

Woodpecker



The newsletter of the Ely Guild of Woodturners



December 2014

The September meeting.

There were 43 members present this month, with three visitors, Jenny and Andrew McCran and Konrad B. Sorry, Konrad, I couldn't read your surname in the visitors book.

Chairman Christine reported that takings at Art in Wood were £6389 and commission would be at 15%. This was from around 2500 visitors, a sales rate of 1 in 9.

Nineteen members took part this year. A few more would have been better. There were times when stewards were a bit stretched. There were some nice items on display, a better variety than last year. Christine thanked all those who did take part, and also the non-members, whose assistance was much appreciated. She said that, next year, we should aim to have the list of participants complete in May. If participant numbers do not increase, it may be necessary for everyone to do more stewarding sessions.

Guild President Dick Brown also appealed for more participants, and suggested that some of those members who consider themselves novices will, by next year, have achieved a sufficient level of expertise to warrant their participation, judging by what he sees in the monthly competition.

On a different tack, Dick said the number of entries in the said competitions, both novice and senior, was disappointing. So far this year, the maximum number of entries had been five.

I'm afraid most of the photos I took at A in W are less than impressive, so I'm not going to include them here. Phil Buckley, our webmaster, is a more accomplished photographer than I am, with better equipment, and I know he took a number of photos, which will, I feel sure, appear on the website in due course. In fact, by the time you read this, I'm sure they will be there.



The meeting this month took the form of previous September meetings, namely bring and buy, wood swap, have a go, learn something new, GET INVOLVED. Unfortunately, not many people appeared to be doing that. The ever reliable Mark Wardle was sharpening tools, always popular, Dick Brown, having done the beginner's tuition, more or less carried on, and I had brought my small lathe to do a bit of 'messaging about'. There were some tools on offer,

with quite a spread by a gentleman whose name I can't remember, but really, there didn't seem to be all that much going on, and the meeting broke up early. As was sometimes on my school report, we all 'must try harder'.

The competitions.

Novices:- 1st. John Palmer, 2nd. John Last, 3rd. Graham Sanderson.

Seniors:- 1st. Peter Symonds. There were no other entries

Sadly, we learnt of the passing of former Guild member Ray Munns, on the 21st of August. Ray became a member in about 1992, and took over from Dick Brown as President when Dick was ill. At the funeral on 10th September, the Guild was represented by Peter Symonds and Howard Dyson



The all-day Saturday demo was held early this year, on September 20th. Tracy Owen had been booked for October, but was unable to come, so Mick Hanbury kindly stepped in at short notice.

Mick comes from Fenton, near Newark, and is on the Register of Professional Turners, and a member of the A.W.G.B. We have seen him once before, for an evening in 2011.



Mick in full flow.

This time, Mick concentrated on decoration, although there was also quite a lot on various tools, their purpose and how to present them. Starting with a sizeable blank on a screw chuck, he turned the outside of a bowl, using a gouge with a long side grind, and forming a foot. This was painted with acrylic black, using a foam brush, with which he also made various swirls while the paint was still wet. Acrylic dries quickly, and he left the lathe running to aid this, while he talked about other things.

When the paint was dry, Mick applied small blobs of iridescent paint from tubes, then proceeded to shape these, using a compressor powered air gun with a tiny nozzle, designed originally for inflating footballs. This was done in three colours, then some green added at the base with a small brush. The final finish was gloss lacquer sprayed on, and the result was fabulous.



The bowl exterior.

Mick's next project was a three-sided lidded box. Starting with a longish square between centres, it was quickly roughed down to a cylinder, using the right hand side of the long side grind bowl gouge. This gives a good finish as it is a slicing cut, and the shavings go to the right, not in your face. A spigot was formed on each end, before partially parting off about one third for the lid. Both parts could now be held on the spigot to hollow them.

Using odd leg callipers, with the long leg in the centre hole made by the tail and drive centres, Mick marked a circle on each end, then stepped round six times and selected alternate marks, which were transferred to the perimeter, where they were marked along the cylinder, using the tool rest set close as a guide. Mounting the piece on one pair of these points, he then proceeded to take off timber until the lines along the cylinder were reached, when that face was power sanded. This operation was repeated on the two remaining points, resulting in a three sided piece.

The parting was then completed and, holding each piece on the spigot, both sections could now be hollowed and fitted together. The waste left after parting off the lid was used to make a jam chuck to finish the lid with a knob.



The 'shadow' of the off-centre turning can be seen.

