

Tips:

> Have you ever experienced the frustration of trying to sand in a difficult corner and just can not do it? Maybe, like many of us, you have little stumps on the end of your hands in the place of fingers and they just won't fit in the places you need them to go to. Nevermind, help is here, and what is more its on an electric gadget so there is less need for hard work.

Glue two strips of thin ply to an old jig-saw blade, glue abrasive paper to the ply and hey presto you have an electric sanding machine which can get into thin cracks. Who cares if you have fat fingers !!

> **Tool sharpening.** If you hold your gouge in the conventional way you can not see the edge that is being ground. As an alternative hold the tool sideways and you will be better able to see the face being ground. Keep the angle of the tool against the grindstone constant whilst lifting and rolling the tool to get the right shape. Experiment with different methods of sharpening until you find the one that suits you best. (Gavins note: The way I was taught how to sharpen when I did my turning course in Johannesburg was to watch the sparks until they come over the edge of the tool, then you know that you are sharpening on the edge of the tool.)

What's On:

Club Meetings:

> Club Meetings are held at Hudson Park High School Woodworking Room on the **4th Wednesday of every month (Not the 5th Wednesday)**. Members gather from 17.15 and proceedings usually commence by 17.30. Meeting officially end by approximately 19.00, but members are welcome to chat for a while while thereafter (while they assist with the tidying of the venue!)

Beginners classes for members new to turning are usually held on the first Wednesday of the month. Please contact Andy Knight at Club meetings.

Details of content of forthcoming meetings is as follows:

> **19th April, at about 1730. Note Thursday.**

- We will be having the Bonnie Klein, from the USA, demo.

Activities and Notice Board

> Do you need abrasives? Elliot has found a place in Signal st that supplies sandpapers. WPT Mechanical & Engineering Supplies, 7 Signal st, Quigney supplies sheets, disks and velcro disks. 722-8280.

> Your club fees are now due and payable:
R75 for Workers.
R50 for Students.
R50 for Retired people.
Please see Ulrich at club meetings.

> Ulrich still has 1 Large and 2 Xtra large club golf shirts left. See Ulrich at club meetings.

> Another date to keep in mind is the 19th April. Bonnie Klein, the visiting congress turner from the U.S. will be doing a demo at our club. This is **NOT** to be missed!!! Please note that this demo will be on a **Thursday** evening and earlier in the month and may also be on for later than usual.

> The May meeting may consist of a collaboration session where teams of turners will design and turn an article. There will be three lathes to use.

> See next months newsletter for more Simon antics.

> An item received too late for the wanted or for sale column. If you have or know of anybody who has a lathe and tools for sale, or if you are upgrading your lathe to a Nova 3000, Record swivel head, or a VB36 and want to sell your old lathe, then Richard Whitbread 043-732-1994 has got buyers for your old lathe !!!

Wanted or for sale:

> Your editor still has some Norton Adalox 360 grit no fills sandpaper in packs of 2 and a half sheets cut to size for R3.00. What a bargain!! Contact me or see me at meetings.

> The lathe that was for sale in last months newsletter has been bought by a young friend of Ricard Whitbread's who reports that he is chuffed with it.



This column is for any woodworking/turning item which you would like to sell or buy. Please contact me (see below)

Please address any correspondence to:

The Editor
(Gavin Knowles)
EL Woodturners News
10 Bowen Street
Cambridge West
5247
Telephones:
043-726-6749(h+w)
073-241-9810(cell)
e mail: Woodyone@polka.co.za

East London Woodturners News

April 2007

Editorial

The reason why you are getting this newsletter earlier than usual is because Bonnie Klein and her husband Robert from the U.S.A. will be in East London and she will be doing a demo which will be on the 19th of this month at about 1730 at the club. Even I do not know what she is going to demo, it will be a surprise, I do know that she will be using my JET mini lathe and not that atrocious Tauto club lathe.



Here is a picture of Bonnie working on her ornamental turning lathe "at home".

