

# WestTurn News

Guild Web Site:

<http://www.sydneywoodturners.com.au>

**Issue 81, July 2006.**

Western & Blue Mountains Region

Postal Address: PO Box 4008, Lalor Park, NSW 2147

Twin Gums Retreat Address: Cnr Northcott Rd & Diane Dr, Lalor Park

## Regional Committee 2005/06:

**Convenor:** Robert Jarvis 9622 2741  
**Secretary:** Robyn Mahoney 46288236  
**Treasurer:** Bob Young 98732773

**Regional Rep:** Ian O'Connor 9715 3490  
**Member:** Tony Maberly 9622 7561

**Library:** See Don Hughes if you would like to know what is currently available from our library.

*Please remember that some of the items within the library are on loan from other members and all care should be taken to bring them back as soon as you are finished. Just as in other libraries one month is usually sufficient time to have an item out.*

**Stores, Equipment & Maintenance:** Toby McIlwain and Ted Edwards. Please let them know if you find any problems with any of the machinery in the hall.

**Editor:** Bill Hartley 98716128  
[williamhartley@optusnet.com.au](mailto:williamhartley@optusnet.com.au)

From the comments I've received from members, it is evident that the colour photos in our newsletter are preferred over the alternative black and white. However, colour printing is expensive and our committee is considering ways of minimizing costs in this area.

Would you like to see the latest *WestTurn News* in full size glorious colour on your computer screen? If your eyesight is not perfect, you can enlarge the print to suit your needs. If you have a printer and would prefer a hard copy, then print it. I'm certain that a majority of our members would have access to a computer and the Internet, so why not visit the website of the Sydney Woodturners Guild by typing this into your browser:

<http://www.sydneywoodturners.com.au>

Then go down the page to Guild Regions and click on the *Western & Blue Mountains Region* link. Here you can select any of this year's monthly newsletters or access the archives for previous years.

If you have an email address, I could send you a note with a link to the latest issue so all you would have to do would be to click on that link in your email and you would be taken straight to the issue on the website.

If this all sounds like gibberish to you, don't panic. We are not going totally electronic and if you would prefer a paper version of this newsletter, then you will get one (even with your name on it).

This month we have an informative article from Bill Swindale on precautions we should take when woodturning and in *Your Turn* we feature one of our members. For next month I have a contribution from Toby McIlwain on some important considerations when turning at public demonstrations.

**Catering Officer:** Trish Gale. See Trish if you have any special needs.

**Sick List:** If anyone knows of any of our members or their partners who are on the sick list, please let a Committee member know so that we can inform the members.

**Committee Meeting:** The committee meeting is held on the **second Tuesday of the month** starting at 7.00pm at Twin Gums. All are welcome to attend.

**Next meeting 8<sup>th</sup> August 2006.** *If you have a gripe and want to have your say please come along. Complaints at meetings and at demos will not make changes but only cause rumours and we all know what happens when rumours start.*

## Western/Blue Mtns Region Calendar for 2006:

**Third Sunday** every month from 10.00am, Every **Wednesday** from 10.00am. Every **Friday Night** starting at 7.00pm.

### Sunday July 16

Our guest demonstrator will be **Bruce Leadbeatter**.

### Sunday September 17

Our guest demonstrator will be **Fred Holder** — American Woodturner/Demonstrator/Teacher. This is our normal Sunday meeting but due to the demo the entry fee is \$10 for members Western & Blue Mountains Region; \$20 for other regional guild members and visitors. (Lunch provided).

## Future Demonstrations:

Our members have been asked to participate in the following demonstrations: Please help by participating and putting your name against the event. We ask that you try demonstrating as these can be fun and it helps improve your skills.

### Saturday September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006

St Mary's Development Committee Spring Festival

### September 16<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>

Wisteria House Parramatta

### Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup> 2006

Linwood House Please see Tony Maberly if you are interested in attending.

Please remember that **NO** member can commit the Region to participate in any demonstration or event without first presenting to the committee. Guild approval is also required for insurance purposes.

