

SAW – May 2023

Members' Magazine and Information



Coronation edition



Website: <http://www.shropshire-woodturners.org.uk/>

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Not only is the programme for the rest of 2023 now complete but our planners are well on the way to filling up the 2024 programme!

It was again encouraging to see so many members at the meeting in April – as well as some guests who might soon sign up.

A Man walks into a bank with a bag of shavings wanting to open a shavings account!
Woodturners are a lively bunch as they have lots of lathe nights!
That's not a catch, that's a design feature!

A message from the Chairman

I have had a real success this month. I have enrolled an old friend in the Woodturning community. He has even purchased a lathe and appropriate chisels, and I have sent him a gift pack of blanks. However sadly he will not be joining our club. He lives in Lincolnshire! On the other hand, I was more than pleased to see 3 guests at this month's demonstration.

Being your Chairman, which I still think of as very daunting and a real honour, has rekindled my passion for turning and stimulated me to try and improve my technique. This needs skill and not just enthusiasm. When I was still working, I used turning as a great stress reliever, retreating to my shed and making lots and lots of shavings. Sanding and finishing did not have the same effect as actual turning, so I ended up with lots of rough bowls and vases.

Now, being retired, I have apparently all the time in the world (!), and so have over the last few years started turning again, encouraged greatly by finding Shropshire Woodturners. I realise turning should be fun and enjoyable and that a real good result gives one a tremendous uplift. That's why I am trying to improve my techniques. At present I am making croquet balls for Attingham trying hard to manage 'turning spheres', a new skill for me. Any member wanting to help, please contact me. Indeed, the Committee are always pleased to hear suggestions from any or all members on ways to improve Club activities.

Next month I hope there will be lots of turned fruit on show!

2023 calendar – Final programme

There may still be minor changes but here is the full programme for the rest of 2023. So you can look forward to the meetings and start turning your entries for the challenges. Don't delay, turn today...

Themes for remaining club nights have yet to be decided but if you have a particular interest such as finishing, then have a word with one of the committee.

Month	Demonstrator	Turners	Advanced turners	Notes
Wednesday 24 th May 2023	Club evening including an introduction to turning with resin by Mark Phillips.	A piece of fruit	An example of "inside out turning"	
Wednesday 28 th June 2023	Club evening including a demonstration on Lathe maintenance by Axminster Tools	A natural edge bowl	Two identical balls with which to play Boule (Pétanque)	Theme to be advised
Wednesday 26 th July 2023	Professional demonstration by Robert Till at Bicton	Anything from a blank provided by the club.		
Wednesday 23 rd August 2023	Club evening – to be confirmed	A matching pair	A lightbulb - 60W Edison screw Pearl Scale 1:1 traditional pear shape	
Wednesday 27 th September	Professional demonstration by Ian Ethel	Something turned from two types of wood	Something turned with wood and resin	
Wednesday 25 th October	Professional demonstration by Jay Heryet	A mushroom	A pair of curtain pole finials on a short length of curtain pole	
Wednesday 22 nd November	Club evening	Christmas decoration		
Wednesday 13 th December	SAW AGM	Chairman's challenge		

Next SAW meeting on 24th May

As shown in the table above, the next SAW meeting is a Club evening with a difference.... Mark Phillips has offered to introduce members to the opportunities and challenges of turning with resin. You will be invited to bring along any items you have already made – and note that the challenge in September involves something like this. There's time to practice before then.

Challenge for May 2023

As previously advised, the challenges are for the May meeting are:

Turners: A piece of fruit

Advanced turners: An example of "inside out turning"

SAW meeting on 26th April

Demonstration by Mike Taylor

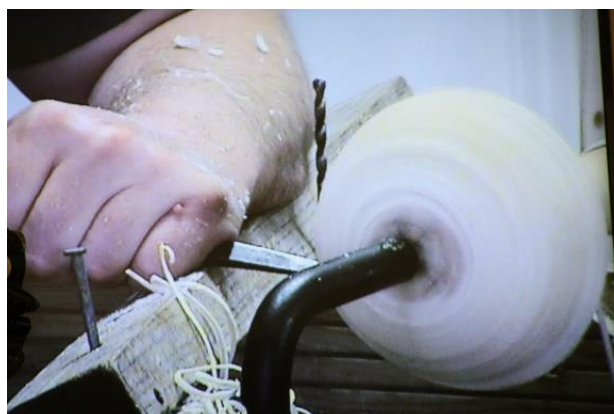
Mike had arrived early at the Hall to set up his pole lathe on which he was going to demonstrate the Art of Turning a Bowl in the traditional manner. He said his usual pole lathe had split when he was dismantling it for transport the previous evening, and so had spent half the night and morning it 'bodging it up' so he could do today's demo. He therefore apologised for the odd appearance for those used to pole lathes as some parts of it were made with decking boards.



