



# TURNOUT

**the Official Newsletter of Northern Turners Inc.**  
**a member club of Woodgroup SA**

May 2011

Vol. 2 no.7

**From the President:**



Hello again. Easter has passed and I hope you all had a good time whether turning or not. Mick Adley has completed his stock take of club assets. The committee is now reviewing the list with the possibility of disposing of some items while at the same time compiling a ‘wish list’ of requirements. The exhibition committee is busy marketing “WOOD REVISTED” at the Port Adelaide Community Art Centre so get weaving on your items. (Weaving? ‘Get turning’ just didn’t sound right.) The program is now out until the end of the year and hopefully will not be changed too much. Why so far in advance? A couple of reasons. I won’t be at a 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday meeting until June and then will be away for August and September. (I will just manage to sneak in for SATurn prior to flying to Italy on the Thursday following.) Speaking of which you will notice that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday meeting in August has been cancelled, this is due to the number of senior members who would normally attend going to SATurn. It is always a hard decision to cancel meetings but has been done in the past and will no doubt be done again in the future, especially as SATurn is always on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in August. Because Turnout is going to be posted on the Web we have had to change the format slightly. You may, or may not, have noticed that the official contact list has gone from the top of the page. Basically after the AGM a new list will be sent to individual members with any changes that occur and a list provided in the new members pack being developed. We have included in this issue a reminder re the ‘Biggest Morning Tea’. This is an annual event for Northern Turners which is facilitated magnificently by Anne Kerr, (for those that do not know ‘facilitate’ means ‘to cater’, well it does in this instance!) I am sure that any offer of assistance would be gratefully received and those who wish to help can contact Anne direct. This year the BMT will be slightly out of kilter with the rest of the country and will be held in June not May as it clashes with the MMoM. (Let’s face it, if the MMoM can be held in August there is no reason the BMT cannot be held in June).

Ed.



**SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAMME – SAT MAY 14<sup>TH</sup> 2011**

**WEED POTS**

Our second of three meetings for weed pots will continue the progression from weed pots to larger “vases” and finally to hollow forms. The May meeting will follow on from the simple weed pots, to introduce hollowing out of a small vase through the neck of the vase.

These vases/weed pots may be made from timber 80mm to 100mm in diameter and from 150 mm to 200 mm long. They do not need to be large.

Similarly to the last session, natural branch material makes interesting weed pots especially if the bark can be retained. However extra care will need to be taken as the depth of bark is an unknown and must be allowed for when hollowing out.

Initially it is easier to use less dense timber for the first try.

Please bring along spindle gouges, parting tools, skew chisels and any boring tools that you have.

We will be discussing the use of these before we start turning.

Show and Tell will be weed pots from last month



## WOODTURNING: ART or CRAFT? ONE PERSONS THOUGHTS.

When talk turns to exhibitions variably the term 'craft items' is used. So does that mean, by definition, that all other pieces are art?

One definition of art: "Human efforts to imitate, supplement, alter, or counteract the work of nature". Sounds good but do I agree? Not sure.

One definition of craft: "An occupation or trade requiring manual dexterity or skilled artistry". Hmmmmm, so craft requires artistry.

