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20 July-2August	" Turnaround 20". Odlins Gallery
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EDITORIAL

As I write this the country is looking forward to the confirmation that we will be going into level 2 in this fight against Covid 19, which will enable us to extend our bubbles and resume activities that we have not been able to be involved in for over 6 weeks. We should be able to attend meetings, while keeping a suitable distance apart, should be able to resume activities in the MenzShed again so long as we stick to prescribed safety measures, and generally enjoy more of the freedoms which we usually take for granted. I know this is not a space to politicize but I do applaud the decisions that have been taken on our behalf to minimize the effects of the Covid-19 virus.

I have not found the lockdown to be particularly trying. Like most of you, I presume, I have happily let time go by doing the things that I enjoy doing in my workshop. I have completed several pens and fifteen bowls/platters/dishes of varying sizes, some embellished and some left to allow the wood to take centre stage. I have spent over a week denailing old Douglas Fir framing timber and now have over 800 about 30cm long, 4x2", pieces of firewood stacked here and at my daughter's new home. Also, my contributions to my Kindle account have steadily increased.

Having said that I do look forward to starting my turning classes again because I miss the friendships that are such an important part of these evenings and I also miss the Wednesday morning time at the Shed – probably for the same reason. I appreciate that new systems will need to be introduced initially so we can keep safe but that is to be expected. So, stay safe in your sheds and stay well. And my thanks to Michael, Warwick, Sam, Graeme, Dave and Mark for their contributions to this issue of Cambium.

Finally, Dick Veitch sent a note to NAW members advising that Gordon Pritchard has passed away. For those of you newer to woodturning particularly, Gordon was an engineer who designed and built the Pren Colt lathes in his Fielding workshop. He was a keen woodturner and pioneered the Fielding Collaborations that ran for some years. His contribution to the development of woodturning in this country has been considerable. I am a very contented owner of one of the first big Pren lathes that Gordon made, of which there were only 5 or 6 built, so Gordon is often in my thoughts.

HDM

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

What has the lockdown experience been like for you all? I have been busier than normal being one of the lucky few being able to work from home. Unfortunately my wife, Jaina, was not able to get to work so took it upon herself to take on all those little jobs that have been hanging around for years. Unfortunately for me this meant all that free time I would normally have was taken up to help so I have not had as much time in my workshop as I would have liked. On the upside the attic has been cleared and the living room has been painted.

I have, however, managed to get *some* shed time. As you may have seen in our Newsletter I have been making a portable bench stand for my new mini lathe but the project is on hold waiting for some hardware to arrive. My other project was a variation on the Amphora piece I made at the Hawkes Bay collaboration in January. The idea was to make a pottle by laminating five pieces of wood using a paper glue joint, turning a spherical pottle, then carefully splitting the glue joint and reassembling the piece using only the centre and two outer faces to produce a pottle that looked round from the front and oval from the side. This approach turned into disaster for many reasons. My first mistake was to forget that paper joints are intended to be weak. I got carried away with the turning, cranked up the lathe speed and there was an almighty bang and clatter as the piece hit the tool rest and I was showered in glass. Luckily nothing hit me as I was wearing a safety visor but the strip light above me is a mess and I need a sparky to come and fit a new one so I now restrict my shed time to daylight hours.

What became of the piece I was working on? Well I did glue it back together and continued turning but when I finally split the piece (intentionally this time), the balance was wrong so the project is now parked. I think my idea will work if I change the thickness of each part when I create my initial blank. The centre has to be thinner so the side panels don't end up too small on the finished piece. The whole experience taught me a lot. I am still waiting on the sparky.

Now that we are in lockdown level 2 we can start thinking about our next Odilins exhibition



so keep busy in your shed. Unfortunately it still means we cannot meet in a large group but our interest groups should be able to resume meeting provided you follow the rules.

Cheers

Mark

MICHAEL HARRISON FILES **MISTAKES**

When I say 'mistakes' I mean those things done whilst woodworking, all the others are too numerous to mention.

