



TURNINGS

July 2004

WCWA, Pinelands Hobbies Club, Nursery Way, Pinelands

AWSA home page: www.awsa.org.za

Central Ohio Woodturners (Sister club to WCWA): <http://www.biosci.ohio-state.edu/~awolfe/COW/cow.html>

EDITORIAL

“The best laid plans of mice and men...”

The newsletter is a week later this month than I'd intended. Getting away for a couple of day's break up the Garden Route came first - How's that for getting my priorities right for a change? I'd like to share some of our thoughts from the trip -



Knysna -

Lagoon and coast; timber and forests. Woody Mecca to the South African turner. Jane and I have just recharged our very depleted batteries there, just four nights, only three days, but magic, magic, magic all the way.

A kaleidoscope, full of images.

From a main road through Knysna which looks as though its holding a signwriters' convention, to the deep woody green that greeted our noses as we cycled past Groenvlei one energetic morning. From icebox chill in the valleys to hot sun on our backs as we rode up those rolling hills.

Tourist traps selling chunks of yellowwood that had come to a sticky end as crude household items that would at worst sell, only to be replaced by more, or at best burn well, thanks to their thick coating of toffee-apple varnish.

Driving down Grootrivier Pass, Mexican wave “to The Yellowwood” to see a man about a log. Nature's Valley, all but deserted, save for a self-assured youngster who paddled in to shore in his canoe, unchained his BMX from the bench where we were enjoying our thermos coffee and rode off home to have his breakfast, paddle across his handlebars, making use of the whole road. A leisure-time executive-in-training if I ever saw one.

A drive up to Rheenendal and a stop to see what Bushpig Fabrics were all about. Wonderful humour and amazing talent creating fun images on everything from tablecloths to t-shirts, serviettes and cushion covers. Can't help wondering whether she laughs out loud as she draws and designs. We're hooked and sold.

Old Nick's, near Plett; full of lovely warm things made from soft mohair and smooth wood. A super-efficient wood-burning ceramic fire place in front of which we were happy to warm up that chilly morning. Locally made in Karatara. (What a name!) Interesting ceramics. Nested wooden bowls that someone had incomprehensibly described to me only days before at the Waterfront. Another missing piece drops into place in the woodwork puzzle. A chest of drawers crafted from hard pear that glowed like the back of a finely made violin and sang sweet nothings to our too thin purses.

Driving up to the forestry nursery at Diepwalle, (past a signpost warning that any elephant seen would be a wild one) to wander in amazement through row upon row of carefully nurtured flourishing indigenous trees. A Bonsai Alley. Ironwood, all three Yellowwoods, Wild Pear, Wild Peach, Stinkwood, Cape Beech - you name it, they probably have it and know its botanical name, English name, Afrikaans name and probably a few more besides. And that tree that I'd never heard of before; the one that must have been named listening to the call of the Knysna Loeries - “Quarr!” One book describes the tree as ugly and unattractive, but perhaps with nurturing, it will blossom and turn into something as outrageously colourful as a Loerie in flight. Just maybe.

The kaleidoscope turns again. Fragments of memory realign and we recall the wonderful Natural Edge gallery, run by Grant and Dennis Marshall, Dave Stevenson and Mike Kaplan.

Unashamedly up-market, woodturnings share elegant shelving with ceramics and sculpture, leather art and our now-familiar bush pig. Grant (still modestly (but

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obviously) fired up from Utah which went really well for both him and Mike) passes on "Greetings to Izak from Bonnie Klein". Spalted plane has me completely fooled into identifying it as Cape Holly. Wild Olive that glows more brightly than the light shining through it. Seeing signature pieces for the first time "in the round". Me, feeling bad at realizing we've left insufficient time to go up to Dave's and see his workshop. But there's always a next time (or so we like to think...)

A muddy rutted track, stretching through farmland to chat to another bowl turner. How does anyone have so few shavings in a workshop? Maybe it's the faeries that clean up. Functional bowls. Oiled, all of them. Salad bowls. Working bowls. Thick bowls. Functional



bowls. Blanks For Sale. Why? Tempted, but maybe another time.

