

The Irish Woodturners' Guild



The First 25 Years
1983 to 2008

This Book is for the
Members
both past and present
of the

IWG

Preface and Acknowledgements

Much of the early information in this book was gathered by Emmet Kane, one time Chairman and President of IWG, and given to Joe O'Neill of the Dublin Chapter who passed his collection to Jim Ryan of the Limerick and District Chapter. Subsequently a Working Group collected and collated a great amount of detailed material, reminiscences and photographs and finally edited it all into a manageable and, we hope, interesting form.

The Working Group consisted of :-

Evan Petty (Convener and Editor), South East Chapter
Michael Dickson, Ulster Chapter
Niall Fitzduff, Ulster Chapter
Eugene Grimley (IWG Secretary), Ulster Chapter
Joe Laird (IWG Development Officer), Dublin 15 Chapter
Peter Lyons (IWG Journal Editor), Ulster Chapter
David Sweeney, Dublin Chapter

Our thanks are also due to all the past and present Chapter chairmen, secretaries and members who contributed their time and effort to submit oral, written and photographic material. The fact that material has been collected from so many sources and individuals has made the script more intimate, more interesting and often more amusing. We understand, however, that local stories often depend on knowing the characters and situations present at the time and we realise that some of the banter occurring at Guild events might not always translate so well to readers not directly involved

Some members, past and present, may feel disappointed or even aggrieved that their contribution to the IWG has not been recognised by inclusion in this volume. For this we can only apologise but point out that significant efforts were made to obtain information from many of those with knowledge of past events but sadly they were either reluctant or indifferent to our pleas for help. We suggest that anyone with such information or photographic material relating to past events should contact the contributors mentioned while it remains fresh, so that it can be considered for inclusion in any future or revised edition.

We hope though that you will accept this story of the Irish Woodturners Guild as a reasonable account of its conception, birth and growth to its present maturity. It has no pretension to be a definitive history; within the time and resources available to the group, such would have been impossible and, in any case, we are first and foremost a group of turners not historians.

We must thank those many supporters of the Guild, some, such as the Craft Council and the Tree Council, who have been there from the start, and others who regularly advertised in the Journal or brought their equipment and materials to the delight of the devotees and who often gave prizes to winners of our competitions. We must also mention our appreciation of those organisations who allowed, even encouraged, our chapters to meet at their premises.

Although all the Group Members contributed, some more than others for a variety of good reasons, the one person without whom this book would never have appeared on time and so attractively is Peter Lyons. Peter of course produces the quarterly IWG Journal, the August / September edition of which coincided with the final push on publishing this Anniversary Book. You might know he is also the Secretary of the Ulster Chapter and is one of the few members who also has to earn a living, rather than a pension like some of us. Yet he still keeps his cool and his sense of humour.
Peter, you take our breath away.

Last, but by no means least, I must thank my wife Pauline for her tremendous efforts in checking, reorganising and a host of other jobs on this manuscript while I made the tea.

Evan Petty, Editor, President of the Irish Woodturners' Guild. August 2009

THE STORY OF THE IRISH WOODTURNERS' GUILD

The first 25 years 1983 to 2008

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Foreword by Úna Parsons Chief Executive Officer Crafts Council of Ireland



In 1966 Kilkenny Design Workshops invited established Dutch woodturner Maria Van Kesteren to set up a workshop in Kilkenny. The presence of such a renowned maker in Kilkenny had a formative influence on Irish woodturning. This book tells the story of the development and spreading of the craft in Ireland and the establishment of the Irish Woodturners Guild (IWG) in 1983. Since then, the IWG has flourished and now has over 700 members from all over Ireland and comprises of 19 regional / local Chapters.

Communications between the chapters has been key in the expansion and strength of the Guild by providing a forum for the exchange of views and ideas. These chapters are the lifeblood of the Guild and anyone who has an interest in woodturning can join so I would encourage any woodturner - professional or hobbyist - to link in with the Guild. Everyone working together as one group brings benefits to the sector as a whole.

The future development of woodturning in Ireland depends on fostering talent amongst young people and paving the way for them to pursue a viable career. I applaud the work that the IWG has done in encouraging the development of educational and training facilities for woodturners. The workshops and other supports provided by the Guild enable the excellence and innovation in design and production of turned wood in Ireland.

The Crafts Council of Ireland is delighted to have supported the IWG since its inception and continues to do so today. The IWG is the largest of our member Guilds, Associations, Networks and Societies (GANS) and it has been a pleasure working with the Guild members since organising the very first Guild exhibition in the South of Ireland at the Council's National Craft Gallery in Kilkenny. In 2002 the collaboration was continued with the International exhibition 'Splanc' (Irish for 'spirit') that featured a selection by David Ellsworth (USA) and Gary Rance (UK) from the 2002 IWG Seminar competition.

In 2006 'Tracing the Line' was curated by IWG member Liam Flynn and incorporated turnings by Founding Members, Liam O'Neill and Brother Ciaran Forbes, together with pieces from the original Kilkenny Design Centre Tutor, Maria Van Kesteren. We were also pleased to involve the IWG in craft demonstrations at Bloom in the Park in both 2008 and 2009 which received a lot of interest from the public.

The achievements of the IWG since its foundation are something of which all members should be very proud. While the current recession has presented challenges for craft enterprises, it has also opened up opportunities for the craft sector to grow. The Crafts Council of Ireland looks forward to continuing our close ties with the IWG in the years to come.

I congratulate the Executive Committee of the Irish Woodturners Guild on this wonderful publication celebrating the woodturning craft and art of Ireland and I wish all Guild members every success in the future.

Úna Parsons
Chief Executive
Crafts Council of Ireland
August 2009

A Message from the President 2008



I got into woodturning by accident about 20 years ago and it was the happiest accident anyone ever had. It seemed to me that I must have been a woodturner in a previous life but my skills have developed subsequently from the plain ugly to the arty bits, to teaching, lecturing and demonstrating and recently back to the trade aspect.

Tom Newman, my own tutor, invited me to my first Dublin Chapter meeting after just two lessons and ever since that day I have been an addict. The well-established monthly demonstrations and competitions were and still are a great incentive to improve skills.

To be involved in the IWG is like being a member of a very large family. There is a feeling of belonging to an all-sharing, all-inclusive and democratic group. All levels of woodturning skill and category are catered for, encouraging competition, exhibition and involvement at every stage of membership from school children to adults of all ages.

I soon became involved on the local committee and later onto the National Committee where I was eventually elected President. What an honour and a privilege! I decided that during my term of office (4 years) I would try to visit all of the chapters. I started very enthusiastically but, after developing a worrying medical condition, I realised I would not be able to fulfil my plan to my satisfaction, so I resigned two years into my term. However, I am still very actively turning on a daily basis and teaching when needed.

I would like to offer the Guild my congratulations on reaching this 25th milestone and wish you all the best for the next 25 years.

