



LINCOLN HERITAGE SKILLS FESTIVAL - REPORT BY JOHN BOYNE-AITKEN, CHAIRMAN

You know what it's like; we all do it, going through the list of stuff that you have packed to ensure that you can do your job at the event you are travelling to. I had reached the point of no return, the M4 motorway in my case. I was en-route to Lichfield where I was due to meet my wife and the following day we were driving on up to Lincoln. I was representing the RPT at the Heritage Skills Festival at Lincoln Cathedral along with fellow RPTs Margaret Garrard on our stand, and Joey Richardson on the Turners' Company stand. We were part of the Worshipful Company of Turners' marquee, which we were sharing with members of the Association of Polelathe Turners and Greenwood Workers. There were also representatives from the Cathedral Carpenters and Roofers. So, I was going through the list in my head and realised that I had forgotten to load the Workmate, otherwise known as the lathe stand. After dinner that night was spent tracking down the nearest Screwfix or Tool Station and early morning saw me buying (yet another) Workmate.

Arriving in Lincoln at lunch time gave me the opportunity to liberate an extra six foot table for the weekend, but resulted in me loaning a two foot table in place of. So with an extra four foot of display area I started to set up the stand. I was soon joined by Margaret and Joey and between us, we soon had a couple of good looking displays. We had on show the work of six members of the RPT, which was good, but if more people had sent their work it would have been better. Thursday evening saw us having dinner in Mrs Brown's Pie Shop. Who said woodturning isn't glamorous! Friday was the day that my other half was supposed to go shopping and leave us to it, but that did not happen. With so much interest about our work, crowds gathered to watch Margaret or me demonstrating and so my good



lady never got to the shops as she spent all her time selling members' work. Friday evening the Turners' Company hosted dinner the same as they do at Harrogate. Saturday morning dawned dry and bright and witnessed us all trying to find somewhere to park all day without getting a ticket. Saturday was even busier than the previous day and I managed to pass on some of our members' details to several interested parties.

5:00 pm and the show closed. There was the usual mad panic to get packed away and on the road home as soon as possible. A pork pie and a bag of crisps was my evening meal that night, parked up at Leicester Services. Margaret fared a little better as she had a hot meal on the way home.....I think it was a Big Mac. What was I saying about the glamorous side of woodturning?

Getting home close to 10pm, it took another half hour or so to unload the car before we could sit down and relax. It was a very busy weekend and

it was hard work with hardly any time to look around. But if we judge the success of the event by the number of people that we have made aware of the RPT, and many of them are in businesses that would use our members' services, then the weekend was a great success. It could have been better with a greater diversity of members' work on display and for sale, but most of those who sent in work were happy.

All in all it was a very enjoyable but very tiring weekend: one that should be repeated but with additional members taking part in manning the

stand and submitting work for sale.

Thanks are due to the Worshipful Company of Turners for inviting the RPT to have a stand in their marquee. I would also like to express my thanks to Margaret Garrard for the hard work that she put in over the weekend and to Joey Richardson (who has also put me in touch with the guest speaker at the next AGM). I would also like to say thank you to the Master Turner, Andrew Neill, and other members of the Turners' Company for their very kind words about our display.

LINCOLN FESTIVAL - REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOWE COMMITTEE, CHRISTOPHER SCOTT

Twenty two Livery Companies were exhibiting at the Lincoln Heritage Skills Festival, and we like to think that the Turners' marquee was the biggest draw. We had demonstrations from the Register of Professional Turners and from the Association of Polelathe Turners and Greenwood Workers.



There was also an exhibition of our own Joey Richardson's internationally renowned work; and we were joined by craftsmen from the Cathedral and from Lincoln College who were demonstrating other woodworking skills.

There was a steady stream of visitors, all amazed at what could be created with lathes, adzes, spoke shaves, axes, knives and chisels. At times the crowd was so thick that people were three or four deep around the demonstration lathes. And they were generous with their purchases. Almost £2,500 worth of exhibits were sold, and, with 20% going to the Cathedral, the Turners were able to contribute over £470 to Cathedral funds.

Many Livery Companies donated items to an auction at the end of the Festival. This raised £23,500 for the Cathedral and included a £200 hammer price for a Bert Marsh turned dish, kindly donated by Deputy Master Nicholas Somers.

Turning was well and truly on the map at the Festival and our medieval ancestors must have been looking down on us with pride as their skills in the Cathedral were commemorated.

LINCOLN FESTIVAL - REPORT BY MARGARET GARRARD

Our Chairman, John Boyne-Aitken and his wife Jenny, plus myself, "manned" the stand for the RPT. Joey Richardson had another stand for the Worshipful Company of Turners, and several Worshipful Company members did the meet and greet as people entered the marquee. We were all exceptionally busy, chatting and explaining our

craft, throughout the two day event. Many items were sold from our stand which was displaying members work. John and myself where mostly engaged in turning for the public's interest, but when we weren't turning we helped Jenny, our indispensable sales lady.