## Other Regional Events/Demonstrations:

### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July

Blue Mountains Woodturning group outing at Blaxland Crossing Park, Wallacia. Celebrating the centenary of Wallacia. Further information from Ross Standale on 47591088.

## Ladies Days: Ring or see Anna for details.

### Bowls for Any Event!

Don't forget if you are not turning anything in particular, think about turning one of our blanks. It appears that these are becoming very popular at our demonstrations in the rummage box. A significant source of income for the club and our charity work.

## Committee Decisions

We delay purchase of a bandsaw for 6 months till we know what is needed for incorporation and insurance.

It was decided we have a safety audit and also get rid of excess benches and other junk.

The screens are to be attached to the lathes subject to the safety audit.

It was decided that we keep separate record books for sales, key register and demonstrations

There were three new members welcomed this month, **Ray Blissett, Pamela Allen and John Laugesen.**

## Have a Laugh

On the very first day, God created the cow. He said to the cow, "Today I have created you! As a cow, you must go to the field with the farmer all day long. You will work all day under the sun! I will give you a life span of 50 years.."

The cow objected, "What? This kind of tough life you want me to live for 50 years? Let me have 20 years, and the 30 years I'll give back to you." So God agreed.

On the second day, God created the dog. God said to the dog, "What you are supposed to do is to sit all day by the door of your house. Any people that come in, you will have to bark at them! I'll give a life span of 20 years."

The dog objected, "What? All day long to sit by the door? No way! I give you back my other 10 years of life!" So God agreed.

On the third day, God created the monkey. He said to the monkey, "Monkeys have to entertain people. You've got to make them laugh and do monkey tricks. I'll give you 20 years life span."

The monkey objected. "What? Make them laugh? Do monkey faces and tricks? Ten years will do, and the other 10 years I'll give you back." So God agreed.

On the fourth day, God created man and said to him, "Your job is to sleep, eat, and play. You will enjoy very much in your life. All you need to do is to enjoy and do nothing. This kind of life, I'll give you a 20 year life span."

The man objected. "What? Such a good life! Eat, play, sleep, do nothing? Enjoy the best and you expect me to live only for 20 years? No way, man!....Why don't we make a deal? Since the cow gave you back 30 years, and the dog gave you back 10 years and the monkey gave you back 10 years, I will take them from you! That makes my life span 70 years, right?" So God agreed.

AND THAT'S WHY....

In our first 20 years, we eat, sleep, play, enjoy the best and do nothing much. For the next 30 years, we work all day long, suffer and get to support the family. For the next 10 years, we entertain our grandchildren by making monkey faces and monkey tricks. And for the last 10 years, we stay at home, sit by the front door and bark at people!

## TURNING CLASSES

We encourage all beginners to seek help, ask questions and enjoy what we hope will be a great hobby. If you are interested in joining classes please see [Bill Swindail](#).

**Please note that due to requirements under the child protection act we cannot teach anyone under the age of 21.**

## Some images from the last Sunday meeting (18<sup>th</sup> June 2006).

**Guest Demonstrators:  
Bill Sheen and Lindsay Skinner**

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June we were very fortunate in having two experienced turners working simultaneously at their lathes. It was a great double act and both Bill Sheen and Lindsay Skinner demonstrated a range of techniques while turning bowls.

Bill used a face plate to attach his camphor laurel bowls which he decorated using a toothed wheel and a trammel grinding bit.



Lindsay used a chuck to attach his bowl blanks which supposedly came from a Morton Bay fig tree in Victoria Barracks -- very dry and porous.



Both presenters then showed us various finishes for each bowl. Bill used acrylic paints and Lindsay used methylated spirits (and a cotton bud) to burn the lip of his bowl) and a laser screw to create a finish.

The knowledge and skill demonstrated by Bill and Lindsay certainly kept the large audience entertained and interested and I'm sure their sessions will be a great help to many of our members seeking new ideas and new avenues to explore when turning.

## Handy Hints

### Bill Sheen:

1. Use screws that have a square counter sunk head as they do not burr like the slot and Phillips head screws. You will need to purchase a screwdriver at same time or I suppose you could grind an old screw driver to fit (my handy hint).
2. Leave acrylic paint to dry overnight to ensure clean cut before cleaning face of bowl lip.

