



WEST MIDLANDS WOODTURNERS

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Chairman's Comments

Our latest visiting demonstrator, Gary Rance, maintained the very high standard of demonstrators we have managed to attract to WMWT. Not only do we enjoy and admire their work and enthusiasm, I feel sure we are inspired to develop our own projects and techniques.

It is encouraging to welcome some new faces to the club and hope we manage to support and help them in their woodturning development. Our Hands On Days are the ideal opportunity to continue to watch & participate in the wide ability range within our ranks. Message to 'newcomers', if there are things you don't see or know about, please ask. Our November Challenge will be explained later on, please participate.

Another feature we can try again on our Hands On Days is a Tool Sales Bring & Buy. We have all got kit we either no longer, or never have used. Bring it along, label it up with a description, price & sellers name. Let's have a clear out and make some cash !! If there are any larger pieces of kit, why not advertise it at the club or even ask for a free advert in the News Letter.

That's it for now. See you in Nov and don't forget to bring your tools, 'It might cost you !

Brian.

Congratulations to Malcolm Thorpe:

Malcolm has won two of the competitions at the Society of Ornamental Turners AGM. They are for the best piece of a novice and the best piece of plain turning.



PROGRAMME 2013/4

- ◆ 17th November . Hands On Day.
- ◆ 8th December. Keith Lanchester demo and Christmas Party
- ◆ 16th January. AGM and Hands On Day
- ◆ 16th February. Andy Coates Demo Day
- ◆ 16th March. Hands On Day
- ◆ 13th April. George Foweraker demo day
- ◆ _____
- ◆ The full 2014 programme is available on the WMWT web-site: wmwoodturners.org.uk

Chairman's Challenge

A Seasonal Theme
*A Christmas Tree
Decoration*

Entries will be used to decorate a Christmas Tree feature to donate to a local OAP centre (try and recall some of Graham's projects, angels, snowmen, choirboys etc).



Review of Gary Rance Demonstration

By Phil Stevenson

I can't believe it's 15-odd years since Gary last visited us but if that's what the man says ... We had a pretty full house to see a very well known and respected turner, familiar to most of us primarily for his round skew, I suspect. Gary is among a select band who worked as a jobbing woodturner before discovering that many hundreds of us participated in his profession as a hobby and that there was a living to be made teaching and demonstrating alongside producing dozens or hundreds of items to order. For me it was this glimpse into the wiles and ways of a production turner that proved interesting – could any of us turn a pepper mill in only 30 cuts?!

Gary has been doing demos since 1990 so knows what we all want – technique, tips, shavings and more than half a dozen projects.

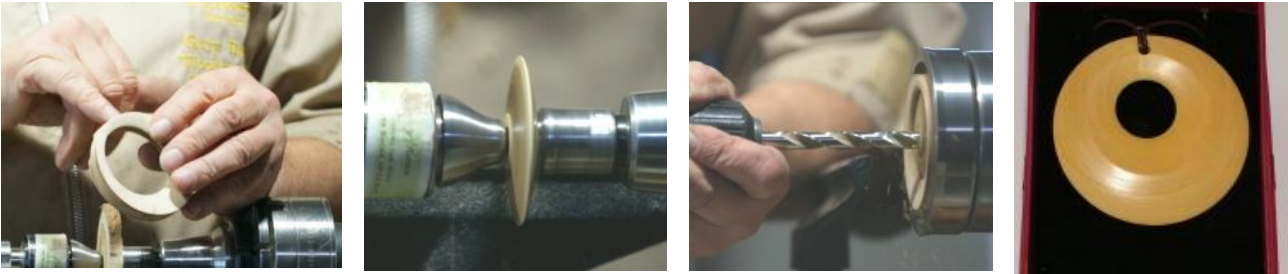
Firstly a sensible mention of health and safety, then a run-through of basic spindle cuts to get us in the groove – never time wasted in my opinion. Note that Gary usually keeps his left hand squarely on top of the tool, in case of kick-back. Planing cuts, beads, coves and ogees are “easy” apparently!