All in all, it was a very rewarding two days.

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE TO RPT MEMBERS

We have been thinking for some time of what the RPT can offer its members, and we decided that if we could obtain discounts for members from suppliers, this would be the way to go. What could we offer the suppliers in return? The best option is to provide space on the RPT website for advertising. This will be visible to all who visit the site, under a separate page of trade suppliers. Under the private members area of the site, the list of discounts from each supplier will be visible with details of how to obtain them.

We are pleased to announce that we have arranged discounts for our members from Chestnut (finishing products) and Crown Tools. We hope to have news later in the year about more offers from companies.

CHESTNUT

Chestnut will give a 20% discount off their products to RPT members for personal use only, and not for resale, as this would cause problems with the retailers. Postage will be extra. Contact Terry Smart of Chestnut to order the products you require

We hope to arrange some dates with Terry so he can demonstrate all his products and how they should be used. This would have to be arranged with an RPT member at their workshop, the day

after Terry has been to a nearby club the previous evening. We hope eventually to have a pool of RPT members that Terry can call on to carry out demonstrations of his products.

Telephone: 01473 890118

Email: mailroom@chestnutproducts.co.uk

CROWN TOOLS

Crown Tools have agreed to offer members a 10% discount on their tools. Orders need to be placed with Mark Sanger, as he is an agent for Crown Tools.

Just mention when you are ordering that you are a member of the RPT.

Telephone: 01747 821644

Email: info@marksanger.co.uk

I am sure you will thank these companies for offering discounts to the Register of Professional Turners.

Please remember the discounts offered are for personal use only and not for resale. Misuses could mean removal of the discounts by these and future companies.

RED CROSS FAIR AND THE LORD MAYOR'S BIG CURRY LUNCH

We would like to ask members of the RPT to donate some pieces of their work for sale at the Red Cross Fair that will be held at the City of London Guildhall on 27th and 28th November this year.

Those pieces not sold, will be taken to the Lord Mayor's Curry Lunch for sale in aid of The Army Benevolent Fund (The Soldiers Charity). This event will be held on 11th April 2018 - so you would have time to make a piece or two specifically for this worthwhile cause.

The logistics of getting work to these events has yet to be finalised, and details will be posted on the RPT website and Facebook pages in due course. You will need to tell us the suggested selling price, and the wood used. The work should be signed and accompanied by your business card.

Those of you taking part can advertise the fact by letting Andy Fortune or John Boyne-Aitken know, so that they can place it on the Facebook page for the whole world to see.

WORKING WITH MONKEY PUZZLE WOOD / CHILEAN PINE (ARAUCARIA ARAUCANA) BY DAVID TREWIN RPT

History

The Monkey Puzzle tree was introduced into England in 1795, and during the mid 1800s it soon became a status symbol with the rich and famous.

Having a Monkey Puzzle tree in your Victorian garden was similar to having a Ferrari car in your driveway today!

Due to the fact that many Monkey Puzzle trees were

planted in the latter half of Queen Victoria's reign, many trees are now reaching the end of their natural life span here in the UK.

My History of Monkey Puzzle Wood

I bought my first Monkey Puzzle tree in 1998. This tree came from the village of St. Germans in South East Cornwall. Since then I have obtained a further 64 Monkey Puzzle trees, from Truro to Lyme Regis and one from West Sussex, the heaviest being 10 tons and 54 inches diameter at the base and standing at 90 feet (28m) high.

All the trees I use are either dead or storm damaged. After collecting the wood, it is cut into rings and stored under cover with plenty of ventilation.

The Monkey Puzzle tree has rings of branches evenly spaced around the trunk; the number of



branches on the wood I have used varies from 3 to 8.

My use of Monkey Puzzle Wood

Table Lamps

The top part of the tree is ideal for making table lamps; the centre of the tree has natural soft pith running the length of the trunk. When making a lamp, the wood is mounted on the lathe between centres with the drive centre and tailstock located into the soft pith of the wood so that the **ring of branches are the main feature of the lamp**. A spigot is made at the top of the lamp, so that the lamp can be mounted by the spigot to enable me to hollow the inside of the lamp. After hollowing, the lamp is attached between centres to finish shaping the lamp. If the Monkey Puzzle lamp is turned when the wood has high moisture content (above 18%) the lamp is put aside for 12 to 18 months to dry. The part finished lamp is brought into our **heated**

home for a period of at least 2 months before finishing to make sure the wood is dry and is accustomed to room temperature.

Bowls and Vases

The bowls made vary in size from 9 to 26 inches in diameter and from 3 to 8 inches deep. Vases range from 10 to 18 inches diameter and up to 14 inches deep. The rings of Monkey Puzzle vary in weight from only about **25lb** (table lamps) to over **160lbs** for the big bowls. I use an electric hoist to mount the heavy pieces onto the **VB 36** lathe.