Finishing up spending the best part of an afternoon with Mike Ferguson at The Woodman's Timber Agency; selecting a modest (but to me daunting) pile of lumber from an Aladdin's Cave of

timber. Izak's name still scribbled provisionally in blue chalk on a lovely slab of Stinkwood - a "Kilroy was here" drawing to a turner, giving me confidence I was at the right place.

Reluctantly, heading for home again. The Kombi heavily laden, feeling like one of those wood trucks but short of probably twenty gears. A tentative uncertain "are-we-wasting-our-time?" stop at the Saturday morning Village Fair at Sedgefield. Can't believe it can be this way every week! A vibe that somehow feels like a reincarnation of the Woodstock Festival. Maybe it's the buskers. Maybe it's the straw, maybe its just the vibe which again is just pure magic. Was that Joan Baez? Were Crosby Stills here earlier? We eventually stagger out clutching yoghurt, butter, cheese, olive oil and more cheese and only wish we'd had a fatter piggy

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bank. Feeling so good, having seen Dave again, this time wearing his craft market hat. Having a ball. We realize we've just added another "Must Do" to the Garden Route list.

What do these thoughts have to do with turning? Everything, as they're all about the wood, the

warmth of friendships and inspiration. Let's not lose track of what turning's all about.

Ken Turner



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello All

Our holiday season is coming to an end and for those of us travelling to work in the mornings the traffic will be back to normal from Wednesday, so make allowance for extra travelling time. To those of you who had a break, I hope it was even better than you had expected it to be!

The Winter Showcase went very well, thank to all the participants and all those who helped to make it such a success. I was again amazed by the creative talent and skills levels of our members. Next time we must aim to get even more members to enter their work.

During the past month we had a stand at the Hobby-X. The interest generated was overwhelming. The idea of having a display of some of the timbers we use was a winner. To all who were involved, *many thanks!*

During the past few weeks I had time to do some work in the garage or is it the workshop? (Bert would say "the studio" but definitely not in my case!). I even had time to reorganize the area around the lathe. I also spent some time surfing the web. Here are two interesting web addresses:

www.fholder.com/woodturning/woodturn.htm (go to the sample of "More Woodturning", a 16 page magazine), and www.dtwoodturning.co.uk.

During Hobby-X the diversity in the pricing of our products struck me.

This can be a potential problem when we market our products together as a club. We can land up in a situation where two very similar pieces have two very different prices. How do you answer a question from the public on

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the difference in pricing? It stands to reason that when we as individuals market our products, the product and price are usually related to the customers we target. At a more upmarket craft market the products may well be more pricey than at the normal craft market. But what is a reasonable price? What criteria do you use to arrive at a price? To these questions there are probably as many answers as club members. Graeme has offered to facilitate a discussion on this topic (date to be decided at the next meeting). Come and share your experiences with us; in doing so we can act as a more cohesive group to promote woodturning and its true worth. Looking forward to seeing you on Wednesday and thanks for supporting the club's activities. Enjoy the time you spend at the lathe!

Louis van Niekerk



COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

Email addresses, home and cell numbers for the new committee members are:
 Louis Van Niekerk (Chairman) louisvn@iafrica.com; 913 1470, 082 885 0347
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 Nico Bantjes (Marketing & PR) nico@paragmed.co.za; 913 0296, 084 610 0026

Usual Monthly meeting schedule:

The workshop will be open from 19:00 – 21:00 for the “working” Wednesday meetings. Those using the facilities are expected to tidy the workshop at the end of the evening.

1st and 4th Wednesdays are usually informal evenings when members are welcome to use the Association's equipment, receive guidance from more experienced members and generally discuss matters turning. (Also the committee meeting on the first Wednesday)

2nd Wednesday is specifically set aside to assist beginners. Subject of demo or videos to be advised in programme. Let Workshop Duty Manager know if you wish to book a lathe.

3rd Wednesday is usually the regular formal meeting, comprising discussion of Association matters, an Instant Gallery critique, as well as demonstrations, and in June and November, the biannual Showcases.

NB Remember to bring your own tools and other accessories for the “working” Wednesdays.

Guest Fee:

A guest fee of R25 per visit will apply to members who have failed to renew their membership, and guests attending more than two club meetings.