The first project was an interesting salt bell (a kind of salt shaker). I'm not going into the how-to of each project; the pictures should remind us of the various stages but I found this an excellent little project. Clever in design, using spindle turning, end grain hollowing, threading and finishing. Interesting throughout the day were Gary's insights into a production turner's way of chasing efficiency; every effort to save a few minutes here, or an inch of timber there is seized upon; these are useful tips for us all to make our turning easier, more accurate, safer and more economical.



The morning finished with an offset pendant. We have had another demonstrator making one of these but Gary's version used a clever chuck addition which automatically held the piece safely to make the centre hole. I'm sorry to say I wasn't the only one to be a little irritated when Gary told us we would have to buy his DVD to see how to make the jig. It's not rocket science and we will figure out a method if we really want but this cloak and dagger stuff was a little bit "off"; it's not rocket science and his livelihood hardly depends on it. Anyways ...



After lunch we moved on to faceplate work and Gary produced a nice little circular picture frame, covering the techniques of turning beads and covers on the faceplate; this again is a nice little project we can all have a go at – Chairman's Challenge idea?



On-set (rather than in-set) came next with one of Gary's boxes with a corian ring on the lid. He went through a straightforward method of making a box whose lid lined up with the body then mounted a disc of corian on the lid to be turned down for a very pleasing effect. As the corian is on -set, not in-set, remember that the finished lid must be convex, not flat!. Gary kindly c**ked up the lid so that he could show us how not to do it, but his retrieval method was perfect. I was interested to see his box scraper – basically a round bar ground square with a bevel at the end, and a flat along the length of the bar; it looked effective and easy to make (no DVD required!)



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A quick word on how Gary finishes his work which I found very good. I coat of friction polish then a whizz on a buffing wheel impregnated with a little carnauba wax; very effective and quick, especially if you have a hundred apples to do!

I have been making fruit for years and I was reminded who I stole the technique from – Mr G Rance! The wood is held in a simple home-made screw chuck on to which the wood is reversed to do the underside.



Apples are a great project to practice cutting curves and Gary's was more or less perfect, as it should have been after making so many thousands!



There followed a spinning top with a corian disc, an ebony spindle and a little nylon tip; again, not breath-taking woodturning, but very competently done and ideal projects for us all.



Gary's tool grinding technique was interesting and far from high-tech. No jigs or fancy accoutrements, just rest the tool on top of his finger on the grinder's tool rest and move around the bevel. It evidently works for him and it obviously stems from his days as a production turner when money was never wasted on gadgets.

A quick foray into offset spindle turning produced a pad-foot table leg (no, Brian, not a cabriole leg!). Gary makes these for a furniture maker but the technique can be used for all sorts of more decorative pieces, and the secret for us all to learn is that the skew must be applied to the wood with the lightest of touches. Slight variations in offsetting the ends of the wood can produce

quite strikingly different designs.



Gary was asked to make a load of light pulls for the Guild of Carpenters (no pressure, then ...) and he reproduced what he gave them; an oak cup with a textured outside (textured with a thread chaser – now there's an idea), then a yew nut glued in place.



And finally! How often do we get a demonstrator asking to do another project after 4.00 in the afternoon? Good on you, Gary, for rattling out a very quick Christmas tree decoration as an idea for the next Hands On Day.



It was a pretty full day and Gary is easily worth his fee. He's an extremely competent turner with his own unique repertoire and an entertaining style. We will all have taken more than one good idea so let's see some items on the show table!

Chairman's Challenge Results: a piece of fruit.

Basic Group (4 entries)

1st place
Brian Bateman



2nd place
David Howgate



3rd place
Bill Finigan



Premier Group (3 entries)

1st place
Dave Nash



2nd place
Malcolm Thorpe



3rd place
Don Lawrence



Display Table Exhibits



Message from Phil Stevenson:

Many thanks to all those who responded to my request for a brace. I was overwhelmed by the response.

(There was perhaps some misunderstanding, necessitating the return of those contributions which belong in the mouths of teenagers! - Ed)

Just a reminder:

Although we will be making Christmas tree decorations at the next Hands On, it is perhaps unlikely that we can “knock them out” as quickly as Gary Rance did. If you do have the time to make one or two before the session, it would help to “fill the tree up”. I don’t think that we would want to send an empty tree to anyone.

It is a good idea to advertise in this newsletter (free to members), so if you do want to list anything send the details to me, with, if possible, a photo at john@hooper25.plus.com