When making any item in Monkey Puzzle, I always ensure that the **centre of the pith is in the centre of the bowl, vase or lamp**. The wood is turned between centres (mounted on the soft pith of the tree) into a round cylinder. I then decide which will be the top & bottom of the bowl, to achieve the best pattern. Before removing from the lathe I make a 100mm (4 inch) spigot at one end of the cylinder.

A heavy duty gripper chuck is used to hold the Monkey Puzzle by the spigot. The cylinder is then turned to make the outside shape of a bowl. A recess of 4 or 5 inches is made into the base of the bowl to accept an expanding chuck. The wood is then mounted onto the chuck to turn and hollow out the inside of the bowl. It is easier to turn a bowl with the branches around the side of the bowl, however it is more **spectacular** to have the branches in the bottom of the bowl, but this is more difficult to turn



because the branches are very hard and brittle. Most bowls and vases are part-turned and left to air dry for a period of 8 to 18 months, depending on moisture content.

When making large vases I do not use a

woodturning chuck but use a heavy duty face plate and part off the completed vase from the faceplate.

Large items can be turned in one session, as long as the wood has low moisture content. When Monkey Puzzle is turned end grain, there is very little movement in the wood, providing it has been stored in the dry for at least 3 years.

Monkey Puzzle is not an easy wood to turn and is not suitable to turn on a hobby lathe due to the uneven weight of the wood. I use a **VB36 Lathe**.

David Trewin

www.turning-wood.com

GILDING COURSE

We are pleased to announce that a gilding course has been organised. We have 6 places available. This will be held in October or November. Date to be announced.

A ONE DAY INTRODUCTION TO GILDING TECHNIQUES

Number of Students: 6

Location: Crouches, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 3BQ (Katie Abbott's residence)

Duration: 9am-5pm

Cost Per Person: £120

Included in price:

Gold leaf (each student will take home their own book of gold - 25 leaves)

Use of material and tools, i.e. cushions, tips, mops and brushes, knives, burnishers, gloves, gesso, size, rabbit skin glue, bold, shellack, samples.

Morning and afternoon refreshments.

Lunch

Students to bring:

Apron

Optional: Two turned objects of their choice to discuss, and possibly to gild on day, if appropriate.

The instructor will provide turned samples to work on during the day.

Course summary:

This will be an intense, practice-based introduction to gilding techniques and materials.

Morning session (2 x one and half hours): with coffee break. We will discuss:

- The different metal leaves available and their pros and cons.
- Water gilding traditional and non-

traditional techniques and materials.

- Use and application of rabbit skin glue, gesso and bold and acrylic alternatives.
- Surface preparation.
- Leaf handling, application, faulting and burnishing.

Lunch: Homemade soup and bread and cheese (1hr)

Afternoon session (2 x one and half hours): with tea break.

- Oil gilding techniques and materials.
- Types of size and application.
- Use and application of imitation metal leaf - leaves and rolls.
- Use and application of fixing varnish.
- Use and application of transfer leaf.

This will be a very intensive one day course and with only 6 places available you are advised to book as soon as possible. We will ask for a £25 deposit once your place on the course has been confirmed. For those that will need it, there is a Travelodge nearby, details of which can be supplied on request. If this course is successful we hope to run a similar course near Hexham (Northumberland) at a later date. This is an excellent value course for the price; similar courses have been quoted at twice this rate. I will be booking myself on it so now there are only 5 places left.....I told you the places will go quickly.

Let me know at :- chairman@rpturners.co.uk

IMPORTANT SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

Fractal burning, the Lichtenberg technique

I am sure that most of you are aware of the tragic event in Oxfordshire which involved the use of a homemade device for fractal burning. The RPT committee recognises that wood turning is dangerous but feel that the deliberate use of unregulated equipment, that is not covered by any safety standard and is capable of causing death by electrocution, is irresponsible.

In line with other organisations we feel that work that has been created using this technique should not be publicised in the media or to clubs or other organisations. At no time should members of the RPT demonstrate this technique at any event. Instructions on how to make such a device or the sale or advertising of such devices will not be published on any media site owned and operated by the RPT until such times as safety standards for this have been produced and accepted for adoption by the woodturning community .

Our members are urged to work safely at all times and to encourage other turners to do the same. Risk assessments should be properly carried out before any risky procedure is undertaken and we would remind our members that they have a duty of care to other people within their immediate vicinity.

CONTRIBUTIONS

I hope you enjoyed reading the contribution to the Newsletter from RPT member David Trewin, and I hope it will inspire you to send me something about your own work . I know we are all very busy turning, but just a few words about a commission or exhibition would be of interest to other members.

Patricia Spero

Newsletter Editor

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