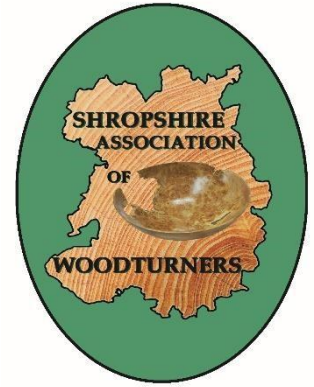


SAW – July 2023

Members' Magazine and Information



Mid-summer edition

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

Club Secretary: Colin Mee: shropshirewoodturners@gmail.com

2023 Calendar

Below is reminder of the programme for the rest of 2023.

Month	Demonstrator	Club Challenge		Notes
		Turners	Advanced turners	
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	A matching pair	A lightbulb - 60W Edison screw Pearl Scale 1:1 traditional pear shape	Theme is "finishing"
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		

2024 Calendar

Demonstrations for the first half of the 2024 programme have also been arranged – including a whole day event for Sunday 16th June. If you have a 2024 diary, you could put the event in now!

Next SAW meeting on 26th July

As shown in the table above, the next SAW meeting is a professional demonstration by Robert Till.

If you have a look at his website, you'll probably not want to miss this meeting.

<https://www.roberttillwoodturner.com/>

Challenge for July

At the May meeting, about 10 members collected a club blank for the July challenge. It's a 9"x3"x3" piece of "False acacia" from which you can turn anything you like – as imaginatively as possible. A couple more took the opportunity to collect a blank at the June meeting. And if you are wondering what false acacia is, then see <https://www.wood-database.com/>.

SAW meeting on 28th June

Demonstration on Lathe maintenance by Axminster tools

The lathes were ready and chairs set out - but Nathaniel, the promised demonstrator, did not appear! We'll no doubt find out what the problem was but, rising above the disappointment, members had a good evening – enjoying the opportunities of the raffle, the challenge, wood sales and more time to share experiences.

And thanks to Mick Caddick, Brian Scrivens and George Powell, we had another great spread for refreshments.

The June challenge

It was good to see a larger selection of entries in the turners group (left):

1st Julian Birch (right)

2nd = Mike Biddulph and Colin Mee



Again, there were just three entries in the advanced turners' section:

1st Ted Barber (top)

2nd John Pitt (left)

3rd Bill Clyne (right)



Display table

There was another impressive array of items on the display table.



Visit to Mike Taylors woodland on 13th June

On Tuesday the 13th June 8 members of our club met up at Mike Taylor's woodland near Little Wenlock. We all found it with no problem thanks to Mike's excellent directions, and once he had opened the gate, 5 cars wound their way up the forest track to Mike's 'encampment'. He interestingly walked behind the cars! We parked in a long line wondering how we would manage to turn round to leave but decided that was a dilemma for later in the afternoon.



We had all bought, as instructed, a mug and something to sit on, so we gathered in Mike's shelter (a tarpaulin draped over some uprights) and made ourselves a drink with water boiled on Mike's open fire. There were lots of comments as it reminded us all of scout camps and our youth! Placing our seats to avoid the smoke was essential. Mike, with a mug of tea in hand, then told us about his amazing area of woodland and his coppicing programme. He had managed the area for 10 years since giving up his job as a metallurgist, and his love for his woodland immediately became apparent.



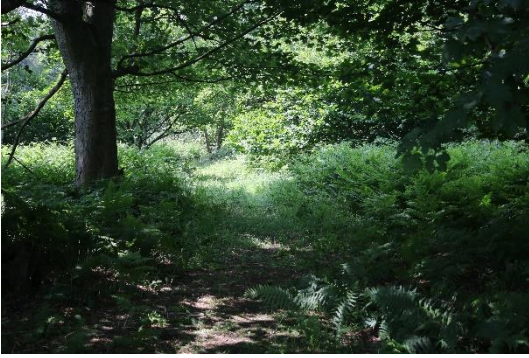
A brief history of the woodland indicated that it was very ancient and had probably been used for coppicing for centuries. The specimen trees were mainly oak mostly 200 years or so old and some of these were being removed to create more light for the hazel. His very long-term plan was to bring the area back to productive coppicing after decades of neglect. He talked about the balance of endeavouring to return the coppice to production and the need to make a living, against the benefits to wildlife – animal, plant, insect, and fungi. Reducing the high canopy to increase light penetration had a huge positive effect on the diversity of nature. He pointed out rowan, holly and chestnut were also found, their exact position probably dependent on the subsoil that varied throughout the woodland.



Mike then took us on a 'tour of his estate' explaining at frequent stops about the various areas that were rotated round on a 7 year cycle. Lovely area of foxgloves indicated last year coppiced area and the natural regrowth of seeds possible dormant for a while. In



another area he showed us how individual branches of a cut down hazel tree was layered and pinned down to encourage a new hazel to grow. A bit like layering a hedge. The decision making as to which trees to leave and which to remove was given a lot of thought.



Most of his work in the woodland was done in the winter and in the summer he laboured in his Cannock workshop to make wooden products for sale. He regularly took groups around the area and also gave talks on the whole range of woodland topics. He worked closely with Shropshire Wildlife Trust. Large logs were dragged out by horse own by a local lady who when she came slept in the top of her horse box. One cold morning her hard-boiled eggs were frozen solid. She still ate then happily!

He took us to one area that he had yet to 'tame', and another area where 250 new hazels had been planted. All the bought in plants were locally sourced. Mike kept saying 'we' decided to do this, and 'we' will be taking that oak down this winter, but we soon realised that the 'we' was actually Mike himself that made all the decision on what was done and where.

The two big problems with the area were deer and brambles. The deer nibble everything and come in at night. Various camera traps confirm this. Mike has various deer fences to cordon off certain areas and has several elevated seats against big tree trunks for people to sit and shoot from. The local butcher takes several every week, but this makes little inroad into the deer problem which is



widespread and needs concentrated national action to solve. The brambles overtake all areas that get a lot of light crowding out the more desirable wild plants. They have to be strimmed at selected times of the year when the wildlife is least affected.

We finished our tour with several members purchasing lengths of rowan and the offer for more wood in the future should we want to order it in advance.

A thoroughly enjoyable and informative afternoon was had by all. Mike has chosen an interesting lifestyle of which many of us would have liked to have. However, this was on a warm sunny June afternoon! Would we have felt the same on a cold wet winter afternoon with our boots deep in mud!

Report by Julian Birch

Have your say

The next newsletter will be the August edition. Please let me have any contributions by *before* the next meeting.

For sale or wanted

Nothing for sale this time but Mick Caddick is offering a Black and Decker lathe to a good home.

And finally..

Ian Feldmesser sent me this link to an amusing Mike Walt you tube video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GAoq_qgoQs

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