Peter Mulvaney

President 2006-2008

A Message from the Chairman 2008



I joined the Guild in 1996 when it was already firmly established and with many Chapters affiliated to it. When I first became a member I was fascinated by this new hobby of mine and was only interested in extending my knowledge of woodturning; thus I took no interest in the origin of the Guild until much later. When I worked on the Dublin Chapter Committee for a few years and also started to attend the National and local Seminars, I began to meet people who had been in at the beginning. Like many, no doubt, my gradual awakening to the bigger picture was a slow affair but I began to realise that the history or record of the Guild since its inception was in danger of being lost for ever. 'A few good men' took it upon themselves to try and collect all information about the Guild from day one but this was marked by many delays and frustrations. As time passed, this chore was undertaken by a number of members including Joe O'Neill, who also produced a Video. We owe a great debt to all who attempted to put this history together, even if left uncompleted.

Finally in 2008 Jim Ryan of the Limerick Chapter was able to submit a draft to the Guild Committee of which I was Chairman at the time. Although this was a welcome development it was clear to Jim and ourselves that much remained to be done to ensure that the full story was told. So it was decided to hold over publication until 2009 and include our special 25th the Anniversary Seminar as the final chapter in the "first 25 years". It also occurred to us that a detailed 'historical' account would always leave some Chapters or individuals feeling they were not fully represented within it. To meet these problems and our self-imposed deadlines, our new President, Evan Petty, agreed to take over the responsibility from Jim who, due to family commitments, felt unable to carry the project further.

So there you are. Read, enjoy and spare a thought for those far-seeing folk back in 1983 who believed in themselves, so much so that 25 years on we have a written record of what the Guild was doing up and down this island, North and South, from the beginning.

Chris Hayes
Chairman of 25th Seminar Executive Committee

Introduction

This is a story of the first twenty-five years of the Irish Woodturners' Guild. Those of you who have been members since the Guild's inception may get the feeling as you read these pages that you have seen or heard much of this somewhere before. The answer of course is that you probably have; in Minutes of Chapter meetings, Guild meetings, A.G.M. s ,the Newsletter to begin with and later the Journal. These have been used as major sources along with the records, correspondences and personal conversations within the Guild since its inception. Some occasional outside sources were used such as newspaper articles and articles in other magazines eg The Crafts Council of Ireland Newsletter and some of the international woodworking magazines.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to those who had the vision, foresight and determination to start the Guild. We tend now, to take both the Guild and the Seminars for granted but at the very beginning there was no guarantee that either would be a success. The first seminar, which was the precursor of the Guild, was a step into the unknown. Had that been a failure there would have been no Guild formed at that time and, possibly, none of the others throughout the World that have seen our success and incorporated the structure into their organisations.

From what they had seen abroad, some of our founding members decided that the skills and techniques demonstrated would be of great benefit to those turning here. From the beginning the very best woodturners were invited to demonstrate at the Seminars. Initially these were mostly from Britain but, following the success of the early seminars, the Guild also looked to the USA, Australia and Continental Europe for demonstrators.

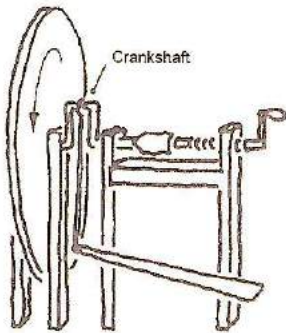
Their legacy is the vibrant Guild with its growing number of Chapters situated around the whole island of Ireland and a large number of talented wood turners well trained in modern methods and techniques. Woodturning in Ireland is very much a minority interest but many Irish woodturners are on a par with those elsewhere in the World. A look through the list of turners who have demonstrated at the national Seminars reads like a "Who's Who" of modern World woodturning.

The Origins of Woodturning

When our ancestors first began to use tools, timber and stones were the first materials they used. Both were freely available and as timber was easily worked, light to handle and strong it is easy to see why it was first choice. When they began using wood they probably began with fallen branches or breaking off bits of trees. Later crude cutting implements of stone were used and when metal was discovered knives, chisels and scrapers became available and it became possible to do some rudimentary shaping on timber. It also became possible to combine timber and stone to form more lethal weapons. As well as being used for weapons and tools timber would have been used for a variety of items that our ancestors needed in everyday life such as handles, bowls and plates.

To make such items fast and repeatedly, the lathe was developed. A lathe is a device for spinning a piece of wood so that a craftsman can shape it into a round or cylindrical form using scrapers or gouges.

It is impossible to discover by whom, when or where the first 'lathe' was invented but it is known that by 3000 BC twist or fiddle 'drills' were being used. The principle was to wind a taut bowstring round a wooden rod inserted horizontally between two centres. This fiddle lathe is still used in some societies and can be seen, for instance, in North Africa where a bow is used to speed up the process. At the 1997 Seminar in Monaghan a Mexican bow lathe turner demonstrated the use of this primitive equipment.



C. 1500 Leonardo Da Vinci

The pole lathe used a combination of rope twisted around the piece being worked and a springy ash pole as a power source. By use of a treadle the piece of timber would move forward and backward, the cut being made on the forward stroke only until Leonardo da Vinci in 1480 invented the crankshaft and flywheel, which allowed continuous cutting in one direction. This speeded up production by at least 50% and could be said to have heralded the industrialisation of manufacturing. The lathe then probably developed as a series of improvements on what was previously available but, like many inventions, led to downgrading of the art and craft of woodturning.

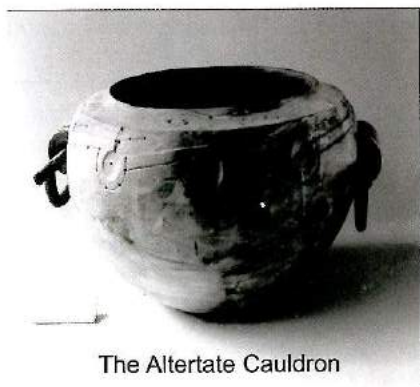
The craft did not, of course, disappear altogether as it could be extended to give household items new forms and individual designs. This process has increased greatly with the advent of more leisure time and longer retirement. This has allowed more individuality of design, the use of other materials (paint, bone, precious stones etc) and new processes (off-centre turning, carving and scorching etc of turned items) to produce work not only through habit and standard procedures but to create artistic items of aesthetic value.

A Brief History of Woodturning

Whenever woodturning was first discovered it certainly was far back in antiquity. One of the earliest representations of turned wood comes from the Tomb of Tutankamun which dates from 1350 BC. This consists of a round joint but we have no knowledge as to how it was produced; it was presumably made by scraping as gouges would have been beyond the manufacturing capability of the age.

One of the oldest, if not the very oldest turned object extant, is a ceremonial bowl found in the burial mound of a Celtic chieftain in Bavaria. The bowl has a chalice-like profile, with a loose ring around the stem. There are no joints, the whole being turned from the same solid block of timber. It dates from the 6th century B.C. and, in showing such remarkable sophistication, indicates a tradition going back much further in time.

