and mechanical engineer, who has worked in the Bahamas and America, as well as this country. Have a look at his website, it's on our programme.

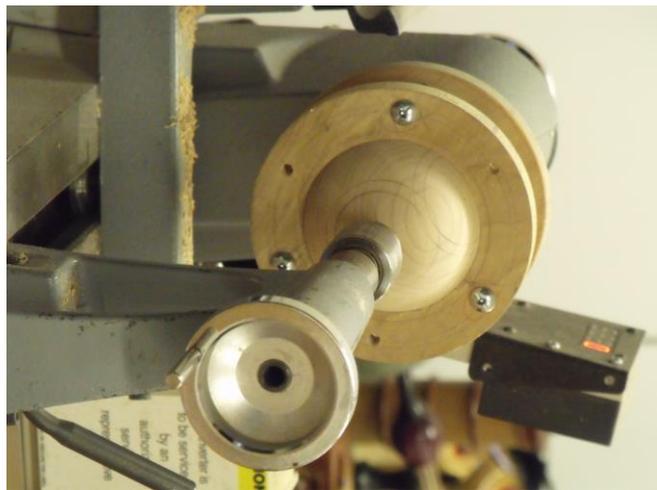
He had a display of some of his products, including several cute owls, all made in the shape of a sphere, and he proceeded to show us how he makes them. First, he spent a short time showing how to turn a sphere free-hand, before going on to a sphere cutting jig of his own design, and which he sells. A nifty bit of kit, but a bit pricey I thought, unless you intend to make a lot of spherical objects, then it would be worth buying.

Starting with a cube with two small blocks hot melt glued on to the centres of opposite sides, this was held between two Steb centres. Paul said if it was cold, it was a good idea

to warm the wood first with a hair dryer before applying the hot melt. He then turned these two projecting pieces 2 down to quite a small diameter, before setting up the sphere jig.

It didn't take long to turn the sphere as far as he could, before it was time to remove the two projecting 'ends'. This left two small projections unturned, and to remove these, the ball was held in a cup chuck with pressure from a rubber buffer in the tail stock, thus enabling the two 'knibs' to be removed. Paul then showed how he uses a scraper on a sphere, but it wasn't any old scraper. This one was made from an old hole saw, with the teeth ground off. A circular tool fits a circular form.

Next it was time to form the owl's eye surrounds. This was accomplished with a router mounted on a jig, and an indexing plate, with the sphere held between two plywood 'chucks', shown below. A wooden bush on the router cutter controls the depth of cut. The beak was cut from a small square blank, and I think the actual eyes may be marbles, but I'm not entirely sure. Perhaps someone can help with that.



The owls were given hats. This one had a mortar board. The top was a piece of ply, and the part which actually fits his head was turned with the aid of a vacuum chuck. All painted matt black and with a bought-in tassel attached.

All in all an excellent demo, using some interesting jigs



and equipment, and all carried out by a man who obviously knows his stuff.

An owl family.



More of Paul's work.



Not part of Paul's display, these are the competition entries. This is the senior section, there being no novices competition this month.

1st. Peter Symonds, joint 2nd. Richard Ackroyd and Ray Dellow, and 4th. Alan Haine.



Paul Howard.

The April meeting.

After welcoming the assembled throng, Stephen reminded us that subscriptions were now due, and that there was now a dedicated parking space for the disabled in the car park, which should not be used by others.

Stephen also had a bit of sad news, Jim Tooke passed away last month. The funeral will be on 20th April at St. Mary's Church, Ely, and afterwards at the Ely Football Club. Stephen asked members to stand to observe a minute's silence.

A lady named Liz Burton, from Ten Mile Bank, was present. She had brought some recently cut apple and walnut which she was offering free of charge, but would like donations to The Woodland Trust. She also stayed as a visitor for part of the meeting.

There is an opportunity for someone to have a stall at Little Thetford village feast on October 26th, where proceeds go to The McMillan Trust, and a lady from Haddenham has a lathe and other bits to dispose of. Stephen has the details.

There is a fairly urgent need for someone to operate our audio/visul set-up on a full time basis. There are a few people who can do it now and again, but we do need a dedicated 'AUDIO/VISUAL TECHNICIAN/SOUND ENGINEER/CAMERA OPERATOR'. A grand title, more grand than any other Guild officer. Unfortunately, like all the rest of us, it is unpaid.