REPORT BACK

As Tom was unfortunately unable to be at the last meeting just before leaving, to accept his Honorary Membership in person, I'm going to share Graeme's well prepared talk with you as we wish Tom and Shirley a successful “settling in” in France -

“Tom Allan joined the Western Cape Wood Turners Association after it had been going a number of years during the Chairmanship of Johan van Zyl. At the first meeting Tom attended, Hannes Ludick demonstrated the art of forming a spiral on balusters etc and it was from this point that Tom started playing a part in the activities of the Club. Tom, with his early training and later years of experience in engineering, has always contributed with ideas and guidance when approached. He was nominated to join the committee and also served as chairman. Since retiring from work and the committee, he has concentrated on building up a

woodturning business, producing items to order and when the time allowed, items for his stall at the Constantia Craft Market which he ran for a number of years.



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Tom developed an enviable skill in producing copious quantities of near-identical items with an excellent finish for their purpose. His ability to design, plan, prepare the prototypes and develop the most efficient method of undertaking the work and then produce the required items is truly awesome. His workshop is a reflection of this meticulous planning and layout - a true example of more planning making the task in hand easier. He is an innovator and uses skills and methods derived from other trades where they complement the work in hand. His particular interest in finishing - reflected in the name of his business "Touch Wood Turnery" emphasizing the tactile nature of the "trade"- led to many an interesting discussion in his workshop and the craft market.

One of Tom's greatest traits is his willingness to share his knowledge (this is the sign of a great tradesman - one who

does not feel threatened by others when sharing his knowledge) and it is for this willingness that we owe our greatest thanks to him. He always welcomed casual visits if the door of the workshop was open and if you had timed your visit correctly, a cup of coffee was always offered. The knowledge that he has shared with us is not only about his techniques in woodturning but also where to source things, tool making and design and a host of other topics that he is so well versed in.

As with all things Tom and Shirley do, their decision to move back overseas has no doubt been carefully considered and planned. Tom we salute you for taking this decision that you know is right for you and wish you and Shirley strength in the coming months, happiness when you settle in your new home and success when you again set up your workshop."

Graeme Hill

Thanks for sharing those words with us Graeme, and Tom, we look forward to regular news from you and Shirley, along with some photos where possible.



NEW ADVERTISER

We welcome **Powertool Repairs** as our newest advertiser this month. Our thanks to Kai Hallerman for his generous support with goodies for last month's Lucky Dip. Please support them. They sell excellent tools!

THE MARKET PLACE

We run commercial adverts in our newsletter. If you wish to advertise, or know of a company or person who might like to advertise, please contact Bert Parker or Ken Turner. Rates for an advert placed in the monthly newsletter, are R350 per annum. The adverts are rotated monthly to make it fair to all.

"The Market Place" is a free service for members, however the editor would appreciate feedback as items are sold.

Mick O'Donnell DVD's and Tapes

Bert has a once-off never-to-be-repeated offer on DVD's and VCR tapes from Mick O'Donnell.

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Covering "Turning Green Wood" and also his Sharpening tips. These are available to members at just R150 each thanks to Mick's generosity and add a lot of info to the book. Grab while they're available.

SECOND-HAND TABLE

Please remember to bring along old tools to the "formal" meeting". This offers the newer members an opportunity of acquiring affordable tools, while you have some extra cash for that next bowl gouge you are hankering after.

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Nico Bantjes is producing workshop jackets, blue with the club logo.

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TAILPIECE

Two ladies picking up pieces at the Waterfront Woodturners. Two very similar bowls, similar prices, one much thinner than the other. The one turns to the other and as she replaces the far

more delicate one on the shelf and says "This one's much better value – it was made from much thicker wood..."

We're never too old to learn something new!

Bonus Technical Article from Reg Sherwin

Thanks are due to Reg this month for giving us permission to reprint an article he wrote for the Oct / Nov 1999 issue of "The Woodturner" about cutting spigots correctly for a secure grip in chucks. As you'll realize, it follows on neatly from Tom's earlier article.

To keep file sizes realistic, I'll have extra copies of Reg's article available at the club rather than emailing it. If you receive your newsletter by email, pick one up then.

(It adds over 3 megs to a 1/2 meg file and I'd not be thanked for putting an elephant in your mailbox... wild or otherwise)