

TURNOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NORTHERN TURNERS INC.

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President's Report November 2019

Welcome to all Northern Members, new and of long standing. As incoming President, I would like to thank Ken Allen and all the committee who have guided the club through the past year. It has been very successful, with addition of a number of new members from all walks of life, several exhibitions which gave exposure to our Club and showed the high quality of the pieces produced from our wonderful Australian woods. Special thanks to the Exhibition Committee and their helpers who do a huge amount of work behind the scenes. Tim Skilton and Robert Edge, with others, organized the very successful 2-day workshop with Stephen Hughes as our visiting demonstrator, another great event. Bill Elliot, Ron Allen and George Pastuch have continued to run our 2nd and 3rd Saturday meetings which are hugely popular. Thank you too to all those who demonstrated at our Club meetings, sharing your expertise and ideas with the rest of us.

As you probably know, there were no nominations for President prior to the October AGM. After my nomination by Graham Reed, seconded by Bob Bauze, I accepted the position with some reluctance. Having said that, I will do my very best to fulfil my duties as I see them.

However, I sincerely believe that we should have "succession planning", and an incoming President should already have spent time on the committee as "President-Elect". Therefore, if any member feels that they could do the job of President, (and it is both a rewarding and enjoyable experience as I found in 2013-2014) would they please let me know. I could then co-opt them on to the committee during 2020 so that they could gain experience within that group so that they know how the club functions. As part of such an arrangement, I would be happy to continue on the committee in 2021 as former President (or similar title) to render any assistance I could. So, members, please think about it!

May the lathes keep spinning, and those hidden works of art be brought to light!

Cheers

Tim Smeaton

Northern Turners Committee

President	Tim Smeaton
Secretary	Dale Starr
Treasurer	David Kleinig
Vice President	Bill Elliott
Member	Roger Coulter
Member	Glenn Kutchen
Member	Fred McCann
Member	Nik Surikov,
Member	Graham Reed
Member	Flora Rumbelow

Send all articles to

turnout@woodgroupsa.org.au

Your Northern Turners

- *Seeking Excellence*
- *Encouraging Individualism*
- *Fostering Creativity*
- *Teaching Skills*
- *Providing Support*

DEMONSTRATIONS AT NOVEMBER MEETING

Border of Banksia nuts embedded in resin.

Graham Reed gave us a very clear and well-organized demonstration of the decoration of the rim of a red gum platter with Banksia nut slices embedded in resin. He first cuts a groove in the rim of the platter, about 6-8mm deep with clearly defined edges. Aluminium or gold foil is glued into the bottom of the groove, and “sprinkles” of different colours are glued on to the foil.

Then slices Banksia cones/nuts are cut on a bandsaw, roughly to 5-8mm thickness, and then shaped into parts of a circle using a template made of MDF or similar which matched the curvature of the groove. The best tool for the shaping was a belt sander (Aldi had one for \$99 last Saturday). These segments are carefully marked and fitted into the groove to give a complete circle of Banksia slices.

Next casting resin is mixed thoroughly in the right proportions by weight or volume until clear, and poured over the Banksia pieces to just cover them. The resin is left for a few minutes and as bubbles appear, they are removed by a brief spray with methylated spirits from a spray-bottle. This may need to be repeated a few times to remove all bubbles.

After several days, or more in cool weather, when the resin is set, the platter is put back on the lathe and the banksias layer is cut back to a uniform thickness. Next, another layer of resin is added, sprayed as before with methylated spirits, and allowed to cure. It may be necessary to build up more resin to ensure that when the platter is turned down to its final shape there is still enough resin to cover the Banksia slices.

The final product is turned to give a slightly raised border, and the resin border finished with cutting polish, Brasso, or similar abrasive. The final result, as demonstrated by Graham’s finished pieces, is smashing, and I hope there will be members brave enough to try it, either using Banksia nuts or other material which will show through the resin. Thanks Graham.



First layer of resin covering Banksia nut slices



A finished border, with my apology for photo quality

Techniques for texturing your work

Tim Skilton followed with a variety of ways that the rims of platters and bowls can be given textured finishes. From an Arbotec cutter passing across the face of a platter spinning on the lathe (a technique which takes about 5 seconds) to an angle grinder mounted on a swinging arm which would be laboriously moved across the edge of a bowl as it is slowly rotated by hand (maybe 30 minutes), Tim showed how a wide variety of textured edges could be produced. To enhance the textured surface, paint or ebonizing solution (steel wool steeped in vinegar) could be added.

