

Getting to know your committee members

This month's profile - Robin Goodman

Current Committee member position

Treasurer since 2011.



Outline what this role involves

Maintaining the accounts for the club throughout the year and preparing final annual accounts for inspection and approval. Responsible for making all payments and receiving income, applying for grants, managing the budget. Presenting a treasurer's report at the AGM and at club committee meetings.

What do you think are the main benefits of belonging to the club?

Meeting other local woodturners. Opportunity to see a variety of demonstrations throughout the year. Encouragement to participate in monthly and annual competitions and maybe turn items one would not otherwise make.

When and how did you first become involved with wood turning?

I have always liked wood as a medium and did some hand carving in my 20's, mainly abstract, such as the teak piece in **photo 2**, but had never used a lathe until 2009, just before I retired. I tried a 3 day woodturning course run by Tobias Kaye, a Devon turner best known for his sounding bowls. Then I found out about Avon & Bristol Woodturners on the internet, joined the club and started courses at the Mill: progressing through the Apprenticeship, Journeyman and finally the Artisan course, which I helped set up.

Who or what influences what you now produce?

I am particularly attracted to pieces that are artistic, unusual, colourful or difficult to work out how they were made!

In the UK, I like the puzzles and interesting geometric pieces of [Dave Springett](#), also the beautifully made intricate colourful forms of [Louise Hibbert](#). There are several inspiring turners in France such as [Alain Mailland](#) with his innovative unusual forms, and Jean Francois Escoulen, the master of multi-axis/eccentric turning, often producing weird and whimsical pieces.

Across the pond I admire a number of turners such as [William Hunter](#) with his innovative vessels so often including my favourite form – the spiral, contrasting with the lovely laminated forms of [Virginia Dotson](#). In Canada [Michael Hosaluk](#) makes interesting turned pieces and [Marilyn Campbell](#) cleverly combines black epoxy resin with almost white holly to produce her unusual characteristic forms.

I like to experiment with laminating, colouring, texturing and using different materials such as acrylic sheet and rod, epoxy and polyester resins, soapstone, alabaster, Corian and resin woven bamboo. The majority of my pieces have more than one colour; in addition I have used coloured LED lights in several pieces and sometimes I try cutting up ordinary forms to make something quite different.

What is the favourite piece you have ever produced?

I do not have a favourite piece, but there are plenty I am very happy with. For example :-

[Rocking Crescents](#) - made from slices cut from sycamore bowls supported by button magnets and fishing line, **photo 3**;

[Whirlwood](#) - made up of alternating discs of sapele and sycamore undercut on the inside, **photo 4**;

[Sunset Swirl](#) - a coloured and carved out sycamore hollow form, **photo 5**;

[Pipe Dreams?](#) – with intertwined spirals of chestnut, pear and sycamore held together with black epoxy mortar and then airbrushed, **photo 6**;

[Stalactite 1](#) - in African blackwood and carved/coloured sycamore supported by frame of acrylic rod, **photo 7**;

[Domelight 1](#) - in sycamore and beech with 70 short acrylic rods lit by internal LED's with flashing option and mirrored base with slow rotation option, **photo 8**.

What advice would you give to somebody just starting woodturning

Talk to other woodturners - easiest done by joining a club, watch demos, DVD's and videos on the internet, get professional tuition and maybe buy a few books. You can of course borrow DVD's and books from the Club's library. Whilst some people have successfully taught themselves to turn, it saves a lot of time and avoids getting

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into bad habits that are difficult to eliminate later, if you take some professional tuition. Overall there is nothing better than doing the progression of courses at the Mill. Don't be too ambitious to start with. Be patient, get the basics right and practise them; most turning consists of forming coves, beads and straight lines, so master them first. Sharp tools are essential, so make sure you have mastered the art of sharpening.

Brief outline of your employment background.

As with many other turners, I am an engineer. A civil engineer, I spent most of my working life designing, building, maintaining and strengthening bridges, both in England and in East Africa; working for consultants, contractors and local authorities. I can drive along the M11 under bridges I designed or along the Avon Ring Road over its longest bridge crossing the River Avon, a bridge I designed and help build. In my last job as Principal Bridge Engineer with Bristol City Council, I organised the strengthening of many of Bristol's bridges, including Totterdown, Bedminster and Plimsoll bridges together with the older Bristol Bridge.

Any other information you would like to add.

When producing artistic pieces or designs, I sometimes find my engineering background creates a rod for my own back. There is a temptation to make geometric shapes as accurate as possible, whether using an indexing wheel or careful measurement, but this means that any minor discrepancies will probably be obvious to the eye in the finished piece. Much better to go for the freehand approach and less precise geometric design; there is then no exact correct position for lines, features or texturing. It may also look more authentic as being by an artist rather than a machine.

Photos

2. *early abstract carving*
3. *Rocking Crescents*
4. *Whirlwood*
5. *Sunset Swirl*
6. *Pipe dreams?*
7. *Stalactite 1*
8. *Domelight 1*

Examples of pieces by some of his favourite turners:

9. *Louise Hibbert*
10. *Alain Mailland*
11. *Jean Francois Escoulen*
12. *Virginia Dodson*
13. *Marilyn Campbell*

Editor's note. In order to do justice to both Robin's and his favourite turners' work, all photos have been assembled on the next page