The most spectacular piece which survives in Ireland from the pre-Christian period is a cauldron found in a bog in Altertate near Clones in Co. Monaghan. It is spectacular even by modern standards measuring 20 inches (45cm) in diameter by 11 inches (28cm) high. The inside seems to be tuned while the outside is elaborately carved. The provision of handles, which it possesses is only possible on a pole lathe. It is made from a single block of poplar and the one remaining handle is of yew. It has been tentatively dated to the first half of the fourth century B.C. When found the cauldron was considerably damaged but it was reconstructed to its original shape and it gives us a very good idea as to the woodturning expertise of our ancestors. It was recently replicated in its original form by David Comerford and this photograph gives us a good idea of how it looked. It is now held in the National Museum of Ireland.



The Altertate Cauldron

The Celts were known to be competent turners on the Continent and it is certain they brought their skills with them when they came here. No doubt they used some form of the pole lathe in turning items for their everyday needs.

The problem with timber is that it does not tend to survive very long especially in our damp climate. Many turned items would have worn away or broken and been consigned to the fire although some have come to light around the country in the bogs and during archaeological digs. Often all that remains are bits of larger items and so it is often impossible to say what the item was part of, or what it was used for. These archaeological discoveries indicate that the early Irish were well able to turn and that turned objects formed part of everyday life.

When turned items are found they still clearly show the tool marks made during the turning process. In those days it was simply enough to produce what was required. Once the turning was complete and the object fully formed there was no further work required. Turned objects were for everyday not ceremonial use and a fine finish was unnecessary. Some of the turning was, for the time and equipment available, reasonably complicated. We know the Romans were accomplished turners of both wood and stone as were the Saxons. The process was widely used in the Middle Ages.

- Many thousand cups and platters were used at the coronation of Richard The Lionheart in 1189
- There is a depiction of a lathe from a stained glass window in Chartres which dates from 1250
- In 1254 at the marriage of Edward 1 to Eleanor of Castille 400 cups and 1500 dishes of turnery were used
- In 1284 there are records of the restocking of a manor with 2350 platters and bowls.
- The London Company of Turners was formed about 1300 at the time when various trades were forming Guilds for the benefit of their members.
- The Mary Rose, the warship of Henry VIII, which sank in 1545, contained many oak platters which were replaced when it was raised a few years ago.
- During the period 1500 to 1600 there was a decline in the demand for wooden pieces due to the introduction of pewter
- In 1591 woodturners established Guild Hall in London along with apprenticeships
- In 1600 water powered turbines were developed. However they had to be near running water and to sources of timber so consequently were few in number
- A woodcut by Jan van Flieet dated 1635 shows a Dutch turner making chair legs. The lathe had a bowl attached to a poppet. In 1661 a painting by van Ostade depicts stools with rounded sockets.
- In 1678-80 Joseph Moxton wrote *Mechannick Exercises – The Art of Turning*.
- In 1718 there is the first record of the term Windsor Chair which was referred to as a garden seat.
- By 1720 the London Guild of Woodturners had 40 members.
- In 1750 it is recorded that there was a decline in bowl turning caused by cheap imports of crockery and glass. Later there was a further decline due to the introduction of tin plate and enamel ware.



JAN VAN FLIEET 1635

1801 – 1831 there was a population increase in England. Bowl turning was in decline while chair making increased in popularity. Bowl lathes of the time were heavy fixed spindle lathes while the pole lathe was light and portable.

By 1850 the number of pole lathes had increased to over 100 in the Chiltern area. However, the records are sparse as bodgers were always on the move. By 1930 the number had declined to 9 and by 1950 only one pole lathe turner remained.

Woodturning in Ireland

During the 1800's the situation in Ireland was similar to that in England. There were a number of pole lathe turners in various localities throughout the country. Every locality had its turner or turners who would provide for local needs. These turners would have made table legs, chair legs, stools, bowls, platters and any other items required by the local population including spinning wheels. Few would have been full time turners and would have worked in other aspects of woodworking, turning only when the need arose. With the introduction of other materials people changed from using wooden products. Pottery of various forms was cheap, clay was easily come by, and easily worked and gradually replaced wood in the day to day lives of the people.

The two last pole lathe turners in Ireland were Joseph Hughes from Banbrook, Co Armagh and James Loftus from Borrisokane, Co Tipperary both of whom were still turning up to the early 1930s.

Joseph Hughes was born in Armagh city at the end of the nineteenth century and was still turning using a pole lathe in 1936, when he demonstrated his skills at the Royal Dublin Show. In the same year, with the help of his brother Frank, he wrote down in great detail the working of the pole lathe, the tools used and the items made on it. While he specialised in the production of butter dishes ranging in size from 60 cm to 32 cm, he also made a range of other household items including pastry rollers, beetles for the linen trade, pounders, floor pots, noggins, plates and egg cups.

When James Loftus died in 1935, aged 82, he had been turning for more than sixty years. He specialised in making all types of dairy utensils, small churns, dishes, strainers, skimmers, cups, jogglers and butter prints. He also turned stool and chair seats, rails, legs, wheel hubs and egg cups. His tools were forged locally and ground by himself. He was, like all tradesmen, concerned with the manufacture of practical and utilitarian items. He found a ready market for his wares in the Midlands, South and West of Ireland and he sold his products at fairs throughout Tipperary. He sent consignments of wooden vessels to large wholesale firms in Dublin, Cork and Limerick and it was not unusual for him to send a selection of sixty or seventy dozen articles to any one of these firms at a time. In the heyday of his trade from 1914-1918 he received more orders than he could supply.

At the time of the First World War there was a great scarcity of tin and enamel vessels, which could not be imported because of restrictions imposed by war conditions. This meant that there was plenty of work for a competent turner to fill the gap. As with other woodturners, sycamore was the wood which he preferred to turn, although he sometimes used horse chestnut which gave a fresh clean finish.

Some of the more skilled woodturners were competent to carry out the work done by coopers and produced butter churns, tubs and barrels. Their skill combined with the natural grain of the wood combined to produce items which often displayed great beauty of form.

Fortunately the lathes and tools of Joseph Hughes and James Loftus were aquired by the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and the National Museum respectively. The equipment from the Loftus workshop is housed in the Museum of Country Life in Castlebar, Co. Mayo.

Before modern communications most small towns needed to be self-sufficient with a broad range of craftsmen catering to the needs of the community. Turners confined themselves to making utilitarian items required in their immediate neighbourhood. For some of the more skilled work, or for work that might not sustain a living in an area, a travelling tradesman would visit the town from time to time.

The idea of the turner as a creative artist arrived in the the mid to late 20th century.

The late Jim Foley, one of the founder members of the Limerick Chapter, an early member of the Guild and a demonstrator at the National Seminar on several occasions, started his career in Ennis in 1942. He began work at a coach builders and undertakers where he first used a pole lathe. This pole lathe was unlike those that we see today. The cord was wrapped around a pulley rather than the piece being turned and there was a certain amount of slip which meant that the timber was always turning towards the turner. In Ennis in those days there were four pole lathes working mostly making hubs and milk sets. A milk set is a shallow bowl about 18 to 24 inches in diameter and about 4 inches deep used to skim the cream from milk. They were made from beech as sycamore tended to turn the milk sour.

In those days turning was just one aspect of woodworking, something that was done when needed. Woodturning was a good skill for a carpenter or joiner to have. In any workshop there would have been several of the staff who were well able to turn.