Drilling a hole that is too big may seem a trifle but it is irritating to say the least. The box in which my Forstner bits lie has their sizes imprinted on the ridges between the rows of plastic holders. I now always check whether the correct size is indicated on the left or the right. On one occasion (yes it has happened more than once) I had to fill the hole I had drilled with an appropriate sized dowel turned on the lathe and then re-drill using the correct sized bit.

Dovetail joints... when making a decorated box for my son I had completed the dovetails on three corners perfectly and started on the fourth. It was only when I went to complete the second half of that corner

that I realised the dovetails were the wrong way around, instead of holding the corner together the joints could easily slip apart. Redoing the whole thing, I decided, was not on, so it was glued together, looks good, and nobody except me has noticed it.

A tool box is a valuable asset and normally contains all the tools for the anticipated 'off-site' work, like the daughter's house. It is only when you get there that the one particular 'asset' you need is missing.

At the MenzShed there is a variety of measuring sticks...one I used on one particular day came up short...why? I couldn't understand why the piece of wood was 0.5 cm short. I measured again and then noticed it was the ruler's fault! It had been shortened for some reason...I binned it!

A tip here about those expanding rulers that roll back into the casing...if you want real accuracy, like for marking out a mortice and tenon, don't use the far end because the little right angled widget at the end that clips over the edge of the wood is often loose and could be off by a small margin.

Other mistakes have been hitting the biological nail rather than the metallic one, penetrating skin with screws that go right through the wood etc. If I am using small panel nails I now hold them with some fine nosed pliers, or some old surgical forceps but not everyone has one of those.

Oh yes, not forgetting the bowl where the bottom was turned out completely. I did manage to fill the hole and turn it smooth, it looked decorative with a different coloured wood in the base of the bowl but I don't recommend it as a technique.

Have you ever put a hinge on the wrong way round?

Finally, but I'm sure it's not the last, I was turning some wet wood and a visitor called so I had to leave the workshop. Time passed and I did not get back to the lathe until the next day or so. What did I find? I'm sure you can guess – a horrible film of rust, not only on the lathe bed but also on the chuck. Not good.

Someone wise once said, "If you don't make mistakes you don't learn." Another quote is along the lines of "If a person has never made a mistake he/she hasn't done anything significant."

Michael

As an addendum to Michael's article above I would like to describe how even when you really try to avoid them mistakes will almost inexplicably happen. I had finished the Maire platter, pictured here, and decided to jazz up the rim by burning a ring of circles using a large cup burner, inking their centres black and then adding x number of paua dots. To work out the number of circles required I measured the inside diameter of the ring then measured the expected width of the burned circle. I then took the cup burner, which was in my micro motor, and burned a row of rings onto a strip of cardboard to the length of the inside diameter telling myself that this had to be accurate. I counted the number of rings and found that I



had 96 which was perfect because it was easily divisible so I would have equal spaces for my dots. So I sat down and burned the string of circles onto the rim and was happy with how they looked. But when I counted them I found that I had 91 instead of the 96. "What the heck? How did that happen? What

goes into 91???" You may think that I am somewhat mathematically challenged as the answer did not come instantly and I reached for my calculator. I was absolutely delighted and relieved to learn that 91 is divisible by 13 which meant 7 rings between each paua dot. Couldn't be better! But how do you drill for a 5mm paua dot, dead centre in the 13 target circles when holding a platter at an angle to the drill? Answer 'Carefully' and I think I did pretty well and got 11 of the 13 more or less centre. Hard to hit perfect every time! **HDM**

A neat little fence for your bandsaw

In March I spent two weeks at the Centre for Fine Woodworking in Nelson, doing the Introduction to Fine Woodworking course. I learnt a lot

of little things: some reinforcing things I had learnt earlier, some new, all of it enjoyable.



One thing that caught my attention was the adjustable fence they had installed on their bandsaw. The bandsaw was almost identical to my own so it attracted me even more.

When I got home I launched into the project and the pic above shows the result. It wasn't too difficult. The saw table already had some holes in it, through which I was able to bolt the track and the rear support onto the table. The fence has a protruding piece which slides in the track. I added a solid piece behind the fence which (a) ensures that the slider is square and (b) provides a good grip for the clamp. I preferred that to having it clamp on to the top of the fence as I had seen in Nelson. It works a treat. Ideal for things like cutting tenons and anything else where you need a straight cut.

