



West Riding Woodturner

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Last meeting: 03 May 2011

Next meeting: 07 June 2011

Deadline for inclusion of items in the next newsletter: 15 June

Chris Pouncey

May's demo was given by Chris Pouncey on behalf of Robert Sorby Tools of Sheffield. Chris had brought a number of different tools with him and these were for sale at 'show prices'. Chris dutifully worked his way through a number of these tools, showing how each one could be used.

Although Chris is obviously a very competent turner, his demonstration was so openly geared to selling the tools that it made for a rather dull presentation with no overall coherence holding it all together. Usually a demonstrator is making some object which we can see develop. Often this allows members to go home and have a go at making it themselves.

However, in this case the emphasis was on techniques and on how Sorby tools have been developed to make them easier. Unless you were prepared to buy the tools, you couldn't try them out yourself at home, and had to take Chris's descriptions of ease and simplicity at face value.



There does seem to be a trend, nowadays, towards tool blades which fit into a separate handle of some sort, and can be swapped in and out as required. Each manufacturer extols the virtues of his particular system over the others, but I've never been a fan of these systems myself. Instead, I prefer to buy tools with wooden handles of a length suited to the tool in question. When I need a new one I buy an unhandled version and swap the handle from the old one. It works well and helps keep the cost down. Anyway, what's happened to the time-honoured practice of turning your own tool handles?

As sales pitches go the presentation was OK but I'm afraid, with no disrespect for Chris intended, it didn't hold my interest for very long.

On the plus side, like our in-house demonstrations, there was no charge to the club. In this case the costs of the demo were borne by Robert Sorby. I guess that makes it pretty good value!

Where the devil...?

Search as I might, high and low, upstairs and downstairs and in the workshop, I cannot find the notes I made at the last meeting. I know I had them, and I'm *sure* I left them on the dining table.

Like all husbands, I blame my wife. She's obviously picked up my notebook and put it somewhere tidy.

Like all wives, she denies it. She's got better things to do than tidy round after me, and if I was better organised I obviously wouldn't have lost it in the first place.

(Better things to do? *What* better things?)

Anyway, I can't find it. I doubt if anyone asked me to put anything in this newsletter, but in the unlikely event that you did, I'll put it in next month if you remind me.

Turnabout

My turnabout session went ahead on May 10th and three members attended, Chris Redfearn, Dave Robins and Peter Hendry. We spent a convivial evening talking turning generally and looking at making an off-centre eggcup. The evening went so well that Linda had to come and break up the party, sending everyone home at about eleven o'clock - this, presumably, is one of the 'better things' she has to do when she *ought to be tidying up after me*.

Chris, Dave and Peter will (I hope) host turnabout sessions of their own in due course, and I look forward to the opportunity of seeing how some other members operate. Many thanks to these three for coming and commiserations to Ian Taylor who had intended to come but has been poorly.

Each of the three voluntarily donated a pound towards my charity choice, which is Cancer Research. Three pounds may not seem very much, but every little helps, and read on...

Andy Hall eat your heart out!

Back in March I did a full day demonstration for Suffolk Mid-Coastal woodturners, who meet in Ipswich. Linda came with me on this occasion although she doesn't usually, and while we were there one of the members, a lively octagenarian named Peter Taylor gave her a present. It consisted of a pair of tiny hats on stands, which he makes and sells to raise money for charity.

Linda was much taken with them and they are now proudly displayed at home. They are so elegant I thought they would make an excellent subject for demonstrations and so I rang Peter and asked if he would mind me making them and also selling them for charity.



With Peter's blessing, and after a bit of practising, I began making them at a recent demonstration for the Sheffield club and successfully auctioned the first one for £15. In this instance I donated the money to Bluebell Wood children's hospice - the charity that the Sheffield club is supporting this year.

Coombe Abbey woodturners in Coventry bought another two last Saturday at £10 each, and I will continue to make them and offer them for sale at future demonstrations. Thus my total fund raising this month has increased from £3 to £38 in the last week, and may rise higher.

In the photograph, Peter's originals are at either end of the ones on stands and all the others are mine, and are for sale - no reasonable offer refused. They are about 50mm diameter and stand about 80mm tall on the little stands. Peter uses ponytail bobbles (I think they are called - I rarely use this sort of item) for the hatbands, but I took a leaf out of Andy Hall's book and made the hatbands by leaving a slightly raised section of the wood which I coloured with felt-tip pens.

Do we actually need a newsletter?

When I first took on this job I pointed out that you'd get the newsletter you deserve and, notwithstanding Chris Battersby's magnificent effort last month, it remains true that contributions to the newsletter from club members remain conspicuous only by their absence. In fact most months it's not so much a newsletter as a monologue from me.

I don't really mind, but sometimes I feel a bit embarrassed that the newsletter seems to represent a very Bobcentric view of the universe. On the other hand, what am I to do? I hate the thought of leaving large blank spaces, but without help it can be difficult to fill them with anything meaningful to the club and I have little alternative but to fall back on my own experiences.

This has made me wonder whether we actually *need* a newsletter at all. Upcoming events are mentioned at the beginning of each meeting, so they hardly warrant a regular newsletter. The occasional advert for this or that can be put on the notice board at meetings. If the membership has nothing to say in a newsletter, do we really need one? Answers in no more than 250 words, in writing, please.

It's obvious really

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