

My Journey with Woodturning

By Kevin Purdy

One Monday evening I did a presentation, tour of my workshop, how I started etc., to the Borders zoom meeting, after a thought what would be wrong not to share it with you at the Northumbria wood turning club. Mmm!!!

Three years ago, come September/ October I had been thinking of woodturning after watching a demo at Axminster tools on the Saturday of their opening; unfortunately I can't remember his name. I thought it was fascinating watching this guy turning apples. I had a look around and ended talking to a guy named Eddie Elliott who told me about my local clubs. A few weeks later I was on holiday and decided to pop in one Tuesday as I was told there would be people turning; here I bumped into Arthur and Frank. Arthur showed me the lathes that Axminster had in and showed me the lathe that he had at the time, a small Jet 1221VS. I had mentioned to him that the last time I used a lathe was in the high school. I decided to stay for a bit longer and ended up turning my first piece with Frank, a snowman. They told me about the woodturning club at Blyth on the second Friday of the month, I attended on the next meeting night and kept coming ever since. I then took the decision to start spending money at Axminster tools on a lathe and the vast amount of equipment, not able to stop away from the place. Frank invited me to his house one Sunday so I took him up on his offer and again unfortunately he can't get rid of me. Now great friends.

Since the start of my woodturning the shed that I had at the beginning was only large enough for garden equipment and stick dressing so two years ago I decided to extend it to twice the size 14' x 5' 6" much better well I thought it was until last October when I decided to build another shed to put my garden equipment in and timber logs that I had accumulated. Yes it is still small but hey ho it will have to do.

Times with Frank on Sunday afternoon have been times well spent a great friend I have made. I remember on the second Sunday turning with Frank we decided to turn a bowl, take your time, place the gouge like this he said, BANG, what I quickly found out what had happened, a catch, the bowl was over my shoulder and hit Frank, such embarrassment, fortunately Frank survived this ordeal. I think he has forgiven me now, well hopefully.

Things I like to turn.

I haven't got any single items I like to turn, anything I suppose from bowls, platters, hollow forms of many description, funny silly items pens. Colouring verses non colouring, the same I like both. I like to see the colour of the timber along with its grain pattern and the use of different finishes too, but one thing I do like most of all is starting with a log, bowl or spindle blank and at the end of the day having something completely different, I item to be pleased with.

On some Saturdays and Sundays when Frank was on holiday I was asked by Arthur if I wanted to pop over to his to turn, I happily accepted his invitation. Arthur likes to turn

bowls and use colouring in his work. Again, like with Frank great times turning giving me much advice which is greatly appreciated.

I remember watching Andrew Hall at Axminster tools turning Hats and blues Bowls etc., wow, I decided to go and have some tuition by him. Finding out that he was booked up for months on end I decided to get my name down. I had a two to one with Andrew with another friend who had joined the Northumbria turning club too, Andrew Griffiths, a great time we had and straight away booked ourselves on another course after then more courses with Andrew Hall including a colouring course when Arthur and Frank came too.

In February and March this year I was lucky to get a place on the Wood Turning Certificate Course with Andrew Hall after someone had dropped out. Panic stations after that even after mentioning it to Helen Bailey to ask what it was like as she had done the course, goodness how I would cope. Turning Items from drawings and to copy items that had been made from Andrew along with homework and with questions and practical assessments to the end was tiring, pleased I took holidays to do it. Happily, the week before lockdown I had finished the Woodturning Certificate Course and the day Andrew told me that I had passed I was well chuffed. There was not only Andrew to thank but a wonderful person named Allan Joicey who had helped Andrew to run the 7-day course and Andrews's wife Janet too.

Joining Northumbria wood turners and the Seaton Sluice woodturning and carving clubs I must say I have met a cracking bunch of people who have given me there time to help me during the first three years of my turning and I must say I appreciate it but most of all to Frank and Arthur. Not forgetting Walter Vasey who everyone misses and to the club for tuition given and the demonstrators they have managed to get to come.

I have made many friends along the way and look forward to many happy times.

Kevin

Footnote –

This is a very interesting article by Kevin and in my opinion gives an accurate description of NWA and what it is all about – it's our Club , your Club let's make sure we all keep it strong, healthy and most of all friendly, whatever we all put in we all benefit in what comes out

Stay Safe

Stan