### Lindsay Skinner:

1. Use a strap of leather with jeweller's rouge (a polishing powder of hydrated ferric oxide) to hone your tools.
2. Make your own Laser screw by grinding down a coach screw. Grind 4 vertical slots along the screw thread. These help remove debris and cool the thread.
3. Use methylated spirits mixed with water on timber for burnt edges on bowls etc. Apply using cotton buds (Lindsay is a firm believer in the humble cotton bud).
4. Use high density foam to support a thin-rimmed bowl.
5. Lindsay demonstrated an alternative way of using a bowl gouge, in this way:

—————  
**rwbe qomw**

(If you can't get the above hint, look in the mirror.)



— — — — —

Consider the mosquito. He rarely gets a slap on the back until he goes to work.

## Show and Tell 18<sup>th</sup> June 2006.



Bill Moore presented an attractive bowl from jarrah burl, finished with Shellawax.



Bill Swindale's walking stick featured a carved spiral section and a carved handle. It was turned from New Guinea Rosewood.

### Some ideas from Alan Phelps

The following is mainly aimed at the newer members but will probably be of interest to everybody.

#### *HandTools*

If you are in the market for tools I recommend the tools from  
Hy-Cut Tools  
Harboard NSW  
Georgie Armen  
PH 9905 0220

Georgie is a member of the Peninsula group and is a genuine all round good bloke. All these tools are hand made from imported Swedish high speed steel called Bohler S600. Some time back Ted Edwards and I did some research on making tools for ourselves and found that the S600 was about the best steel available in Australia. These particular tools from Georgie are hand made and are specially heat treated and hardened for their full length and are better than most of the imported varieties. Also the price is considerably cheaper.

I recently checked with Bohler Aust on pricing of steel and found that these tools are being sold finished, cheaper than I can buy the blanks. From my personal experience, if you want a bowl gouge, buy the 16mm with the swept back grind. You can use it on any size bowl and it is probably all you will ever need. I also have the large roughing gouge and it's the best I have used. We have a couple in the store and I suggest you borrow one and try it out. You won't be sorry. Also Georgie makes the Uni-Jig Sharpening jig, again a quality product that does the job well. There is a catalogue of these tools pinned to our notice board.



Michael Harvey had this small lidded box beautifully turned from an offcut of teak.



Anna had a turned piece made from driftwood, a gift from a New Zealand friend, Shirley Thomas. The use of black stain gave a nice contrast to the deep natural colour of the timber.

## Your Turn... EMMANUEL FARRUGIA

This guy is a real enthusiast. Only last week at lunch it was Manny who sounded out the group as to how many members would like to have the club open for a second day of the week as well as Wednesday. He obviously loves the contact with other members, sharing ideas and enjoying the company.

When I arrived at his home, Manny was putting the finishing touches to a portable cross which he has been making for the Salvation Army. Under the house he has set up his extensive workshop with a huge range of hand tools and power tools. I had never seen such a collection of tools and jigs, but then Manny was a tool-maker in a previous life and naturally is able to call on his wood and metal working skills for his hobby of woodturning.



He then told me that he had designed and made his own "slot machine". I just couldn't see Manny as a casino gambler so was relieved to see that he was referring to his "multi-router", which he has made to cut the slots in timber ready for gluing the tenon in furniture joints.

Manny gets pleasure in doing things for others and is at the moment making sharpening jigs for two friends.

When you see his collection of lathes, bench saws, band saw, scroll saw, jointer, planer, fine-tooth drop



saw, etc you can understand how he is able to do things like laminate his timbers and cut the precise angles required to produce those attractive segmented bowls.

Manny is very excited about one of his many current projects where he is looking to apply the technique of wood inlay (or marquetry) to his segmented bowls which should produce contrasting coloured shapes around the outside.



In his house, Manny has an impressive collection of his landscape paintings, model ships and furniture pieces he had made for the family as well as, of course, many examples of his woodturning pieces. It was while I was admiring these items that I asked him how long he had been turning. I nearly fell off my chair and spilt my coffee when he answered "Fourteen months".