As this demo will be in the place of our normal meeting, the committee is looking forward to a big turnout, Please be there. Due to the Andrew Stevens Saturday morning demo at the beginning of March, it was decided at committee level to have a meeting on the normal fourth Wednesday and Ulrich stepped in at the last moment to give us a demo on turning table legs. The square leg blank is held between centers, and the position of the pummel is marked. Cut the pummel with the parting tool. Rough down the rest of the blank with the spindle roughing gouge. Mark the major dimensions. Cut the pummel with the spindle gouge. Part down to major dimensions using calipers. (Ulrich does not use a storey stick or template, he makes the first leg, then uses that as the template.) Cut the details with spindle gouges. He used a scraper shaped tool to cut small coves. Ulrich is not such a great skew chisel user (his own words not mine). → → 2

There were 16 members at the meeting which included Dr uys who received a phone call (again) and had to leave the meeting. It is also nice to see that Nigel Waters has rejoined the club, Nigel your banter is always welcomed and puts a little life into the meetings. The show table consisted of items by Nigel and Ulrich. I was coerced into doing the crit on the items by our chairman. Ulrich had on the table a finial lidded box made from Beech with four small feet that were part of the bottom of the box and carved. A ring was left on the bottom and the position of the feet marked. The rest of the ring was cut away and the bottom sanded. The work on the bottom was very well done. The finial on the lid was dyed Mahogany. Nigel had two Norfolk Island Pine end grain vessels and a carved platter of the same material. As the material was still unseasoned and not completed, he enquired as to how this may be done and also the splitting of the end grain. I have not turned Norfolk Island Pine so I could not give any insight into Nigel's requests. Nigel also brought along two Cedar bowls that were splitting and I know for a fact that Cedar is susceptible to splitting. Those members who are going down to Congress must enjoy it, I can not make it again this time due to a BIG workload.

Keep it turning. *Gavin Knowles.*

In this months episode of Simon, he gets a new lathe.

For some time I'd known that my lathe wasn't up to the things I was trying to do on it.

I'm not saying that it was a bad lathe, but it was cheap. I'd spent about £120 on it, which was all we could afford at the time and it had worked hard. Anyway, £120 is enough to spend if you flit from hobby to hobby like I used to do. It was odds on that I'd spend three or four weeks turning then give up and try something else.

Woodturning was different. I'd struggled - at first - to get to grips with it, but after some expert tuition from Harry Middleton it looked like I was going to be turning for some time. I just got hooked.

All this turning, added to the abuse that the lathe had withstood in the first few months, had taken its toll. I continued to turn to the very limits of the lathe's capabilities, but I didn't have a bandsaw, so most things screwed to my faceplate were miles out of balance and heavy to boot.

Abuse

This abuse had put quite a strain on the bearings. I'd rounded the nutshaped recesses in the handles to the extent that they no longer worked, so had had to remove them, replacing them with spanners, and I'd stripped a thread here and there, and rebored and tapped the holes, again replacing the locking screws with bolts and spanners.

However, the lathe kept going and my turning slowly improved. It was time for a bit more investment.

I still needed a chuck of course. This was really holding me back as, although my skills had improved, I lacked the accuracy needed to turn goblets and boxes in jam chucks and lacked the ingenuity to fabricate anything myself. I wanted a chuck.

What I didn't want to do was buy one for the lathe I had, because I wanted a new lathe too. Birthday money, along with Harry giving me some of his old tools, had just about covered all I needed. I still didn't have a spindle gouge; this was through choice though, as I'd found that anything I could do with one, I could do equally well with a bowl gouge. I'd yet to purchase a spindle roughing gouge, but again, I could easily rough a square to round with my pride and joy, a Henry Taylor Super Flute bowl gouge. It was the most expensive gouge on the market, but I loved it. What I really wanted was a new lathe and a chuck.

Search is on

We both worked lots of overtime and slowly an amount grew up to be set aside to buy a new lathe. It sounds selfish now, but Marilyn had bullied me into this silly hobby and encouraged me then as much as she does now, and was more an accomplice than an unwilling partner.

We started looking for lathes again. I didn't really know what I wanted. An Union Graduate would have been nice, but the few that were available were well beyond our price range and those we could afford were very similar to the one I'd already just about shaken to bits. I needed to get the right lathe this time, as it would be a long time until I could afford to change it.

I wasn't bothered what it was; I knew little about what was available anyway. I liked Harry's Myford ML8; it was on the original cabinet and had outboard attachment, but I envied his Jubilee. It had everything I needed to turn as large as I liked, outboard and toolrests and tailstock that stayed where you put them without the trouble I associated with clamps that work with screw threads. Plus it was heavy and looked the business.

The problem was; where could I buy a second-hand one?

We scoured the small ads. Nothing. I asked Harry if he knew of any. He didn't, but said he'd ask at his club.