Another variation on decoration was the use of “crackle”. This special paint, coming in spray cans and 2 different coats, gives first a base colour which may be gold, followed by a darker layer which produces the crackled appearance associated with very old furniture. The cans used by Tim were many years old, obtained from the USA when imports were permitted, but according to several members, “crackle” paint can be purchased here.

For the correct angle for spraying the crackle paint, Tim and Ron Adams had designed a stand which could be set at almost any angle, and was slowly rotated using a small electric drill, fitted with a Dremel-style sanding pad, minus

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the sandpaper. Again, a fascinating exposé of the arts of enhancing your turning, and thanks again to Tim Skilton.

Tim Smeaton



A platter for a competition which included off-centre turning



Several of Tim's platters showing different forms of texturing.



Tim and Ron Adams designed this jig, viewed by interested members



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TREES OF THE KIMBERLEY REGION

On a previous trip to the Kimberley's, George took lots of photos of various trees endemic to that region. I researched some data about some of the trees and saved the information. George has asked me to include these in the Turnout. I hope you enjoy these.

Franky Pastuch

White Dragon Tree (*Sesbania Formosa*)

White Dragon Tree (*Sesbania Formosa*) (Also known as the Swamp Corkwood)

A native of northern Australia, it is found in the Pilbara and Kimberley areas and eastward into Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. It also grows in a small area on the western side of the Cape York peninsular, Queensland. This species occurs in the hot arid, hot semi-arid, hot sub-humid and hot humid zones. It dislikes frost. Growing along river banks, in depressions or in areas where a high groundwater table exists. It grows on alluvial plains where the soil varies from deep sands to heavy, black, alkaline clays. It will tolerate saline or waterlogged conditions.



It is a very fast growing tree to 12 metres tall with few upright branches. The bark is pale grey, furrowed and corky, the young branches being finely hairy. Leaves are pinnate to 40 cm long with up to 20 leaflet pairs. The pea-shaped white or yellowish-white flowers are 7 to 12 cm long in clusters of 2 to 7 flowers. Flowering is in May-June.



The leaves and flowers are edible and can be eaten raw or cooked; the leaves are steamed, boiled or sauteed in Indonesia and India. Australian Aboriginals used an infusion from the inner bark for treating sores and general illness.

The wood is white, soft, light and non-durable and is little used. The leaves have good potential as stock fodder. It has the potential to become a weed under certain conditions.

At the woodturning demonstration week end, Tim again has excelled himself with another poem about Stephen Hughes and the week end

George Pastuch

Stephen Hughes - Woodturner

Stephen Hughes is a wood turner extraordinaire
Well known worldwide for his artistic flair
Some of his works are quite hard to believe
How they can be fashioned, a deep mystery,
But he's entertained all of us on this workshop
So many ideas we didn't want him to stop.

In his youth he was surfing, enjoying the waves
But introduced to Vic Wood it was wood that he craved
He over-loaded his car on a trip to Tasmania
A ton of Huon pine to satisfy his mania
And sketching his work to perfect his design
He made beautiful spheres of old Huon pine.

Our first day was watching a winged bowl emerge
From rectangled redgum with a glued-on pine verge
Steve measured and sanded, he finished with wax
But then dropping blood pressure forced him to relax
So he talked of his projects, using piercing saws delicate
His miniature pieces with designs very intricate.

Recovering quickly, Steve soldiered on gamely
Using templates for thickness. Why do it? Namely
If you wish to have bowls with a spherical centre
You measure your thickness with a flexible caliper,
But be careful when your gouge is near the end of the steady,
Of you'll have blood on your finger, need Band-Aid ready.

As I sit here writing this doggerel rhyme
I hope that Steve will see out his time
And show us tomorrow three items of class
Perhaps a fine lamp decorated with glass
Or spherical pieces with carving so elegant
They can only be bought by the very extravagant!

Once again we thank Tim and his colleague young Rob
And all volunteers who helped with the job
Of running this workshop, really top drawer,
We're always left eager and hoping for more
So thank you to Stephen who's shared all his knowledge
They're lucky to have him at Haileybury college.

Tim Smeaton

November 2019