He explained that Bob Taylor had invited him to come and see his demonstration at Linwood Park school and once he'd seen what Bob could turn, he was hooked. Manny's rapid progress can be understood in terms of his great enthusiasm for the craft, together with his natural ability and the Guild turning lessons.



Fourteen months! And here he is producing articles that anyone would be proud to bring along for display at our monthly Show & Tell. I'd just assumed that it must have taken years to get to his standard and that he had been turning as long as old George Wells! There's hope for me yet.

Some scenes of weekday activity



Sid



Paul & Bob



Erich & Ian



Wes



Robyn



Robert



Peter



Don

## Timber and How Harmful is it to Our Health.

By Bill Swindail

When asked to write this article on timber and our health, I was asked to write about the possible health hazards associated with Australian Timbers. But I was reminded sometime later that most members have turned timber from outside this country. As I looked into the problems that timber can cause, I wondered why we as turners do not take more precautions when turning. At home I wear a full-face shield and also a dust mask at times. In my shed I use dust extractors to help keep the dust to a minimum. We do have dust extractors in the club's hall, and yet I turn without my personal aids. WHY?

If I have a reaction to Silky Oak and let's say Tom is on the other side of the hall turning Silky Oak. I will still have a reaction as the dust moves around the hall or as I move around the hall talking to people. Because of these problems, do we ban the use of these timbers in the hall? If we ban all harmful timber from the hall, then workshop days (Wednesdays) would come to an end.

If all members are to enjoy woodturning, then it is up to each and every member to take the necessary steps in looking after his or her health when turning. Use a dust mask, full-face shields, wear long sleeve coats if necessary providing they are not loose around the wrist. If turning a timber for the first time, then take these precautions to help prevent the possible health problems, it may be too late by the time you find out about a problem.

### Timber and Health Risks

Huon pine — *Lagarostrobos franklinii*, syn *Dacrydium franklinii*

Risks - Not known

Camphor laurel — *Cinnamomum camphora*

Risk – Can cause dermatitis and shortness of breath

Blackbean, Moreton bay chestnut and other names

— *Castanospermum australe*

Risk — Dermatitis, irritation to throat, armpits, eyes, nose and genitals

Kauri pine, Queensland kauri & New Zealand kauri – *Agatis* spp

Risk – Not known

She-oak - *Allocasuarina fraseriana* (syn. *Casuarina fraseriana*)

Risk — Dermatitis, irritation to throat, armpits, eyes, nose and genitals

African padauk, Bar wood – *Pterocarpus soyauxii*

Risk — Sawdust can cause skin and respiratory problems, swelling of the eyelids, itching and vomiting

Purpleheart – *Peltogyne porphyrocardia*

Risk — Dust can cause irritation and nausea

African mahogany — *Khaya ivorensis*

Risk — Dermatitis, nasal cancer, irritation to mucous membranes and irritation of alimentary tract

Tasmanian oak, Alpine ash, Victoria ash, Swamp gum — *Eucalyptus delagatensis*

Risk — Irritation to mucous membranes, nose, mouth, throat, genitals and armpits

American mahogany, Brazilian mahogany — *Switenia macrophylla*

Risk — Dermatitis, skin irritation, giddiness, vomiting, respiratory problems, furunculosis,

Blackwood, Black wattle — *Acacia melanoxylon*

Risk — Dermatitis, Asthma, irritation to nose and throat and skin reactions

Blue gum — *Eucalyptus globulus*

Risk — Dermatitis

Douglas fir, Oregon — *Psuedosuga menziesii*

Risk — Dermatitis, giddiness, vomiting and mahogany cough

Jarrah — *Eucalyptus marginata*

Risk — Irritation to nose, throat and eyes

Lemon scented gum — *Corymbia citriodora*

Risk — Dermatitis

Mountain ash — *Eucalyptus regnans*

Risk — irritation to nose, throat and eyes also dermatitis

Red cedar — *Toona ciliata*

Risk — Violent headaches, giddiness, stomach cramps, asthma, dermatitis and irritation of mucous membranes

Red siris or mackay cedar — *Albizia toona*

Risk — Dermatitis, bleeding at nose, conjunctivitis and giddiness

Western red cedar — *Thuja plicata*

Risk — Dermatitis, asthma, nasal cancer, nose bleeds, giddiness, rhinitis and stomach pains.