Harry and a turner called Bill Newton had formed a woodturning group, The West Riding Woodturners, the previous year. Harry had asked me to join, but I was 21 and God knows what the average age of a woodturner would be. I already had the beard, but wasn't ready for the pipe and flat cap that seemed necessary for turners of the time. I was sure that I wouldn't fit in with the group of older turners, even if they did meet in a pub.

Hiding to nothing

Weeks passed, but I wasn't desperate, and the longer it took, the more I'd be able to afford. Anyway, it couldn't be long before one of Harry's pals became too old to turn and sold up, lathe, chuck and all, and I'd net myself a bargain. I've since found that really old men - and women for that matter - can turn long after even their 60th birthday, so I was on a hiding to nothing anyway.

Harry phoned. An old pupil was selling a Jubilee - and it had a chuck with it - for the sum of £350. Was I interested? Was I!

Said lathe looked to be in a bit of state, but appeared to be all there. Nothing was attached to anything else, the tailstock was in another part of the building and the whole thing was a bit grotty. Worse still, it was painted a sort of bilious orange, not butch at all!

Disappointed

I was disappointed, but Harry thought it was all right. He screwed on a 12in faceplate and tried to wiggle it; no movement so the bearings were ok.

It was agreed that, despite the paintwork, the lathe would be in reasonable condition once assembled. We agreed a price of £320 to include the chuck, faceplate, centres and all. I paid a deposit and arranged to pick it up the next weekend.

Marilyn and I went to collect it. I knew it would be heavy, but it was stripped down into its major components so three of us -

the bloke I bought it from, Marilyn and I - had no trouble loading it into the Land Rover. Getting it home and out of the Land Rover wasn't difficult either. The difficult bit was getting it into the cellar and then, of course, making space for it, a task I'd neglected to do

Pitfalls

The bed, leg, banjo, tailstock and other bits were easily carried into the cellar. The problem was the headstock. It is cast in one piece and goes from floor to above elbow height, and contains the motor, spindle belts, switch gear and all the gubbins that were in there when the lathe was three-phase.

We were into Land Rovers, so we'd dug a pit in the back yard - it doesn't show in the photos: we have since filled it in as it's much less effort to pay a garage! We had to negotiate that, a steep flight of steps, two tight corners, the cellar I wasn't using and the one that I was.

We wiggled the headstock from corner to corner and, despite a couple of near misses with the pit, reached the top of the treacherous steps. This brute was seriously heavy and even though we were much younger and fitter in those days, we knew we'd never carry it down without dropping it or one of us slipping.

We had tried to carry it down, but I ended up going first, carrying the bottom heavy bit with the motor. Marilyn had the top bit with nothing to grip and was trying to go too quickly, shoving me down the slippery steps at a speed I wasn't pleased with. The headstock, being too wide to stand on a step unsupported had to go back up the few steps we'd managed while we rethought the whole thing.

I promised not to yell at her and we had another go. One step at a time seemed to be the next logical way, but the problems were akin to the first attempt. As soon as I lifted the bottom of the thing, the top lurched in Marilyn's direction; she still had no grip so the whole thing slid down the edge of the step to the next step removing my lovely orange paint. We then had to repeat the process. I just couldn't lift it enough again to pull the bottom out to clear the edge of the next step.

Slipping and sliding

We decided to slide it. We stood it upright, half on the second step; I left her holding it while I found a couple of planks and a rope. We thought we'd sussed it. Nope! As soon as we started to lower the brute, it headed for a wall and jammed.

I would have to go down the steps, straddling the boards and lathe and guide it as Marilyn lowered it easily and gently to the bottom of the stairs where we would deftly stick it on a sack cart and wheel it into position.

I managed two steps before I slipped. Falling is a strange thing, you'll grab for anything you can. The only thing I could grab for was the largest, brightest thing I could see, a large orange headstock that my wife was struggling to hold in place on a slippery board at a steep angle with a tow rope.

The combined weight of the lathe and me were too much. The rope whizzed through her hands leaving burns and I shot downhill, rear-end first, straddling the headstock. Screaming.

All was quiet. Marilyn was nursing her hands, I was sat in a grotty, wet corner with the larger part of the lathe almost - but not quite - on top of me, and I'd banged my head.

It wasn't too difficult from then on to wheel the lathe through one cellar into the other. All I had to do then was make space for it, build it and get rid of that disgusting orange colour. Looking back, I still can't believe I actually chose to replace it with an equally disgusting sort of metallic pink.