Mick's third piece was a goblet made with wet sycamore. This was done in what might be regarded as the reverse method, in that the goblet was hollowed first, using a template to obtain the shape. Mick was then able to shape the outside to suit, using an LED lamp inside so that the thickness could be judged according to the colour. An LED lamp does not get hot, so doesn't distort the piece, or cause it to crack. He established the thickness at the top edge, then set callipers to enable this thickness to be checked all the way down. The intention was to later decorate the goblet with piercing, which he showed on an earlier part finished piece, seen below.



More examples of Mick's work.

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Once more, an enjoyable day. Mick obviously knows his stuff, and passes on his knowledge in a friendly and professional manner. It's just a pity more members didn't feel able to attend, you do learn things at these all-day sessions. Sadly, if these sessions are not better attended in future, they may be lost to those members who do turn up, as the Guild cannot afford to keep on staging them at a loss.

Once more, our thanks go to Jenny who, assisted by her three young granddaughters, provided lunch. A quick 'whip round' was organised for the benefit of the three young ladies.



The October meeting.

There were 47 present this month, and three visitors, Jenny and Andrew McCran, and former member Gill Marchant. Gill found it necessary to leave a while ago, but hopes to re-join sometime in the future.

Chairman Christine welcomed new member Andrew Stone, and club President Dick Brown presented him with a new member's welcome pack.

Our demonstrator this evening was Gerry Marlow. We have seen Gerry before, in June of last year, when he made a Christmas bauble, which involved several different techniques. Tonight, his first project was a lidded box, which featured router decoration.

Having roughed a square down to a cylinder, a spigot was cut on what would be the bottom, to hold it in a chuck, and it was soon ready for decoration. To do this Gerry mounted an adjustable table in the tool rest, set at an angle, on which the router would slide, and proceeded to cut grooves all round the cylinder with a rounded cutter, using an indexing system. Because of the slope, this resulted in a waisted effect to the box, which was then hollowed out, using a spindle gouge and a scraper. Care must be taken when doing this, as it is easy to end up with a pieced effect in the middle if you go too thin. If this happened, then about the only thing you can do is call it pomander!



The following picture was going to be here, but it wouldn't fit in. This is due to the fact that I have changed computer with a different operating system, and I haven't yet learnt to re-size photos, but I will get there in the end (I hope)! It may take some time!



Gerry explains his router jig.

The box lid was made in a contrasting wood, again decorated with the router, this time in swivel mode, as was the foot, which was a separate piece in the same contrasting wood. With both top and bottom in the same wood, it is best to give the lid a knob or finial of some sort to distinguish them, otherwise you could try to open it upside down and lose the contents of the box.

Gerry's second project was an off-centre candlestick, starting with a square of about 3" x 3" by around nine or ten long, which already had a hole drilled in the top, into which he placed the Steb drive, just to take off a small amount from the corners so that both ends were almost round. He could now see how far off-centre he could go at each end. He asked how far off centre we wanted it to be. Someone said an inch, then two inches. I said four, but the timber wasn't big enough for that. He actually did it at nearly the full size of the timber.

Working from ends to middle alternately, he took the centre down to about one third its original thickness, then it was back to true centres to shape the top and bottom. With the metal candle holder placed in the aforementioned hole, he had quite a dramatic looking candlestick.



The finished candlestick.



The competitions.

Novices. 1st. John Last. John was the only entrant.

Seniors. 1st Peter Symonds, 2nd. Ray Dellow. The only two entries. It makes it easy for those of us who do enter, but you can hardly call it a competition, can you? Come on, guys and gals, show us what you can do.

The November meeting

Those present this evening numbered 46. Visitors were Jenny and Andrew McCran, Alex Tory, and Terry Johnson.

Chairman Christine Robinson said the demo tonight would be shared by Hugh Castle and Gerry Lawrence, standing in for Guild President Dick Brown, who is ill. She also announced that the December meeting would be as last year, i.e. a Christmas party, with food supplied, a raffle, quizzes and competitions, at a cost of £5 per person, with tickets on sale tonight.

Referring to the June 'hands on' open day, the committee had suggested that this be moved to April, and a clip board was circulated for members to indicate if they agreed, and if they were likely to attend. As to the 'hands on' evening in September, there was the possibility that Bob Neill, well known for his abilities at pyrography, could attend, and bring several pyro machines, to provide an additional, alternative activity, and Christine asked for a show of hands, which I think indicated a favourable response.

Looking ahead to the AGM, the committee had identified a necessary small alteration to the Guild's constitution, regarding young members. This will be dealt with at the meeting in February. Another even more important item will be the appointment of a VICE CHAIRMAN, who has been needed for almost a year. The Guild cannot function without a chairman. Members are reminded that three years ago the Guild came very close to having to close down for lack of a chairman. Luckily, John Last offered his services almost at the eleventh hour .LET'S NOT LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN!

