



ORBIT



The Newsletter of the **Register of Professional Turners**

Supported by the Worshipful Company of Turners of London



Welcome back

From the Editor

Hello, and welcome back to “Orbit”....I had hoped that one of the more marketing-savvy members might have come up with a permanent name, but perhaps the temporary name suits you; do please let me know if you have any strong feelings, one way or the other, about this.



Before I go any further, my apology for being a little later than planned with this edition. I’ve had rather a lot to contend with over the last couple of months, following a structural collapse at my little High Street shop and gallery, where I had a studio workshop which served to amuse the tourists as they browsed through the shop. The frantic excitement (or was that fear?) of the day of the collapse, with police and the fire service in attendance, soon turned to hectic work as I aimed to get my bowls back out of the premises and into regional galleries with which I first needed to establish contact and work on some sort of mid- to long-term relationship.

Our local authority’s architect, who attended the site at 11:30 pm on a Saturday, confirmed the need for the evacuation of a number of adjoining properties, which the emergency services had rightly called for earlier that day. As if the collapse wasn’t enough, a resultant fracture in the roof structure caused much of the floor of the building to be under an inch of water for a day or two; not ideal conditions for a few thousand pounds worth of turned wooden stock!

I’m glad to report that all is now well. My stock is available from friendly galleries, the builders have nearly finished propping up the old building and we may be able to re-open by mid October, but for all that, there remains one key issue to be grateful for, and that is that not a single person was harmed.

So please get in touch and let us know about things in your field of woodturning....without your news, there cannot be an interactive newsletter!



Looking ahead
as the summer
draws to a
close

A Note From the Chairman

As I sit writing this the summer period is slowly drawing to a close, I hope you have all had a good season. Those of us that do craft fairs are now looking to the Christmas markets and I know that I am not the only one that has started to make festive stock items.

I am also looking forward towards Wizardry in Wood, 14th to 17th October 2020. I know this is a long way off but with the dates announced that gives us notice to start making competition items and start thinking about which piece to send to London to go on to the RPT stand in Carpenter's Hall. All members are invited to have a piece of their work on sale during this event so think carefully about which piece you would like to include. More details will follow as we get closer to the date.

Wizardry in Wood 2020

Art • Beauty • Skill • Mystery



The feedback forms continue to flow in with most results being excellent as you would expect from a professional organisation's members. With Gary having to hand over the reins of that particular job this gives us a golden opportunity to rework the feedback process. To maintain our modern image and in a bid to reduce the amount of paper waste created by printing off the internet returns, in future all forms will be converted into an electronic format that will be spreadsheet friendly. This will allow us to work with the returns to better benefit our members. It is early days yet but this may mean that you will receive emails for your feedback or it may mean that you have to access them from the website. Over the next few weeks the website developer will be working on a solution to this so do not worry if the feedback you normally get stops for a short while. It is still coming in but we are looking to distribute it out to you differently. This will also have the added bonus of saving the organisation money on postage.

I am also searching for a guest speaker for next year's AGM. This person needs to be interesting with a subject connected to our chosen craft (or close to it). If anyone has any suggestions please get in touch with me and let me have the details.

Best wishes

John



New member
profile

This issue, it's not a member, as such, but a new Master at the Worshipful Company of Turners makes his own introduction.

Andrew Sindall, Master Turner—2019-2020



Andrew and Liz at the Election Court, 31st May 2019.....
...and Andrew at the Max Carey Woodturning Trust, October 2013.

I am delighted to be given this opportunity of introducing myself to the RPT as the latest Master of the Worshipful Company of Turners. Having spent much of my time on other aspects of the Company's life - chairing the Events Committee and more recently the Finance Committee - I am very aware that many members of the RPT will not know me particularly well.

I joined the Turners Company in 2000 having been introduced by Past Master Ilan Krieger whose insurance broking firm I had joined in 1994. I feel deeply fortunate to have made this connection as otherwise it is entirely possible I would have gone through life unaware of the skills and talents deployed by so many turners around the country, and of the great range of beautiful objects that can be created from wood.

...continued overleaf,



New member profile

.....continued.....

As Master, my duties are to represent the Company and promote its activities to ensure our craft is visible to the widest possible audience - to the City of London, and particularly the other livery companies, to the many charities we support or may support in the future, and to the craft itself. In the short time I have been Master I have already attended a number of events falling into each of these categories and have enjoyed speaking with many people from all walks of life about the craft we all enjoy. I regularly receive the comment, particularly from Masters of other livery companies, that we are fortunate to have a living craft to promote and enjoy when the industries and skills of so many others have long since disappeared.