It has come to light that, at the March meeting, Carol Collins hurt her ankle seriously enough to require treatment. If anyone suffers any mishap, they should report it to an officer/committee member, so that it can be recorded, in case of future complications.

Our demonstrator this month was Gregory Moreton, who we have seen once before in 2013, below.



The first thing he did was show how to knock a drive centre into the end of a piece of wood. Nothing difficult about that, you may think, but how many times have you got it a bit on the skew, so that when you engage the tail centre, the drive is not making as good a contact as you would like. Greg's method is to put the drive centre into the bore loosely, engage the tail centre, then, using the knock-out rod and a mallet, knock it into the work piece. This ensures that it goes in straight. Not a major problem with a small blank, maybe, but with a large piece, you want to make sure the drive is getting a good bite. Personally, I just bang it in with an old carver's mallet, and sometimes it even goes in straight.

What Greg did for us was a natural edge burr bowl in false acacia. He likes them to be circular, even on the underside. With the size of the blank, this resulted in a long spigot, the bulk of which he reduced in size so that it would go right into the chuck. Thus held, it was hollowed in the normal way. He wanted to leave the bark on, but some of it came off, so he took it all off, removing any remnants with first a wire brush, then a rotary nylon brush. Greg uses either a 45 degree grind on his bowl gouge, or a 55. He does not like sweptback gouges.

To remove the spigot and any semblance of a foot, he mounted a soft pad in the chuck, which went inside the bowl, with the tail centre brought up to hold it. Ideally, this is done with a revolving ring centre, but if you haven't got one, put a washer on the standard one. This prevents the point going in too far and splitting the wood, which you'll remember is quite a small diameter. It's now time to take the rest of the spigot off, going as small as you dare before breaking the last little bit, or cutting with a saw, then sanding with rotary pads in the chuck. The finish is usually three coats of oil.



The second project is difficult to describe, I don't even know if it has a name, but here's roughly how it was done. A drill chuck with a morse taper was held in the headstock with, if memory serves me right, a 25mm bit. The blank, a section of a log with bark on, was then pushed up to the drill using a hollow tail centre. It was drilled right through, the type of tail centre used allowing the tip of the drill to be seen so it could be stopped before hitting the centre. This was done a little off-centre at each end.

Next a long spigot was made to be a snug fit inside the hole, not more than half the length of the piece. With the tail centre in place, the centre section of the piece was turned out in a nice curve, giving a waisted effect. As the hole was 25mm dia, Greg aimed for a central thickness of 29mm, giving a wall thickness of just 2mm

With the tail centre still in place, hollowing of the end could be carried out, keeping the tail centre in place as long as possible. To hollow the opposite end, a 'jam' chuck was made. It could not be too tight for fear of splitting the piece, so had to be shapes for a good fit into the hollowed out end. This was the drive, but Greg wrapped 'gaffer' tape around the piece, over the 'jam' chuck and onto the main chuck, as an extra precaution. Now the other end could be hollowed as before. Sanding would be done as work progressed. I don't know if any of you can make one of these from my description. I'm afraid my notes don't quite make sense in places, and my memory is no better. If you do make one, bring it along for 'show and tell'.



The 'double-ended hollow natural edge whatsit'.



Another view.

The competitions.

Novices:- A box with lid. 1st. Chris Horne, 2nd. Adrian Moore, 3rd. Tim Beddows.

Seniors:- Lidded item with delicate finial. 1st. Peter Symonds, three joint seconds, Stephen Franklin, Clive Baker and Dick Brown.

The entries. I don't think the Oxo tin was one of them.



The funeral of Jim Tooke has taken place, on Thursday 20th April at St. Mary's Church, Ely. Jim would have been 84 next August. The Guild was represented by Stephen Franklin, Peter and Moyra Symonds, Malcolm Arter, Gerry and Jean Lawrence, Gill Marchant, John Last and Astrid. If I have missed anyone, I apologise.



The 'hands-on/ open day on Saturday, April 22 was well attended by members, both experienced and novice, with six lathes on the go. Sadly, though, members of the public were conspicuous by their

absence. I'm inclined to think this may be due to a lack of advertising.

The May meeting.

There were 42 members present, and one visitor, Martin Moore. A new member's 'Welcome pack' was presented to Leslie Booth, from Stretham.

Stephen said a gentleman named George Thorpe had some laburnum to dispose of. Stephen has got his 'phone number.