We have learned recently that our webmaster Phil Buckley expects to be leaving the area fairly early next year, so someone will be needed to fill that position. Our website is a very useful tool. It tells people what we are doing, enables any one member to communicate with all other members easily by e-mail, provides a means of catching up for members who perhaps have not been able to attend meetings for a while, includes Woodpecker, and brings in new members. It also features a gallery of member's work, which gets a bit dated at times, so if you have got, or can take, photos of some of your masterpieces, let the webmaster, whoever he or she is at the time, have them so that we can all enjoy them.

Jean Lawrence has the programme for next year sorted, and Treasurer Malcolm Arter reminded us that donations of additional raffle prizes for next month would be very welcome.

There was a show and tell by yours truly. I explained how I had finished the two handled bowl, or Quaich, which I had worked on in August.



As stated earlier, the demonstrator this month was Hugh Castle, followed later on by Gerry Lawrence. Hugh started by showing us a worn out lathe drive belt which he had replaced with a new one, at a cost of an exorbitant £100! I thought a fifth of that would be enough. He followed this by showing an off-centre candle stick, similar to one which Gerry Marlow had made last month. He said someone had admired it, and asked him to make a pair, which he said he would try to do. Knowing Hugh, he probably can. I've never attempted to do that myself, I think the type of off-centre, or multi-centre, work I sometimes do would be very difficult to replicate.

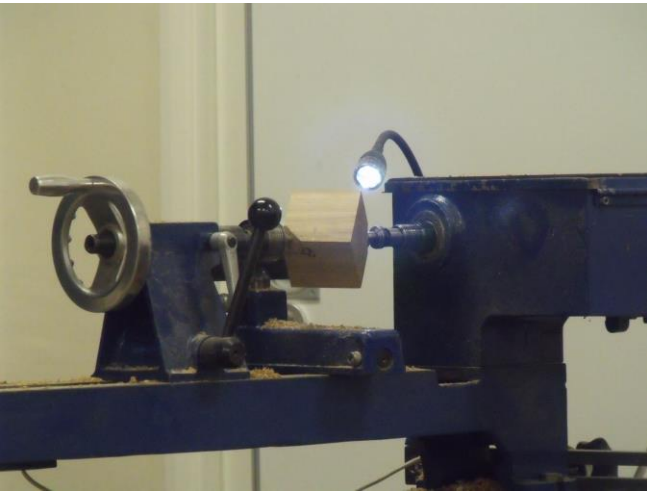
On to Hugh's actual demo. This was a clock set in a ball, atop a three footed stand. He started with a square piece between centres, roughed down to a cylinder on which he marked a centre line and two size lines, allowing for waste at each end, which would be taken off later. This made sure there would be no marks left where the drive and tail centres had been. To finish the sphere, Hugh used a cup chuck into which one round side was placed, then held in place by a second cup on the tailstock, giving a friction drive, to take off the waste. It was necessary to move the piece around several times to obtain a sphere.

To cut the recess for the clock, the sphere was held in a jig with a hemi-spherical recess into which he placed the sphere, which was then held in place by a plywood ring screwed to the base part of the jig.



The ball holding jig.

For the base/stem, a cube was held corner to corner between centres and turned to approximate shape. The narrow end could then be held in a chuck to hollow it, resulting in a three footed base. A 3/4" hole was drilled up the centre, to suit 3/4" expanding jaws. This hole was then carried right through in a smaller size for the screw which would later fix the sphere to the base. Now the base could be held on the jaws to do final shaping, and shape the top to fit the sphere. Hugh passed round a finished example, but I'm afraid I forgot to get a picture of it. Sorry about that.



The block held corner to corner.



What was left of the evening was filled by Gerry Lawrence. Gerry showed us how he goes about making small bowls. The blank is first mounted on a screw chuck to turn the outside, including a foot. It is then held on this foot to hollow it out. Eschewing the use of a bowl gouge, Gerry does the bulk of the hollowing with a finger nail shaped scraper, ground well back to a long bevel, then finishing with a more conventional scraper. Sanding is done using the Simon Hope rotary sanding system.

Gerry and wife Jean travel around giving talks about, and on behalf of, the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf charity. At the end of each talk, Gerry puts out a display of small turned items which he offers for sale, with all proceeds going to the charity. Tonight's small bowl would be one such item. He keeps his offerings small, as he finds people are more likely to buy a small item for a small price at such

gatherings, so he makes more money for the charity in the long run.



Gerry Lawrence at work.



The competitions.

Novices. 1st. John Last, 2nd. John Palmer, 3rd. Graham Sanderson, 4th. Chris Collins.

Seniors. 1st. Ray Dellow, 2nd. Peter Symonds, 3rd. Leon Hyde.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A
PROSPEROUS AND PRODUCTIVE
NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS.