At the Livery Dinner, December 2018

A central thread of the livery movement is charity and the Turners Company plays its part to the full, offering bursaries, scholarships and prizes to our craftspeople, encouraging the development of skills through the Certificate in Turning scheme, supporting youth training, and supporting City events such as the Red Cross Fair and the Big Curry Lunch. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those members of the RPT who regularly produce turned pieces to be sold at these events for the benefit of others. We are deeply appreciative of this.

I live in Sevenoaks, Kent, am married to Liz, and have four children and one grandson. I have thoroughly enjoyed my few experiences of turning and hope to do more in the future as and when time allows, assuming one day it will! In 2013 I organised the first visit by members of the Company to enjoy a weekend's turning at the Max Carey Trust in Portishead which has been repeated most year's since.

I very much look forward to meeting many of you in the year ahead.

Andrew Sindall



Committee News

...a grateful "Goodbye and thank you" and an equally grateful "Hello"!



It is very much the case that it is the committee that forms the work-force of the RPT and without them, the organisation would surely founder. Thus, it is with feelings of sadness and of gratitude that we say "Goodbye" and a huge "Thank you" to Gary Renouf who has served us well as the receiver, compiler and interpreter of all the review and feedback forms that the RPT receives. Gary has experienced increasing difficulty continuing with his turning, due to health problems in recent months, so we wish him well for the future.



Andy Pickard and Ed Oliver

Taking Gary's role on the committee will be down to Andy Pickard, whilst Ed Oliver, another new committee member, will be seeing what he can do with the RPT public facebook page and helping to share its content. We are grateful to both members for stepping up to help out in this way, so let's show them some support by getting feedback, reviews and social media content sent in to them.



Richard Findley tells us about Instagram and the RPT

One of the roles of the Register is to promote turning in all its forms, in particular, the work of its members. One of the ways it does that is through the use of Social Media.

Back in 2015 I realised my only online presence was my website, which had always worked well, but I could feel that there was a definite shift toward the use of Social Media and I knew I needed to be on-board in some way. I looked at the options available and chose Instagram because it seemed to offer a quick and simple route into Social Media, with the ability to simply

post a picture of my work, either finished work or work-in-progress pictures and video. The fit was perfect for me and my business and I haven't looked back.

After my success on Instagram I was asked to run the RPT account. We currently have more than 1220 followers who see the member's work that I post. Some of the content is sent to me, some I take from the online gallery on the RPT website, but I always need more!

To achieve a good following we need to post regularly - ideally two or three times a week - with high quality content. These can be finished items on their own or combined with work-in-progress shots. I can combine up to 10 pictures and videos in a single post, so don't be shy!

I would like also to feature profiles of members with their work if possible. A headshot/profile photo, along with a few pictures of work you are proud of would be perfect. Supplied with some words about you and your work and I can put it all together into an Instagram post, linking to your website and/or your own Instagram feed.

Do I need an account?

No, the idea of the RPT having an account is that we can promote you and your work on your behalf. Of course you can have your own account to promote your own work. If you'd like to do that, here's a few pointers that you might find helpful:

Post good quality content regularly

No need to over share anything personal, unless you want to. Often people follow you just for your turning or woodwork, so don't feel obliged to post pictures of your family or your pets or your dinner... unless you want to. It's your account, you can post what you want to, but think of the brand image you want for you and your business

Add a description to the picture so people know what they're looking at, perhaps a little background too

Use Hashtags, these help people to find your posts, for example: #woodturning #oak

Look at other people's content, see what works and what doesn't work for them and, without copying them, take a lead from how they post, the sort of pictures they use and how they use hashtags

Enjoy using Instagram. If it becomes a chore then it's no fun and won't work for you. Follow people you find interesting, comment and engage with them and take part in the woodworking community on there

If you would like to send me images or ask any questions please feel free to email me on richard@turnersworkshop.co.uk, you can text or WhatsApp me on 07847 236798 or send me via DM on Instagram @richard_findley



Andrew Sindall
reports on the
Masters in Tuning
Exhibition

The Master in Turning Exhibition

On Friday 19th July, I had the great privilege of visiting the 'Art from the Tree' exhibition in Twigworth, not only to view the Ray Key Collaboration pieces, but also to see the exhibition of work by our three Masters in Turning. It was a magnificent collection of work, showing superb examples of the craft as created by these outstanding turners. It also prompted me to look back at the history of the award and to see what makes a Master in Turning.

