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Crosscut

Newsletter of the Witwatersrand Woodworkers' Association
PO Box 129, Parklands 2121

Ad from the 1950s

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Go to <http://mysite.mweb.co.za/residents/tlope/homepage.html> for back issues of *Crosscut*.

Next General Club meeting is on Tuesday, the 9th May at 18h00 at Pirates Bowling Club.
Main club AGM – see agenda below. Also show and tell – good and bad projects.

Next Turner's monthly meeting is on **Tuesday, the 8th May** at 18h00 at Hardware Centre.
Turner's section AGM. Nominations for all committee positions are hereby requested. Chris O'Connell and Shorty Oberholzer will stand down as chairman and treasurer respectively of the turner's section. Also a panel discussion on tools, particularly problem solving: if you have any tools that are not working as expected, bring them to discuss.

News

April General Club Meeting. Ralf Trautwein gave a talk on clock making. Ralf completed an apprenticeship in clock making in Germany and currently operates a clock repair business in Randburg. He talked a bit on the history of clocks, and the accuracy of pendulum clocks. He discussed some of the ways clocks wear out and typical repairs, as well as servicing requirements. Different length pendulums were discussed and the effect of length on the period of the pendulum.

As a matter of interest, here are the equations that govern the period of pendulums: For a simple pendulum, with a single mass and weightless string, the period T (seconds) is given by:

$$T = 2\pi \sqrt{\frac{L}{g}}$$

Where the string is of length L (meters), and it operates in a gravity of g (9.8). The swing must

be small – less than 10° for this equation to hold.

For a swinging solid rod of length L of uniform section, the period is given by:

$$T = 2\pi \sqrt{\frac{2L}{3g}}$$

A real pendulum is somewhere in between these two, as most of the weight is concentrated in the end, but the rod is not weightless. The above also neglect friction. From these equations, you can calculate the approximate length for a pendulum for a clock. As Ralf explained, the clock mechanism effectively counts the number of swings and shows these by the positions of the hands on the face. So the period of the pendulum is fundamental to the accuracy of the clock. Various clever schemes were devised to compensate for errors, mostly due to temperature changing the length of the pendulum. Accuracies of better than one second per day were achieved by special designs, even in the 18th century, which is remarkable given the technology of the time.

April Turners' Meeting. George Simpson explained a simple system to balance grinding stones. John Speedy gave a demo on making caddy spoons.

From the committee:

Club Premises. We have agreement in principle from the REEA governing committee. However, due to their precarious financial position, they are unable to guarantee us security of tenure. If we are to move in and spend money upgrading, then we would like some sort of tenure. They can offer us an area of approximately 10m x 10m in the shed, where we can house our equipment and hold meetings. We probably have too much equipment for the space, so we will need to carefully look at what our priorities are in the club and decide accordingly. We will discuss this at the AGM, and hopefully reach a decision. This is your club, so please participate by giving your input.

Serving on the club committees. Volunteer organisations such as the WWA rely on people donating their time in order to function. There is a turnover of committee members as people do lose interest, move away or no longer have the time. New ideas are needed, so it is important for people to volunteer. The duties are not onerous: 11 committee meetings a year. You don't need to be an expert woodworker or turner – inputs from beginners are just as important. Willingness and energy are much more important. Please volunteer – it can be great fun!

Spray Painting course. This has been rescheduled to the 6th May. It is fully subscribed at present – if you have booked to attend and are unable to, please let Frans know (084 574 3500) so that somebody else can attend.

Annual General Meeting

*In terms of Section 6 of the Constitution, you are notified that the Annual General Meeting of the Witwatersrand Woodworkers Association will take place at **Pirates Bowling Club***

*On **Tuesday 9th May 2005 at 18:00.***

Nominations for all committee positions are hereby requested as the committee will lose 5 of the present members:

- *Our present chairman (Alan) will stand down, as he will not be in Jhb full time next year.*
- *Secretary (Roger) will retire from the committee,*
- *Treasurer (Harold) will retire from the committee,*
- *Member (Frans) will retire from the committee,*
- *Ken Bullivant has recently resigned from the committee,*
- *The present newsletter editor (Trevor), who has done the job for 5 years, will gladly step aside if somebody wishes to take over, and is willing to contribute articles as before.*

Agenda:

- *Attendance / Apologies*
- *Minutes of last AGM*
- *Chairman's Report*
- *Treasurer's Report*
- *Subscription fee for 2006 / 2007 – The financial implications of the new clubhouse and the impact on the subs.*
- *New Premises – We hope to have a proposal for discussion. Request club approval to enter into a long-term lease arrangement and the implications thereof.*
- *Assets in storage – time limitation.*
- *Assets – keep or sell - Discussion of functions of the club and the usage of our equipment.*
- *Election of life members.*
- *Election of Committee for 2006 / 2007*
- *Project Show and Tell*

Only members of good standing as at 30 April 2006 may vote at the AGM

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS: 2006 / 2007 year

Membership subscriptions for 2006 / 2007 are due on 1 May 2006. Please pay the Treasurer before the end of April to maintain continuity of your membership. Post cheques to the address in the masthead of this newsletter. Details for direct deposits are on your *personal* invoice below.