Before the I.W.G.

Prior to the mid 1960's turning in Ireland still remained as it had been for centuries, that is turning utilitarian items. If a piece was visually attractive that was a pleasing addition to its basic function and the turner would have taken pride in a job well done.

However, while turning in Ireland remained fairly static, things were developing elsewhere. During the 1930's in the USA the balance between utility and aesthetics began to alter, primarily through the influence and practice of James Prestini who was a strong supporter of the Bauhaus movement there. Whilst producing precisely controlled, highly formal objects, he also set them within a view which had not previously applied to turned wooden material. Retaining its utilitarian shape, a container could be made as an object of aesthetic expression, with its utilitarian role as a secondary feature. This concept did not separate the two but it altered their balance. The event which had world-wide significance was the development of the thin walled sculptural bowl as an art form by Prestini and ensured his place in the historical development of modern woodturning, even though he was primarily a designer in metal.

His pioneering work was further developed by turners such as Bob Stocksdales who moved away from the Bauhaus formalism and added the concept of matching the shape and unusual grain, especially in exotic woods. Differing cultural concepts were explored in wood, particularly from oriental porcelain. It is, perhaps, amusing to record that when asked about his inspiration for developing such beautiful bowls, Stocksdales is quoted as saying that, after checking some books on Oriental pottery, he found that Chinese and Japanese potters had been copying his designs for 2000 years!

By the 1970s, with individuals such as Mel Lindquist and his son Mark, changes were beginning in woodturning. Wood previously considered flawed became popular allowing holes, spalted and rotted wood and naturally uneven edges to retain their presence. Skill came through selecting a piece of wood so that it played an important role in the shape of an object adding to the maker's input. Amongst others, some outstanding innovators in the field were Ed Moulthrop with his enormous bowls and globes and David Ellsworth who developed very thin hollow turnings. Dell Stubbs was another who brought a fresh approach through his exceptionally thin bowls and platters turned wet and allowed to distort. Stephen Hogbin added another dimension to woodturning by sawing turned shapes and reassembling them to create entirely new forms.

Several woodturners in the USA were considered major artists by the mid 1970s and early 1980s. The Le Coff brothers ran a series of ten seminars in Philadelphia to demonstrate the range of ideas and techniques which had become popular as a result of people gathering and sharing ideas. This renewed interest created an awareness and diverse skills and unprecedented development of woodturning away from the functional towards the wholly artistic. The Gallery/Studio movement had arrived.

By late last century the world had become a much smaller place and ideas spread from country to country much faster than previously. It was now possible for Irish turners to visit other countries and bring new ideas back home with them. In turn they passed on these ideas to other turners in Ireland. Turning began its major development here when in 1965, the Kilkenny Design Workshops were founded and Maria van Kesteren, a Dutch woodturner, was invited to set up a Woodturning facility and introduced design ideas which were then current in The Netherlands and the rest of Europe.

Previously woodturning was confined to industry, craft teachers in schools and eventually this percolated to night classes at the local Technical Colleges. Most of this was fairly basic stuff of course.

In 1968 the Royal Dublin Society instituted their annual crafts competition. Three workshops contracted work out from Kilkenny Design Workshops, on the basis of designs supplied by the latter.

These workshops gradually developed their own designs. One of them in Carlow, owned by John Shiel took on Liam O'Neill as its first apprentice.



In 1980 Liam O'Neill and Ciaran Forbes attended the International Woodturning Seminar at the John Makepiece School for Craftsmen in Wood at Parnham House, Dorset, England. Parnham was a seminal event for Irish Woodturning. Liam was introduced to the techniques of David Ellsworth, Bob Stockdale, Stephen Hogbin, Ray Key and Richard Raffan. This was Liam's introduction to Artistic Woodturning and was a pivotal point in his career, providing the stimulus to set up his own studio at Shannon in 1984.

During this period he was considering a similar type of seminar for Ireland to those he had attended in the UK and by 1982 there was sufficient equipment available at Retos to allow this to happen. He invited Ray Key from the UK who acted as demonstrator with him. Craft Supplies from Derbyshire in England also became involved and, as well as bringing over equipment for sale, brought Phil Reardon to demonstrate and give advice to those attending.

Ciaran Forbes won the prestigious Muriel Gahan Prize in 1980 and used it to spend three months at Richard Raffan's Studio in Devon, further cementing relationships with turners abroad. This prize was again won by Ciaran in 1981 with Michael Dickson from Northern Ireland taking second prize.

In 1983, Liam founded, with Ciaran Forbes, Jim Foley, Willie Stedmond and others, the Irish Woodturners Guild. He first served as Secretary and through his efforts internationally renowned woodturners such as David Ellsworth, Ray Key, Richard Raffan and Mick O'Donnell demonstrated at the early Irish Seminars (see National Seminars below).

At the Royal Dublin Society's annual Arts and Crafts competition in July 1983 Liam shared joint first prize with Niall Fitzduff (who also won the Crafts Council of Ireland Medal for that year). Liam was also awarded the Dr Muriel Gahan Scholarship which he used to visit (top) American woodturners such as Ed Moulthorp, Mark and Melvin Lindquist, David Ellsworth, Rude Osolnik and Dale Nish. The latter well known Woodturner invited him to demonstrate and lecture at the Annual Woodworking West Symposium at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah in April 1984. Many similar invitations followed and in subsequent years he spent several weeks each year touring the USA lecturing and demonstrating his woodworking techniques. Liam has extended his interests over the past ten years into the field of outdoor turnings (as much as 2



metres high from sections of timber weighing 1 to 2 tons for which, of course, he had to build a special lathe.)



Foundation of the I.W.G.

Following the success of the 1982 Shannon seminar Liam O'Neill and Ciaran Forbes made contact with other woodturners in March 1983 with a view to forming the World's very first woodturners guild. The founding members were Liam O'Neill, Bro. Ciaran Forbes, Ray Cornu, Martini Currans, Jim Foley, Pat Hynes, Jonathan Robbins, Bob Pinker, Willie Stedmond and Alec Brownlee.

The idea was to set up a national, non-profit-making organization dedicated to the advancement and promotion of woodturning. It was to consist of individual members and affiliated local chapters throughout the country. It would provide education, information and organisation to those interested in woodturning whether they were hobbyists, professionals, collectors, wood and tool suppliers or simply sympathetic to the craft.

Immediately the Guild had been formed a letter was sent to all turners known to the various members. At last Irish woodturners had a contact point between individual members. Within a year there were upwards of 100 members from almost every county in Ireland.

The objectives of setting up the Guild were

1. To offer mutual help and encouragement
2. Feeding and flow of information
3. Improvement of design and skill
4. Promotion of woodturning among the general public
5. Running of Seminars and Exhibitions
6. Affiliation to the Craft Council of Ireland

The Guild was open to turners of all levels of experience from the beginner to the full-time professional. It also provided for associate membership and even encouraged those who collected wood products.