New Guinea Rosewood, Philippines or Solamons padauk — *Pterocarpus indicus*

Risk — Dermatitis, asthma & indicus

This is only a short list of mostly Australian timbers with side effects. From time to time I will add other timbers to this list if asked. As you can see it is to your own benefit to wear the appropriate equipment when turning.

## SOME MORE SPECIES OF WOODS

*Cinnamomum camphora*

**Camphor Laurel** (*Cinnamomum camphora*) is a large tree that grows up to 20-30 metres tall. The leaves have a glossy, waxy appearance and smell of camphor when crushed by hand. In spring it produces bright green foliage with masses of small white flowers. It produces clusters of black berry-like fruit around one centimetre in diameter.

Camphor Laurels have very stout trunks. They also have somewhat pale bark that is very rough and fissured vertically. They are native to Taiwan, southern Japan, southeast China and Indochina, where they are also cultivated for camphor production.

Camphor Laurel as an invasive species in Australia

Camphor Laurel was introduced to Australia in 1822 as an ornamental tree for use in gardens and public parks. It has however become an endemic weed throughout Queensland and northern New South Wales where it is suited to the wet, subtropical climate. It is unsuited to the fragile ecosystems of Australia. It has been declared a noxious weed for the entire states of Queensland and New South Wales. Its massive and spreading root systems disrupt urban drainage and sewerage systems and degrade river banks.

Its leaves have a very high carbon content which damages water quality and freshwater fish habitats when they fall into streams and rivers. The camphor content of the leaf litter helps prevent other plants from germinating successfully, helping to ensure the Camphor's success against any potentially competing vegetation, and the seeds are attractive to birds and pass intact through the digestive system, ensuring rapid distribution. Camphor laurel invades pastures, and also competes against eucalyptus trees which are the sole food source of koalas, which are an endangered mammal in many parts of eastern Australia.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camphor\\_Laurel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camphor_Laurel)



Warning signs in use at Lismore attached to camphor laurel trees of the more toxic chemotype

An as yet unknown total number of distinctly different chemotypes of Camphor laurel tree exist throughout most of NSW's Northern Rivers Region; some chemotypes are now shown to be extremely toxic, especially during a hot and late summer season. At least one toxic chemotype, or 'Safrole type', is distinctive in its outward appearance, whilst others, including 'Cineole' type (Firth 1979), need further research so landowners can prioritise removal of the more toxic types first. Evidence is presented to reveal that a wide range of native bird species, koalas, possums, and long nose bandicoots, are being slowly poisoned, or turning sterile, due to over-consumption of Camphor laurel fruit, bark, and roots, in areas of 'faunal territory' that are now hyper-dominated by Camphor trees - such that indigenous food selection/s are highly delimited, minimal or zero - as in extreme Camphor-infested land units. Based on the preliminary collections and observations, and combined with recently accumulated knowledge of domestic animal deaths (goats, horses) and induced sterility (fowl, game fowl, geese), more research and toxicological examination of all available chemotypes is now urgently needed.

A preliminary survey of hobby and professional woodturners showed that no more than 50% of 25 interviewed were positive about Camphor Laurel wood, and its fine working qualities, but those who have finally discovered that its wood, shavings, and sawdust are mostly toxic to breathe do so the hard way!! This seems principally because the Camphor & timber industry in general do not publish information about the relative toxicities of timbers grown and cut in Australian conditions



Differences between types are clearly greatest in early Winter, especially after a dry, hot summer.

Source: <http://www.camphorlaurel.com/>

Despite its toxic properties, Camphor Laurel is a great species for the woodturner if due protection is worn.



This item displays the impressive colour and grain pattern of the wood.