Thank you.

Roger Matthews Secretary

INVOICE		31 March 2006
DUE DATE		AMOUNT
1/5/2006	SUBS for the Witwatersrand Woodworkers Association - 2006/2007 year	R150-00
	Direct deposits to: Witwatersrand Woodworkers Assn. (Fax deposit slip to 011-447-3334) Nedbank Main St. branch - Code: 197-905. Account No: 1979-321833	
		R150-00

For Sale:

Delta Wood Shapers (2) 12mm R2500- neg

Delta Planer – 100mm R2500- neg Contact Bill Teare on 783 6395 Owner departing Jhb soon.

Wanted by the editor of Home Handyman – articles on woodworking and similar. Payment offered.

Critique (continued from last month - part two)

It is important NOT to see an unfavourable critique as a criticism and feel a sense of failure. It is only natural, after putting in many hours into a piece, to feel some attachment. If you didn't, that would be strange. However there is always risk in making something. Even if the piece is technically successful, it may not work visually. It is very difficult to visualise the end product from the misshapen lump of wood that you start with. Only once the piece is finished, can you see what you have, and know whether it turned out the way you imagined. Even if it does, it may still not be "*right*" for a variety of reasons. Some of these you will see yourself, but sometimes critique can help you see possibilities.

Victor Radin <vradin...@ameritech.net> wrote:

Form then function or Function then form?

This colours the balance of any criticism I may have for the piece as a whole.

Art? Craft? Both? Other? Functional Bowl? Fanciful vase?

Perhaps I'm prejudiced, but a bowl has certain characteristics of "BOWL", that may or may not include holes, zippers, or other ornamentations.

Does it have pleasing proportions, height/width/transitions? Do the walls have thickness enough to support the perceived weight- again: proportion of size?

Do the lines "flow"? Does the grain pattern work with the physical form? Do the transitions complement the grain and enhance the natural beauty of the wood?

Does the material fit the form or function? A goblet of pitch pine may look nice, have balance, excellent lines, but may not be particularly functional. On the other hand, that straight, no-

figure, white-as-rice, lampshade is perfectly functional but has nothing to distinguish it from a store-bought fabric shade. Balance of form - **function, art or craft?**

Another, broader perspective is given by Darrel Feltmate:

Somewhere along the line we are faced with the question of what is art, specifically if it is to be addressed in the field of wood turning. For some such as myself, it is a moot point, as I do not picture myself as an artist, rather as a technician, striving to perfect technique. That said, it is to the artists that the technician turns for new areas to address those techniques. The old "a man's reach must exceed his grasp, else what's a heaven for?" drives us to better and better and technique and thus enjoyment of the task. Many of us seek a different challenge than turning the next thousand pens better than the last.

As we question what is art with respect to wood turning, we come to a fourth facet of the field, one to which you have alluded, namely the wood turning art critic. Peers tend to suggest almost universally that "the bottom needs to curve in more" as the harsh criticism along with "hey, nice piece." We need to address questions of form in relation to purpose, curves as directions to a resolution, interplay of light on surfaces, enhancements to surface and texture, resolution of idea, thought and intent as expressed in a finished piece, among others. How does the beauty of the medium draw us in ways that another medium might or might not. Would the piece be better resolved in metal, glass, ceramic or some other material?

Critics and criticism thoughtfully and wisely applied can determine much of the direction of artistic development not only of a person but also of a medium. We must also remember that if turned wood is to be an art form, we need to be open to the criticism of our peers and the group is naturally expended. No longer is the peer group only wood turners or for that matter collectors and sellers; it is a collection of potters, ceramicists, painters, fabric designers, sculptors and other artists. Most of them will take it for granted that the technique must be of a high standard. Their question will be, "does the result of the technique say anything?"

There is an ongoing debate about **art vs craft** that I won't pursue here. However, there seems to be consensus that you need to be technically proficient in your craft, before you can progress towards art. This is underlined by the attention paid to the details of the piece in our critiques.

I would like to suggest a few more items to consider when looking at a piece:

- The scale of the piece – how does the piece look in the size that it is made in?
- Are the thickness and features right for the scale chosen?
- How does the material work in the scale chosen? (A coarse-grained wood may not be appropriate for a small, delicate piece with fine features.)
- When the piece is handled, what tactile sensations are provided? Is it surprisingly light or heavy? Does it feel balanced? Are the textures of the surfaces right and consistent?
- Olfactory – can you smell the wood or the finish and is it pleasant?

I hope that above has given you some food for thought? If you have anything you would like to add to above, please discuss with or email to me. I'd like to hear from you.

Trevor Pope