Most livery companies which emerged from the ancient craft guilds provide guidance and support for their crafts. The Worshipful Company of Turners is no exception, the 'Certificate in Turning' being created in 2014, and the 'Diploma in Turning' being due to be launched this year. The 'Master in Turning' award was initiated in 2010, with the full support of the three main craft associations, the RPT, AWGB and SOT. The award is made by the Company in recognition of those within the craft who have given many years of outstanding service to the craft, have attained acknowledged high levels of skill and excellence, achieved wide and possibly international recognition, and contributed to the wider support of the craft through holding positions of responsibility and participation in charitable work. It is rightly regarded as a lifetime achievement award.

The Company has made just three such awards to date. The first was to Ray Key in 2012, the presentation being made by Alderman Fiona Woolf at that year's Wizardry in Wood exhibition. Further awards were made in 2014 to Stuart Mortimer and to Reg Hawthorne in 2016. All candidates selected are charged with agreeing to use their best endeavours to foster the art and mystery of turning and to uphold the high standards expected of all who receive this award. They must be prepared to act in the capacity of mentor to those who are committed to pursuing a career in turning, so they may benefit from the experience and lifetime example of the Master in Turning.

The exhibits on display demonstrated a huge range of turning styles and technical skill, from Stuart's spiral twists, through Reg's delicate ornamental boxes, to Ray's beautiful hollow forms. Seeing work of this quality and knowing the enormous contribution each individual has made to the life of the Company, left me in no doubt that the awards could not have been made to more deserving candidates. The exhibition was a joy to behold.

Andrew Sindall

Master, Worshipful Company of Turners.



A warm welcome to
Chris Fisher and
George, our newest
members.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new members, Chris Fisher (aka "The Blind Woodturner") from Chorley, in Lancashire, and to George Shapland, from Pewsey in Wiltshire.

In the next few weeks I'll be writing to each of you in the hope that you'll answer a set of pro-former questions for a short article in the end-of-year edition of the newsletter.



Paul Hannaby reports on the Ray Key Collaboration exhibition.

The Ray Key Collaboration Project.

After Ray Key passed away, his wife, Liz, with some help from Reg Hawthorne and myself, found a considerable number of part turned items in his workshop. After discussion it was agreed, following the example of the Pablo Nemzoff and Tony Boase collaborations, that these pieces would be sent to a number of internationally renowned turners to finish in their own style. The resulting pieces to be exhibited and later sold by auction.

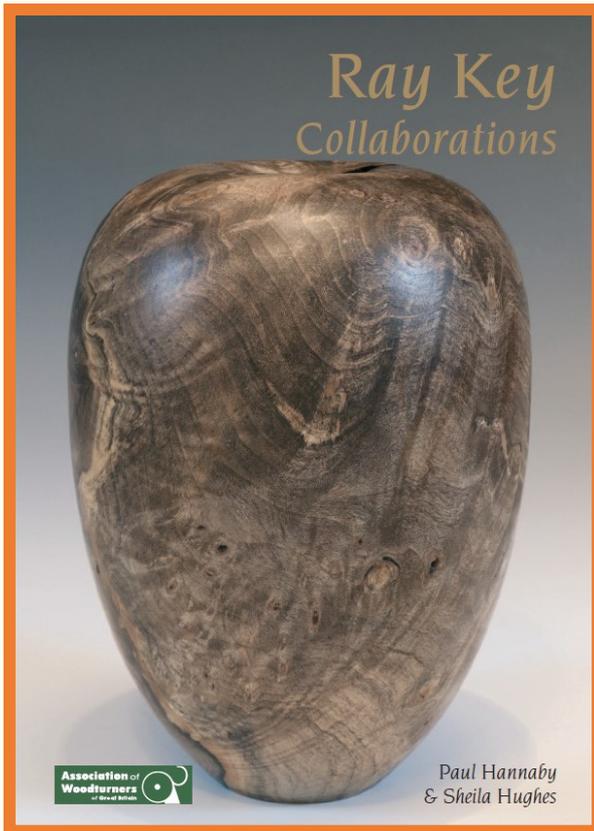


Steve Loar

Such was the sphere of influence of Ray, the project has resulted in 124 turners from five continents agreeing to take part in the collaboration and pieces being posted out to them (which was a mammoth task in itself and certainly kept Paul's local post master busy!). This has resulted in 118 superb pieces reflecting a wide range of styles but each with its roots in Ray's workshop.