From the outset the Guild was an all-Ireland body and in that respect it can be seen as being ahead of its time. This was shown by the facts that Niall Fitzduff who had a woodworking business in Co. Tyrone became Chairman in 1984 while Michael Dickson from Co. Antrim, became Secretary the following year and Bill Scott from Dublin, Treasurer. Together they brought a sense of order to meetings, proper minutes, bookkeeping and an efficient organisation to the budding Guild. Michael's input was crucial at this stage computerising the data base and producing the first Newsletter. (He also hosted) A Committee meeting (at his own home) was held in Antrim at a time when some of the group were making their first trip north of the Border.

Regular Newsletters and budgets etc ensured things moved smoothly and computerisation of the membership ensured those eligible were kept informed.

The newly formed Guild also outlined its future plans to prospective members, which included regional exhibitions of woodturning throughout Ireland. At this stage the Craft Council of Ireland, to which it became affiliated, provided considerable help and advice. It also accepted examples of members' work at an exhibition held as part of a European Conference of the World Craft Council.

The Guild's first exhibition was held at The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in Cultra, Co. Down in 1985. The first Seminar on Craft Woodturning was held at Shannon, Co. Clare in September 1983, at which guest contributors included Ray Key of England, Michael and Liz O'Donnell of Scotland and Richard Raffan from England (later Australia), as well as various Irish specialist turners including Jim Foley.

The success of the first venture had given the newly formed Guild the confidence to press ahead with their plans driven by Liam O'Neill and Ciaran Forbes and their enthusiastic committee. Two other stalwarts of the new Guild were Willie Stedmond and Tom Dunlop who have given and still give continuous sterling support to its development and growth. Their teaching helped to raise the level of quality, precision and fine finish that was not generally so highly regarded in the early years.

On the 6th May the Secretary wrote to members advising them that at a meeting in Athlone on April 23rd, 1983 it was unanimously agreed that the Guild should set up a standards advisory committee. This committee would be available to advise all members on any problems that might arise in the pursuit of their craft and to help prepare members for any exhibitions etc in which they might be taking part.

It was also agreed that the standing Guild Committee would serve in this capacity until the Seminar in Shannon on September 10th and 11th. A list of names, addresses and phone numbers plus details of how to avail of this service were also included. The members of this Committee were Ray Cornu, Shannon, Jim Foley, Killaloe, Bro. Ciaran Forbes (then living in Letterfrack), Jonathan Robbins, from Mallow, Co Cork and Liam O'Neill.

In 1984 the Seminar invited a strong team of demonstrators including David Ellsworth, making his first appearance in Ireland, together with Mick and Liz O'Donnell from Scotland and the local talent of Liam O'Neill, Jim Foley, Ciaran Forbes, Niall Fitzduff and others.

At this time Liam who had done much of the ground work for the Guild set up his own professional woodturning workshop. This made ever more demands on his time so the Guild structure became more formalised Michael Dickson became Secretary, Bill Scott Treasurer and Niall Fitzduff Chairman.

Also an important guest was David Sloan of Fine Woodworking magazine of the USA, the leading international woodworking magazine of the day with a worldwide circulation. A very complimentary article appeared prior to the 1985 Seminar stating that IWG was the World's first Woodturning Guild.

At this time IWG funds were tightly stretched but Michael Dickson, who had access to a local community computer facility, commenced writing a regular newsletter to members and computerised the membership list for the first time.

He had also been working to initiate an IWG exhibition at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in Co Down and eventually obtained a small grant which just about covered the cost of the brochure.

"The next problem was to transport the show to Ulster as these were difficult times -- in more ways than one! Enquiries revealed that he had to get a sponsor e.g. Chamber of Commerce, who would have to apply for a permit to the Revenue Commissioners, stating the total value of the goods, their destination, duration of absence, transport arrangements, dates in and out, responsible officials and finally a bond to the full value of the goods plus Vat for a minimum sum of IRE£15,000!! There had to be another way perhaps -- (smuggling)?

Finally everyone was told to bring their pieces to the AGM in Athlone on 2nd March 1985. They then had to be transported across the Border to Co. Down.

Since some of the goods had originated in "The North" they didn't need to be declared; how would the authorities know what belonged to "The South" if they somehow found their way over the Border? Athlone that day was wet and stormy, not conducive weather for road blocks and checkpoints and so it was a rather heavily laden Volvo 245 Estate that took the "cattle run" over the border that wet and windy night.

The Exhibition was a resounding success, our first effort sold eventually 75% of the pieces on offer. We also had a few bits of luck on our way. David Shaw Smith, who made the channel 4/RTE programmes "Hands" and wrote the book on the series, had a simultaneous exhibition. Our display was in their entrance hall. Through a chance meeting with the Minister of Development of the day, John Rhodes-Boysen, we were pleased to welcome him and his wife to our show and give them mementoes of the occasion. He might have been less enamoured if he had known how we got the pieces there! This gained us valuable kudos in the local press and led to much wider publicity. A good venue, more than 5000 people passed through the Gallery that Easter weekend."

Also in 1985 significant efforts were made to "spread the word" throughout Ireland with the development of regional seminars by Niall Fitzduff in the Cookstown area, Willie Stedmond and Tom Dunlop in Leinster and Liam O'Neill in Munster. It was through these first tentative efforts that the Chapter culture, that currently dominates Irish woodturning, finally emerged.

The foundation of the Irish Guild was noticed abroad. In 1984 David Ellsworth who was invited to demonstrate at the third seminar, noted details of the formation and working of the Guild and used it as a model for the creation of the American Association of Woodturners' in 1987.

Following his attendance as demonstrator at the early seminars, Ray Key organised a seminar in Loughborough, and started the UK association, again using the IWG as a model. This seminar entitled "From Craft to Art" was advertised in the Guild Newsletter and also included, Jim Partridge (innovative bowls) David Ellsworth, President of the American Association of Woodturners (hollow vessels), Ed Moulthrop (giant spheres) and Michael and Liz O'Donnell (green wood turning).

(From its input) By its example outside of Ireland the Guild demonstrated the importance of having a strong and open-minded organisation and, by breaking down the isolation of woodturners, providing them with a forum for the development of ideas and techniques within larger groups. This was all the more important in Ireland due to the scattered nature of those who were turning prior to the formation of the Guild, the majority of whom lived outside the main centres of population and had no contact with turners outside their own locality. Because of this group presence, equipment suppliers such as Craft Supplies became more directly involved even to altering tools to meet changing needs.

By 1991 the Guild committee was giving consideration to a code of practice governing etiquette and conduct. The Guild also took active steps to encourage turning among young people. In 1995 it set aside £300 for a bursary to be awarded to a young person aged 16-21 for further training in the craft of woodturning. Application forms would issue to woodworking teachers through the National Council for Vocational Awards and its equivalent in Northern Ireland.

The Guild has from the beginning kept an eye on what their members wanted. In 1998 and 2001 they conducted National surveys to help them set future policy. The age profile showed that the majority of woodturners were over 40 years of age. The highest age group was the 60-69 bracket which had 29% , 50–60 age represented 24% and the 70-79 age group represented 16% of Guild membership.