As you can see the fence is quite high, perhaps higher than it needs to be. But if it gets in the way of the blade guides I can use a block in front of it as an auxiliary fence. And for a larger job where I do not need a fence, it is easily removable.

Warwick Smith

Handy tips from Sam Hillis

A. While looking through an old woodworking magazine recently I found this tip for flattening an oilstone:

- Remove the oilstone from its holder and clamp into a vice.
- Take a very rough old file, preferably 300mm long, with a handle.
- File the stone diagonally from corner to corner.
- Check for flatness by spreading a light coat of Prussian blue powder, mixed with a few drops of oil, onto a piece of glass.
- Rub the oilstone over the coating and the high spot will show up blue.
- Repeat this process until the oilstone is flat and it will be like new!

Personally, I don't worry too much about checking for flatness as my oilstones are used for sharpening carving chisels and the oilstones always end up with grooves in their surfaces anyway.

B. During the lockdown and down to my last old bandsaw blade which was not cutting very well (the result of hitting hidden nails) I remembered a handy tip I once read in another old woodworking magazine:

- You will need a large flat file
- Remove the damaged blade and twist to reverse the teeth.
- Replace in the bandsaw with teeth pointing downwards and remembering to refit all guards.
- Switch on the saw, carefully bringing the flat face of the file into contact with the teeth. It helps to steady the file by resting it on the table. Tilt the file back slightly so only the bottom of the file is in contact with the teeth.
- It only needs 1-2mm taken off the teeth in order to replace the original angle on the cutting tips.
- The teeth will now have a square edge to the front.
- The cutting edge will be reduced but the object is simply to extend the usefulness of a worn blade, not to restore it to it's new condition.

This does work, albeit slower, but it allowed me to complete the cutting out of blanks for toy cars – all being made for the Guild's annual Christmas gifts to the Salvation Army.

Sam.

LIVING IN LOCKDOWN

During this lockdown period I have been so fortunate to have this hobby of working with wood and the endless possibilities it creates.

In the first days a project involved the trimming of a few trees on my property, after 25 years on unrestrained growth, and these included Pohutukawa, Kowhai, Karo and Bay tree. Bay tree is almost pure white with a fine grain texture and while the cut branches were only 130mm diameter they did offer the opportunity to make small natural edge bowls. The day after cutting the branches two blocks were prepared, one for cross grain and the other for end grain.

With bowls I always start the turning with the block between centre which is the easiest method of holding a block regardless of its shape and enables easy repositioning - in this case to balance the line of the bark edge. It also gives a centre mark in the base which is used when finding the bottom, between a plug and the tail centre.

Turning wet wood is a delight as the wood cuts more easily and the shaving flow from the gouge in smooth ribbons.

The first stage is to cut the outside profile and prepare a chuck holding spigot. In the area of the bark all cutting must be done towards the spigot to prevent the bark from being pushed off.

In the cross grain piece, the branch centre pith was positioned about 1/3 of the total height, just to see what might happen. The outside turned piece was then clamped in the chuck, given another outside cut and then sanded. Invariably when fitting a part turned piece in a chuck it will never run absolutely true and needs a final light cut to make this happen. This is essential for thin walled vessel but not needed on thick walled pieces but it is part of my normal practice. For this project I elected to turn the

wall to 3mm thickness to allow for quick drying and to see how much movement might happen during drying.



Turning the inside demands a stepped process to support the area being cut. Stepping involves cutting down the side wall about 20mm and then cutting gradually out to the final wall thickness. Then starting another step and again cutting out to the final wall thickness with constant checking of the progress with callipers. These small bowls took five steps to finally reach the bottom. After each step the upper area will move and go out of round and it is not possible to go back up for another cut as the

wall thickness will be reduced. Final sanding involves some power sanding below the bark edge and hand sanding the bark area.