For almost three months, it was almost like Christmas every day with another finished piece being returned for me to unpack and admire (I think I must have done a lot of that!). It was also very touching to read each collaborator's text about their recollections of Ray. One or two produced unexpected surprises too! Steve Loar's piece was encrusted with dust from Ray's workshop so he collected the dust, put it in a little phial and sent it back with the piece! Nick Cook sent his finished piece and half a part-turned platter which he had saved from one of Ray's demonstrations in Atlanta, Georgia. The platter had separated on the lathe and when Nick returned it, Ray had said he couldn't put his name to such a piece and signed it "Nick Cook, Dale Nish and Richard Raffan"! David Ellsworth confused me by sending a completely different piece of wood back – a small box (I later found out David made it when he first met Ray) with some shavings inside, which were from the piece sent from Ray's workshop, and an inscription which was a quote from Ray saying "When the day is done my ultimate goal is to have a nice pile of shavings".

The collaboration pieces were exhibited for three weeks at Nature in Art near Gloucester. This proved to be a superb backdrop for the exhibition. Seeing all the collaboration pieces together for the first and sadly, last time was an inspiration in itself and a testament to the camaraderie of the global woodturning community. I was privileged to be able to accompany Liz and Darren Key around the exhibition. I think they were moved by the generosity of all the collaborators and impressed by the quality and diversity of work on display.



A book has been produced which contains before and after photographs of the collaboration pieces and some text from each collaborator about their recollections of Ray and the piece they worked on.

The proceeds from the sale will be divided between Liz Key and the AWGB. The AWGB has agreed to use some of their share of the proceeds to fund the Ray Key bursary (which is intended to support prodigious turners with a package of training, mentoring and guidance) and the Seminar gallery people's choice award. Ray was a strong supporter of both the AWGB training and development programmes and the seminar so the AWGB trustees felt these two initiatives were

appropriate ways to commemorate Ray's contribution to the AWGB.

The pieces will be sold through an online auction which runs until Sunday the 13th of October 2019. The auction is hosted at www.thesaleroom.com (search for AWGB or Ray Key Collaboration)/

Paul Hannaby, AWGB Chairman and RPT member.



...get the book!

The Ray Key Collaborations book is available through the AWGB, just follow this link....

<https://awgbwoodturningseminar.co.uk/product/ray-key-collaborations-book/>



...and finally

Bursary award news...

May I introduce Miriam Jones, a young turner from north Wales who came to my workshop as a student last year and in whom I saw much potential. I am sure that Miriam will not mind me saying that whilst she



...a wonderful smile of satisfaction!

lacked essential practical skills as a woodturner, she showed much potential through her unusual and innovative ideas. I am delighted to note that I was not the only wood turner to recognise Miriam's potential, for the RPT has awarded her a portion of the bi-annual bursary award. I am even more delighted to note that Miriam chose to return to me for two sets of two full-day tuition sessions.

What Miriam was struggling with was sharpening, the bane of many a novice woodturner, and her problem was two-fold. Firstly, she lacked a suitable means of sharpening, in that she had only a small (6") bench grinder with severely worn-down and rounded grey-grit wheels. Secondly, her tools had become so misshaped from poor sharpening that she was unable to use them effectively, and had resorted to using them all as scrapers.

For the first day of our initial two-day session, we concentrated on sharpening techniques and available equipment. Fortunately, this coincided with my closure of my little studio workshop, so I had an 6" bench grinder with CBN wheels and jigs up for grabs and I was happy to let Miriam take this away on an extended loan until she could afford to buy her own, but she was so determined to address this issue that she bought the equipment from me. We went on to turn a couple of small bowls, experimenting with techniques, sometimes using her own tools and sometimes using mine.

On our second day we went large! Miriam turned a bowl which was huge, compared to anything that she had turned before, but as if that wasn't enough, we chose a piece of timber with soft, lightly spalted areas, which posed a few issues for her, and her smile in the picture above says it all....success!



A few days after our 2-day session, Miriam sent me a photograph of her finished bowl. Whilst the turning and waxing of the bowl was complete when she left me, she then worked her magic by binding the bowl with coloured thread, something which she frequently does.

Miriam has been a delight to work with and I look forward to our next 2-day session. She is spending some time learning to put her new-learned skills into use and will return later in the year.

Les Symonds BA RPT, newsletter editor