The majority of woodturners were introduced to the Guild by a friend. 56% of those surveyed attended woodturning classes with 85% satisfied with the standard of instruction. On the question of a fixed location for the Seminar, 163 thought that the Seminar should continue to rotate while 16 were in favour of a fixed location.

One figure which must have given the Guild great satisfaction was that only 4% were dissatisfied with their membership of the Guild, 63% were satisfied and 33% were very satisfied. A high percentage was satisfied with the Journal although this figure had fallen a little from the 1998 survey. However, it was suggested there was room for improvement with the Journal and this should be obvious from the changes over subsequent years.

Development of Chapters

It is interesting that in the early days the local woodturning groups were not known as Chapters. The initial idea was to call them Branches, which in retrospect might have been more appropriate. The Dublin woodturners, when they came together called their grouping a Chapter and this was followed by others. One might have expected Chapters to start almost spontaneously after the formation of the Guild but this was not so. Progress was slow even though there was a surprising number of woodturners working around the country. There were few members in most areas except Dublin and, for the first few years, probably not enough to start a chapter. However when advertisements began to appear looking for turners, a surprising number of people who did not turn replied. These potential members were interested in taking up the craft and joining any chapter to learn from those who were competent in the craft. The vast majority of members of the guild were hobbyist turners but there were some who were semi-professional at that stage. They were mainly working at the craft independently of one another.

The aim of the Chapters was to build on the woodturners skills and provide a local forum for the interchange of ideas, the development of the abilities of woodturners at all levels and to give encouragement and assistance to one another.

To form a chapter required ten paid up members of the Guild. Once formed each Chapter would elect their own committee to arrange events and meetings. Activities to include workshops, demonstrations, exhibitions and participation in local Craft Fairs. All members were urged to join their local Chapter and play a part in its development. From the early days Chapters were to foster a greater awareness nationally and internationally of the woodturners art and craft.



Some of the Chapter Logos

CHAPTERS in alphabetical order.

Castledermot Chapter

The inaugural meeting was held on the 21st May 1994 in Emmet Kane's workshop. There was a large attendance along with nine members from the South East Chapter. Emmet demonstrated making hollow vessels using some very effective home made tools. Two further successful meetings of this Chapter were held then the Chapter appears to have been amalgamated into the Midlands Chapter (see below).

Clare Chapter

(subsequently joined with Limerick and District Chapter)

The first meeting of this Chapter took place on the 11th April 1991 However the Chapter never really got going and in May 1994 an attempt was made to restart it as the East Clare Chapter. A number of events were held in conjunction with the Limerick and District members. This was always a small dispersed chapter and, when it ceased, woodturners from the Clare region joined the Limerick and District Chapter(see below).

Collaborative Chapter

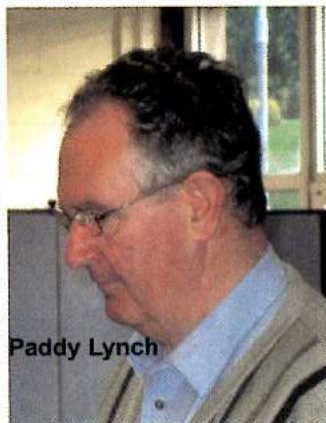
Formed in June 2001 this chapter met twice – once in Monivea, Co. Galway and the second time in Naas, Co Kildare. Its purpose was to cross-fertilise ideas from different disciplines and to incorporate other materials with wood. Fran Morrin and Emmet Kane were involved with this Chapter.

Cork Chapter

A few years after the foundation of the IWG in 1983 the Cork Chapter was operating unofficially. One event instrumental in giving the locals the impetus to organise was a demonstration by Liam O'Neill in a shop in Paul Street in Cork City. Quite soon after that, homes and any other locations available were utilised for workshop demonstrations. The first official meetings were held in the Powder Mill Pub / Restaurant in Ballincollig. The first committee consisted of Mick O'Loughlan, Bob Pinker, Colm McCarthy, George Colton, Michael Burke and was chaired by Dermot Chapman.

In the early days the main focus was on perfecting the basic skills and practice, practice, practice. There were several enthusiastic members at the time giving momentum to the Chapter including Paddy Lynch who, with others ,would often travel to England to keep up with methods and materials used there. Sharing equipment, books, magazines etc was commonplace and this eventually transformed into the Chapter library.

In the mid-nineties it became obvious that a base for the Chapter was essential for a group that was rapidly growing. At that time Tony Clifford the then Secretary managed to negotiate a space in Deerpark School and the use of their facilities for one day per month. This was a major improvement for the Chapter as it was reasonably central and had plenty of space. The graduate lathe used at the school was presented by Mrs. O'Loughlan in memory of her husband Mick ,one time Chapter Secretary.



Paddy Lynch

Good communication was always paramount and between the work of the diligent secretaries and the use of regular newsletters the Chapter ran smoothly. Michael Longman (R.I.P.) pioneered the double page Chapter newsletter in the early days, followed by Tony Milner with colour and extra pages. Gerard Hennessy continued in the same vein and John Ahern is the current editor.

The Chapter would see themselves as outward looking, taking part in many competitions and exhibitions outside the area, for instance, exhibiting at the RDS National Craft Competition, competing at other Chapter's seminars, demonstrating at the annual Charleville Summer Show, visiting wood turners abroad and, of course, the Splanc exhibition of woodturning in Kilkenny 2004, where the Chapter had two exhibits. In recent times, visiting turners from other Chapters have added a more cooperative dimension and the visit by Ned O'Donnell and Brendan Hogg comes to mind, particularly for its fun element on the day.

In 2007 we had to vacate Deerpark School and find another home. It did not take long for Marea Power to secure another space for us in a community facility in Togher, a short distance from Cork City.

Most people agree that the highlights for the Cork Chapter must be the National Seminars in 2005 and 2006. Credit should be given to the chairman Brian McAdoo for driving these events and also to the membership who got behind the venture. 2005 was the EU City of Culture for Cork and the Chapter also played its part. An exhibition of woodturning, "Adhmad", was organised by inviting EU States to take part in our exhibition.

Also, during the 2005 Seminar the public was invited in, for the first time, to view the exhibition. For 20 plus years the Cork Chapter has endeavoured to develop and promote high quality woodturning. It has encouraged the membership to keep up to speed with progress and trends at home and abroad. The original founders set very high standards and often with very basic equipment – no 'high-speed steel tools', variable speed lathes, nor 4 jaw chucks. Many of these members such as Michael Box have stayed for the long haul, and they should be congratulated for giving inspiration, direction and stability to the organisation.



Left is Brian McAdoo

Right are Cork members and below the Chapter meeting in the Midleton Distillery



Craobh Eo

(Irish for "The branch of the Yew") (pronounced Creve O)

Craobh Eo was founded on the 4th August 2004 which makes it one of the newer Chapters within the guild. Among the founding members were Willie Creighton (Chairman), Martin Gallagher (Secretary) and Seamus Parsons (Treasurer). Two members of the founding Chapter, Jim Casey and Tom Rafter are sadly now deceased.