In a recent issue of Woodturner magazine, the Guild's website was voted website of the month.

It had been suggested that the library should perhaps be disposed of, but Tim Beddoes has volunteered to run it.

Stephen had appealed more than once for a stand-in for Peter as secretary, if and when he has to miss meetings when he has his eye operation. This evening, he was able to reveal that Mary Ward has offered to do this. Many thanks to Mary.

There is still a need for someone to set up and operate the audio/visual system on a more or less permanent basis. Of course, there is usually help in getting the equipment out and packing it up, so it is not just a one person job.

At the last committee meeting, it had been suggested that the Guild would benefit from a publicity officer, someone who could handle advertising for events like the 'hands-on/ open' day, to name but one. You will be aware that Gill Marchant has done sterling work in the past in appearing on local radio to advertise Art in Wood, but neither Gill or her husband Peter enjoy the best of health, and I know she is very busy with other things, so I for one would be reluctant to ask her to take it on.

There is an opportunity for us to publicise ourselves at the forthcoming Little Thetford Feast. We would be able to have a lathe on the go, and offer items for sale. It would have to be outside, as the hall will be in use by others, but Clive Baker has offered to bring a gazebo in case of inclement weather. Speak to either Clive or Gerry Lawrence.

Remember, you can get discount from some woodturning suppliers, such as Axminster and D.J. Evans in Bury St. Edmunds, and Toolpost? (I may have got that wrong) if you are a bona fide club member.

All you have to do is show your current membership subscription receipt

It has been suggested that members might like to have 'open workshop' days, whereby members can open their workshops on specific days for other members to visit. Could be interesting-we could learn from each other in a way that is not possible at meetings or hands-on sessions. Talk to Stephen if you would like to give it a go.

Art in Wood. Mike Marsters will have schedules of duties available next month, if you want to book your slots.

Earlier, Stephen had briefly mentioned that Malcolm Arter's wife Linda was standing in for Jennie in doing the refreshments this evening. There was more. It seems it was Linda's birthday, and a card, which had been circulating for members to sign, and a bouquet of flowers was presented to Linda.

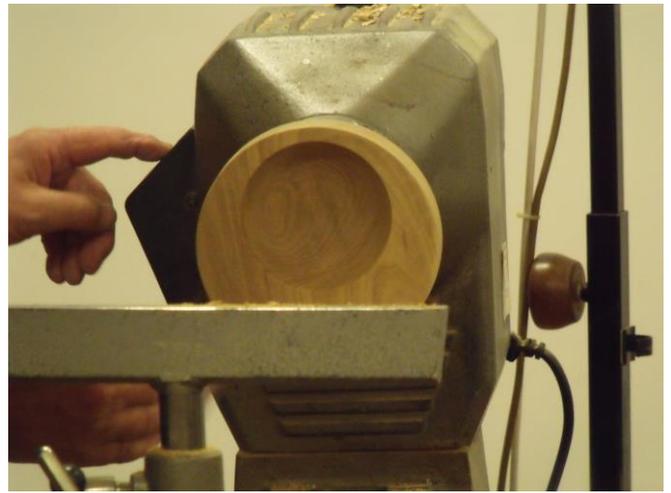


Our demonstrator this evening was Clem Ansell, from Wisbech. Clem had not been scheduled to do it, but generously stepped in at the very last moment, as Guy Ravine had been taken ill that very morning.



Clem likes to include projects for novices in his presentations, and his first item was one we had seen before, not so long ago, a box in the shape of a barrel, above.

Next came another simple piece, although you can make it as complex as you like. He passed round one that he had made earlier (shades of Blue Peter?) for people to examine. It's known as an 'idiot stick', and when it came to me, and I couldn't do it, I did indeed feel like an idiot, because I later remembered that I had actually made some of these years ago.



The third project was more advanced, an off-centre bowl. The blank was drilled in two places to take a screw chuck, one in the centre and one off-set. After turning the under-side centrally, it was mounted off-centre to cut a dovetailed recess, on which it was held to turn the bowl, which was, of course, off-centre. Seems like an easy way to do it. Above we see the bowl part finished.

The competitions.

Novices:- A pair of items. 1st. Chris Horne, 2nd. Les Booth, 3rd. Tim Beddoes.

Seniors:- A hollow form. 1st. Hugh Castle, 2nd. Geoff Houseden, Three people tied for third place, Richard