The next day the end grain piece was turned using the same procedure. In the 24 hour delay some cracking had started around the bark edge and super glue was applied. The centre shake was also starting to open but was left to develop. The removal of the chuck holding spigot was achieved by placing a suitably shaped plug in the chuck which fitted the inside of the vessel, but below the bark line, and using a layer of drawer lining cloth as a cushion. The tail centre was then brought up to hold the piece snugly and the spigot turned away and the bottom shaped leaving a small tip to be removed by hand.

On finishing, both pieces were oiled with walnut oil, are now dry and have changed shape but not as much as expected. The bottom of the end grain piece needs flattening on a sanding block but the bark on both pieces has remained intact.

Finally, Bay tree wood was nice to work and I would be quite happy to turn some larger pieces should they become available.

Graeme McIntyre

Good Vision in the Workshop

As we gain in years one of the difficulties we often face is declining vision. It may be gradual or for a few of us the result of a traumatic event leading to a sudden loss of vision. The consequences of this can be major and, in the case of craft people, requiring us to seek ways of working around the problem the impairment may be irreversible, but there are often many things we can do to help ourselves to cope.

An obvious need is for up-to-date prescriptive glasses for everyday living. There are a number of places that offer free eye tests for those of a certain age. For woodworkers and craftspeople it is often useful to have an extra pair of safety glasses with increased magnification (say 0.25 to 0.5) for close up work. Safety glasses with prescriptive lens can be expensive; the last ones I bought from Specsavers were close to \$300 and then I found they became scratched after just a few months. A very workable alternative is to buy a plain set of safety glasses for around \$30

and adapt them into bi-focals by the use of 'stick-on' lenses. These were recommended to me by my optician and have proved to be reasonably effective. The trade name is "Hydrotec" and they come in a set (two lens) with a choice of magnification between 1.0 and 3.0 in 0.25 steps. They use a soft material that you cut to fit inside the safety glasses, and which adhere naturally to the glass. The lens can be pulled off the glasses, if necessary, to transfer to another set of spectacles should the surface of the first pair become scratched. Basically, they turn a plain set of safety glasses into bifocals at a cost of around \$50-\$60.

While all workshops need good light, it is doubly important if you have any sort of vision impairment. Like others I have often finished off turning a bowl and then taken it outside into the sunlight and found a myriad of surface blemishes. On the hunt to find better lighting solutions I came across mention of a new high powered Philips LED light bulb in one of the northern Guild's websites. Following this up I found that they were available at Mega 10 in Petone. These bulbs range in power from 3000 to 5000 lumens compared with the more normal "strong" bulb of around 1200 lumens. The 5000 model I bought several months ago cost around \$50 and made a huge difference to the clarity and vision in the area over the work bench and lathe. Looking at the different lighting web-sites that are available I now see that there are more options available at prices lower than this. Replacing one screw-in bulb with another is a simple task and one you should consider next time you visit a hardware or lighting shop and are browsing through the aisles.

I am consciously trying to use a full face mask when doing particular tasks that require me to place my face close up to the workface. This includes turning uneven blocks of wood, grinding and the use of power tools. Unfortunately the wearing of spectacles in conjunction with a full facemask often leads to the steaming up of the glasses within seconds. I have tried a mixture of oils on the surface of the mask with some improvement but not to the degree that makes it workable. I have tried the old scuba diving trick of applying spittle, also with limited results. I am interested if anyone has a workable solution to this problem other than an expensive pressurised facemask. Will await to hear from you.

Dave Winthrop

SUB-GROUPS

HUTT TURNERS - Coordinator: Denis Newton 9775650
Naenae Menz Shed, 1st Saturday after Guild meeting 10-12am
CARVERS - Coordinator: Sam Hillis 5297105
Meeting at Naenae Menz Shed - (3rd Tuesday 7-9 pm)
GREEN WOODWORKERS - Coordinator: Eric Cairns 5267929
FURNITURE GROUP - Coordinator: Mark Wilkins (2nd Tues)
021 428 187

These groups provide us with an opportunity for more a like-minded fellowship; and a chance to further develop those skills that you have so far experienced.

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