The rationale behind the setting up of the new Chapter was that interest in woodturning was on the increase and woodturners were having to travel some distance to Chapters in adjoining areas to meet up. Current membership number is approx thirty. Meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday and hosted by individual members in their own workshops. Members are encouraged to bring a piece to be judged in either the advanced or beginner categories. A worthwhile prize is awarded to the winner at the end of the season. This year's prize of a lathe in each category is generating a lot of interest as record numbers of pieces are coming in each month.

Tuition and courses are available to members who want to advance their skill levels and there is a good take up on these offerings. We are especially encouraged by the number of new members joining the Chapter.



The 25th Anniversary Seminar team
Willie Creighton, Martin Wilson
Chris Sweeney, Robert Hanford
and Ian McDougall

Craobh Eo was privileged to host the national seminar twice in recent years. In 2007 the IWG seminar was held in Ballina and was our first major undertaking as a Chapter. We were specially honoured to host the 25th Anniversary IWG seminar in October of 2008 in Inishcrone. This was an outstanding event both for the location, level of attendance and the expertise shown by those demonstrating. Two of our younger members, Brian McDonald and Simon Wilson did us proud by winning prizes in the under 19 and beginners sections. Simon also won the Presidents prize.

Our first one day seminar held in 2006 in Ballina was officially opened by Bishop Richard Henderson, Killlala. The demonstrators were Billy Henry and David Comerford who were well

received by the large attendance. In 2007 David O'Neill and Seamus Cassidy demonstrated at our one day seminar. Our most recent event was an open day held in Kiltimagh in April where the demonstrators were Tony Wilson from England and Eric Turner, the appropriately named IWG member. The demonstrators and participants made this a very successful day and it will be a model for us in the future. One activity about which our Chapter members are very enthusiastic is support for local charities. Pieces turned by our group are donated so the charity can sell them and raise much needed funds.



Early this year a great honour was bestowed on Craobh Eo when our then Chairman, Willie Creighton, was elected to the post of IWG Chairman. Willie has had a major influence in the progress that we have made as a Chapter since its inception and we know that he will bring those qualities to his new role for the good of all members of the IWG.

His wife, Margaret, served with distinction as Treasurer of the IWG for a number of years up to and including the 25th Anniversary seminar.

One of the difficulties we face in Craobh Eo is a lack of hardwood trees in our area and even the crows have a job to get enough twigs to make a nest. We have overcome this problem by laminating various imported exotics so perhaps we can teach the crows a thing or two.



Above the first Craobh Eo Seminar
Below Chapter members making goblets in the pub (museum)



Crossborder Chapter

In 2004 Guild Chairman Felix McCoy and his Journal Editor Hanspeter Bodmer enjoyed a drink at the bar of the Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth. Contemplating the Guild-map of the Emerald Isle; "Something must be done about that big blank area just north of Ireland's heart" they decided. However, it wasn't until two years later, in September 2006, that they joined up with Seamus McDermott and the three of them got the ball rolling. Seamus had, with the same objective in mind, been canvassing around his many friends in woodworking and teaching circles in county Monaghan and had a ready-made list of dozens of potential members for a new Woodturning Chapter in that region. Upon his invitation 26 interested woodturners met on September 21st at the Collegiate in Monaghan and the event turned on the spot into a constitutional meeting. After a first Committee Meeting a "Founders Workshop" took place on October 28th 2006 with 27 members and two 'godfathers' attending, namely Willie Creighton and Peter Donagh from the Craobh Eo and North East Chapters, respectively.

The new Crossborder Chapter was approved and recognised by the National Guild and started off in 2007 with 29 members and an ambitious programme. Its first Committee (Chairman Seamus McDermott, Secretary Hanspeter Bodmer, Treasurer Michael Crossan and members Martin Clerkin and Felix McCoy) conceived a working modus operandi, set up local rules and managed to get cooperation from a number of renowned demonstrators such as Billy Henry, Willie Creighton, Tony Rea, Peter Mulvaney, Eric Turner and Peter Donagh, to name but a few. Thus the membership soon swelled to 42. They came from counties Monaghan, Cavan, Meath, Louth, Armagh, Fermanagh and Down (but see Down Chapter below). Thanks to Treasurer Michael Crossan a new ideally suited venue was found, the woodworking workshop of the Beechhill College – in comfortable walking distance from Monaghan town centre.



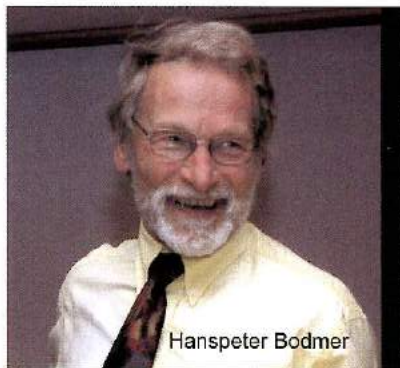
Members of the Crossborder Chapter with the Mayor of Craigavon at the time of a sale of work for cancer charities. Below left the founder members of CB



Crossborder Founder Members



Felix McCoy



Hanspeter Bodmer

By the end of 2007 the honeymoon was over. The 'spontaneous enthusiasts' dropped off and the fledgling Chapter settled into proven routines. With just over 30 serious member consolidation took place with first class demos by Joe O'Neill and Joe Laird from Dublin, Danny McGeever and John O'Sullivan from Sligo, Robert O'Connor and Willie Stedmond from Gorey, and Seamus Cassidy from the neighbouring North East Chapter. There were also instructive, and constructive, contributions from our own ranks (in particular from Ashley Hobson, Norman Alexander, Felix McCoy, Thommy McMahon, Eugene

Grimley, Harry Emerson and Hanspeter Bodmer) in the form of demos, hands-on workshops or do-it-yourself demos.

The Chapter's yearly Christmas Dinners in Monaghan and Barbecues at the Ranchito (Co. Down) are major social events and have become a very popular tradition. Thus that 'blank spot' in the northern heart of Ireland's woodturning map has been successfully filled with a Chapter for avid woodturners of six counties straddling the border.



Norman Alexander

Dolmen Chapter

Early in 2008 several members of the Midlands Chapter discussed forming a Chapter "nearer to home". On 26 February a meeting was held at the Seven Oaks Hotel in Carlow where it was passed that a local Chapter covering Carlow Town and the surrounding areas including Carlow County, South Kildare, South Laois, West Wicklow and North Kilkenny be proposed to IWG Committee. After much discussion and a vote the suggested name was the Dolmen Woodturners Chapter.

This was agreed by Executive Committee and Dolmen is now a thriving new Chapter of 17 regular members with the Chairman Johnny Hutton, Secretary Ray Harmon and Treasurer Arthur Dawson.



Down Chapter

This is the youngest Chapter of the IWG although it was conceived in 2002. At that time a group within the Ulster Chapter felt that they could better achieve some of the Guild's objectives by running a smaller working group operating closer to home. So membership was restricted to Ulster members residing within the Down district including some from neighbouring towns like Lisburn, Portadown and Belfast where travel might be more convenient for them.