When travelling I often call into the local galleries to check out what is on offer. On the same trips I will go into craft shops. The difference? Sometimes I cannot tell. Sometimes I think that it comes down to the price, \$5, must be craft, \$100 must be a work of art. No I don't like that either. So how do we differentiate? Am I an artist or a craftsperson? (Judging by what I have sold..... probably neither) I look at some of my turnings and honestly think they are a work of art. The problem is very few agree with me. Perhaps the presentation is wrong, or the lighting on the display too bright/dull? If the Mona Lisa was taken out of the Louvre and removed from its frame and displayed on my kitchen table would it still be priceless? Yes, so maybe presentation isn't important. Do you need a reputation, a following, to be an artist? What if the Statue of David was completed by Michelangelo's butcher? Perhaps we should look more closely at the medium. Most people thinking of Art would say Painting or Sculpture. Woodturners use wood. Is wood an artistic medium. Ask anyone who does carving, parquetry, marquetry, scroll sawing etc and you will get a resounding yes and so it is with woodturners, wood is beautiful. Wood turning gets a different response than some of the other wood arts, or so I believe, people want to touch it, pick it up and stroke it. Weird isn't it. No. Wood is a tactile medium. Wood was a growing living thing, unlike a can of paint or a hunk of rock. Wood can feel hot or cold, rough or smooth. Wood can have defects; in fact many woodturners prefer wood with defects. Woodturners manipulate the wood to transform it into an aesthetically pleasing object which may or may not have a practical application. There is another question; can a work of art have a practical application? Expand your ideas of art and yes they can. I have a corkscrew which is indeed a work of art, aesthetically pleasing, practical and very easy to use. So can a pen be a work of art? I believe it can. Dependent on the wood used, the mechanism, the design and the finish applied I think some wood turned pens are works of art. Ah... I hear you say, pens should be craft items according to the price theory. No..... I say, go on the net and check them out, \$160 (American) for a Junior Statesman Fountain Pen in Cocobolo, Big Leaf Maple Burl or Purple Heart, and they do look like works of art and my little twist pen made with a piece of scrap Padouk and finished with lacquer is also a work of art even though it is priced at a very reasonable \$18. I produce Art, I produce Craft and I also produce a lot of firewood the difficulty we all share is knowing which is which and sometimes accepting that our nearest and dearest don't agree with us.

Bowls, platters boxes all have a practical use but I have a couple which I would hate to see used for peanuts or paperclips. I have one piece which I believe is a true work of art, but, no-one wants to buy it which in a way is good because I really like it. The first piece I ever sold was put in an exhibition as an afterthought but someone liked it. Personally I think that getting the lid of a turned box to fit properly is a work of art in itself....or is it a craft?

Artist or Craftperson, remember that you are truly your worst critic. Do not underestimate what you can do, but also be aware of your intended clients. I cannot honestly say that I know anyone that will buy a pen for \$100 let alone \$160. But maybe, just maybe, I will find a nice piece of wood a nice mechanism put it altogether in a nice presentation box in a gallery and see what happens.

Dennis Murray, President Northern Turners Inc.

(The author would welcome letters to the editor in response if you have your own views.)



## BIGGEST MORNING TEA

This will be our 9th consecutive year holding this event. In 2003 we raised \$66.50 and it has gradually risen since. Unfortunately I don't have the figures for every year so cannot say at this stage what we have raised in total. I intend to try to get the figures from Cancer Council if possible so we can have a goal to aim for this time. Money raised last year was \$320.50 but that was certainly not our best effort. All proceeds go to the Cancer Council and is a very worthy event. DON'T FORGET, no morning tea or lunch required on JUNE 25<sup>th</sup>.

Anne Kerr

(Don't forget to empty your piggy banks. Ed)



For Sale

Ledacraft 1018 Mini-Lathe

Almost New – has only been used at SAturn

\$150

George Pastuch

83963731 or 0419494150



## BUILDING AND HOME IMPROVEMENT SHOW

We will be in a section of the show called TOOLS AND MORE.

Volunteers needed. We are only sending 2 lathes to this years show. 2 lathes =4 sessions per day x3 days.

This means we will require 6 persons to cover the 12 sessions. Free parking and entry provided as long as you do 2 sessions which can be on the same day or spread over 2 days.

The show runs Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July

Please contact me if you wish to volunteer.

Dennis 82639288 or 0431834472



REMEMBER

THIS COPY OF TURNOUT AND SOME OLD ONES ARE

AVAILABLE ON THE NT WEBSITE

YOU WILL ALSO FIND THE CURRENT PROGRAM

[www.woodgroupsa.org.au/northernturners](http://www.woodgroupsa.org.au/northernturners)