Mike told us a bit about his background and about the 11 acres of woodland he tends and coppiced to source his wood. He tries to find a use for all the wood he harvests and to let the wood dictate what he does with it. He had recently started using a mechanical lathe more, merely to keep up with the supply of wood from his property. He has sold his creations at galleries, fairs and other events to which he was invited. His pole turned lathes were very popular with Re-enactment Societies who wanted everything original, and the very ancient craft of pole lathing certainly provided that. He had brought samples of the various methods he uses to produce his bowls.



Mike was turning a piece of sycamore that was about 12 months since felling. He explained which part of the tree he used to make the blank. He had rounded it off to disc and mounted it on a wooden mandrel via a hole drilled in the base and banged onto the mandrel to make a tight friction fit. This he mounted on his lathe and started to shape the outside of the piece. He rotated the lathe by pressing down on his left foot while standing on a disc of wood with his right. This gave him more traction and revolved the bowl about 2.5 times with each push of his leg. This small number of revolutions with each leg push resulted in short shavings. Turning this way is very hard work. Mike had a step monitor on his phone and said it took about 9000 steps per bowl! Adjustments to the procedure were done with a sharp bang from his wooden mallet.





He only used two hook chisels (made by a specialist) which he had mounted on basic hazel handles. The chisel had the cutting angle facing either up or down, the down used for quicker removal of wood. As they looked very similar, he had marked them 'up; and 'down'. Using the wrong one was asking for a catch. Mike explained how, unlike



mechanical turning, you always worked below the centre

and had to adjust the angle of the chisel to find the 'sweet' spot. He flattened off the bottom of the bowl leaving the central hold point for reversal. His chisels needed regular sharpening on a wet stone working on the outer edge and then removing the burr with a small round needle file.

While turning Mike kept up engaging conversation about types of wood, different cuts, the time left between turning and finishing, (usually 4-5 days depending on the thickness of the bowl, and types of finishers. He used oxygenated flax oil, but his supply came from Ukraine, and it was at present unavailable. He was trying other oils including rape seed oil. His bowls were designed to be used and he considered all wood safe to use in this way as long as the finish was appropriate.

Once happy with the outside shape, Mike reversed the bowl and commenced turning the inside shape of the bowl with the same chisels regularly feeling for the thickness of the bowl which needed to be thin to prevent cracking but not too thin to risk perforation. Time did not allow him to complete the inside, so he then produced 'one he had prepared already' to demonstrate how to finish a bowl. This involved gasping the mandrel and breaking off the core with brute force. This would occasionally take the bottom out of the bowl but luckily it did not on this occasion.



Mike then sat on a chair and carved out the base of the core and tidied up the base of the bowl with a curved double-edged knife moving it towards his hand. These knives were expensive but lasted for ever. After 10 minutes with the knife the bowl was finished.



He stated that broken cores had been found in abundance in York which proved that the fundamentals of pole turning were known centuries ago and were basically unchanged, as was the physical energy and strength needed to manage it!

The Chairman thanked Mike for his excellent presentation especially as he had had to rebuild his lathe the preceding night!

Report by Julian Birch

The April challenge

It was good to see more entries to the turner's challenge. Results of for this section were:

- 1st Colin Mee
- 2nd Mick Caddick
- 3rd Julian Birch



Sadly, there were only two official entries for the advanced turners. Results for this section were:

- 1st Ted Barber (left)
- 2nd John Pitt (right)



Display items

Once again there were some interesting items on the display table – here are three:



Catastrophe corner

And there were a couple of items in this section – both in the “Wolfgang style” of failure!
(Remember how he went through a hollow form in his demo?)



Croquet mallets and balls for Attingham Park – a prestige project

As requested by Julian Birch in his message (page 1), offers to make croquet mallets and ball for Attingham Park are needed. At the April meeting Julian did display one that he had made but we omitted to get a photo. Julian has a supply of suitable timber provided by Attingham.

Have your say

The next newsletter will be the June edition– about a week after the May meeting. Please let me have any contributions by 29th May.

For sale or wanted

Nothing for sale this time but I am interested in getting a small planer thicknesser. Let me know if you've got one you want to sell or if you have any advice on new ones. John Pitt

Johnpitt14@btinternet.com

And finally....

How many turners have that lovely piece of wood in their wood store that they are too frightened to use in case they mess it up!