The originating team included Archie McVeigh, Tony Rea, Bill Davidson, Hanspeter Bodmer, Gerry Douglas, M. McCavery and C. T. Rutledge. This soon grew to 18 members and meetings were held almost monthly in Tony Rea's workshop. These meetings were very flexible and included as well as demonstrations, brainstorming sessions, discussions and experience exchange, hands-on workshops or combinations of these.



Archie McVeigh



Tony and Lorraine Rea

During these years new members joined and replaced some of the earlier ones namely Archie McVeigh, Roy McKay and Gerry Douglas who were sadly missed when they left for 'the Great Workshop in the Sky'.

Tony's workshop (and house) were rebuilt during 2007 and, when this was available, it was decided to make

the group into an official Chapter of IWG.

During 2008 demonstrations continued including a useful one by a new member on the use of home made jigs and how to fold a bandsaw blade !

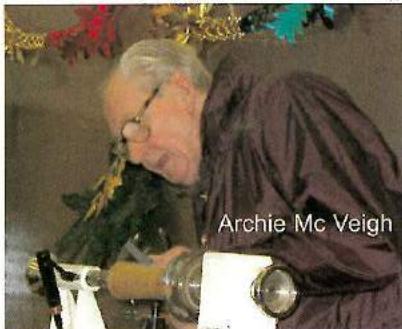


Nora C Baill, Roy Cochrane
George Beattie Maurice McCavery



Jim Johnston

Tony Rea



Archie Mc Veigh



Dublin Chapter

Dublin Chapter was up and running by 1990. One of the founders of the Chapter was Charlie McCaffrey (ob 28th March 1996). He also served the Chapter in other ways and was Secretary of the National Guild from 1994 to 1996.

Originally, informal meetings were held in members' homes but as the numbers grew it became necessary to find a bigger premises and the Chapter moved to Larch Hill, the Scouting Association National Campsite in Ticknock in the Dublin mountains. This became its official meeting place. On the 10th March 1990, before their first meeting, Dublin Woodturners planted 100 young walnut trees at Larch Hill. This event was sponsored by The Tree Council who have always been very supportive of the Guild.

Attendance was good but, given the known population of woodturners, (83 potential members) it was felt that there was room for improvement. Noel Badrian and David Comerford spent the morning of the first meeting cutting some storm-felled timber into moveable sized chunks. These were sold, with the money received going towards a replanting programme already started by the Guild. The first monthly workshop was an "Advice Clinic" conducted by Garth May. This led to a lively and useful discussion and it was decided to repeat this format in future workshops. A regular competition was also announced. This meeting also featured a demonstration on turning and a film by Joe O'Neill on some past events. An exhibition of members' work was also held as well as a sale of timber.

The second workshop, on tool sharpening and maintenance, was held. Tom Newman gave the benefit of his experience and Garth May showed some antique tools and their sharpening systems. Garth also told the meeting that he was restoring an antique lathe and he hoped to give a demonstration on it when restoration was complete. It was decided to have smaller (additional) meetings in members workshops with Garth May hosting the first. In 1992 the Dublin Chapter was looking at the possibility of twinning with woodturning chapters abroad, in the USA, England and Belgium. On several occasions members attended woodturning groups in Wales, who then reciprocated by visiting and demonstrating in Dublin. In 1993 the Dublin Chapter started their own newsletter under the editorship of Garth May. The Dublin members felt that their Chapter, which had in excess of 100 members, needed something more than the Guild Newsletter.

The recent Uileann Pipe Project and several other similar projects brought together a number of turners to make a complicated item and at the same time encourage interaction between Chapter members and so help improve techniques.



March 2006

In 1997 the Chapter moved again, to a new base at Terenure College. The membership at the time was about 140 but this has subsequently been reduced as the East Central and North East Chapters were formed. The pictures below show some of the projects the Chapter members have been involved in; the Spinning wheel and Uilleann pipes.”



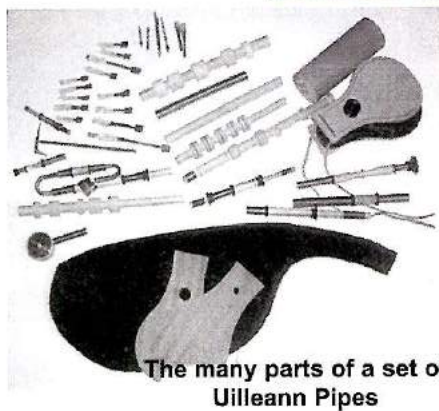
Left to right
 Michael Fay,
 Mary O'Rourke
 (not a guild member)
 Tom Forde,
 William Edwards
 Billy Kellaghan.
 Not in the picture but
 involved in the
 project were
 Frank Gallagher and
 James Gallagher.



To the right
 Frank Gallagher
 and below
 James Gallagher



Eddie O'Reilly



The many parts of a set of
 Uilleann Pipes

East Central Chapter

The East Central Chapter got off the ground in 2005 when it seemed to many woodturners that a group based in North Dublin would help to attract more people to the hobby and serve practicing turners better than existing arrangements. Tom Gibson, who was a founder member and its first Treasurer, discovered that an ideal location was there was there literally at his back door, the Scout Hall, Terenure. So, in June 2005 and after some amicable negotiations with the Scout Leaders, the first Chapter meeting began with a full house and an excellent demonstration by Geof Cronin.

Jim Cashin is still Chairman having been here from the beginning. Chris Hayes was Secretary at first but that role is now occupied by Des Harborne.

The majority of members in the Chapter come from North Dublin or County Dublin, the Chapter's catchment area. At start-up there was about 30 people signed up; this has now settled at around 20.

Apart from the regular demonstrations at the monthly meetings East Central has also tried different attractions at times. The wonderful trio of Dave Kelly, Joe Balmer and Albert Harrison from the UK have attended on two occasions – see issue 47 of the IWG Journal. It's quite overwhelming to see three lathes going full bore in a relatively small space; instructive and entertaining too.



Albert Harrison

In 2006 the Chapter organised an exhibition of turned objects at the request of the Fingal County Council headquarters in Swords, Co.Dublin.

Another time the Chapter ran a fundraising demonstration and sale of turned pieces for their host, the scout troop.

The Sorby Roadshow with Clive Brooks also put on their excellent and very popular act at a specially arranged meeting in 2007.



Dave Kelly

East Central's first Chapter Seminar took place on March 28, 2009, with the former President of the Guild, Emmet Kane, being the sole demonstrator.



Emmet Kane

The Chapter's website only got going in 2007 but has proved it's worth time and time again.



Joe Balmer

The address is www.eastcentralchapter.com

Note from the Chapter Webmaster: If you wish you can navigate to our meetings easily by logging onto our site, inputting your postal address and the location of the scout hall venue and follow the directions given.

Galway Chapter

The Galway Chapter was formed in 1992 with 20 members. Within two weeks this had increased to more than 30, with Joe Stephens as Chairman and Paidrig Fahy as Secretary. The first demonstration was very well attended as one of our members, Mike Regan, gave a demonstration on the lathe. This was the start of giving people the idea of what can be done on the lathe, so that beginners can have a go on a lathe before going out to buy one for themselves.

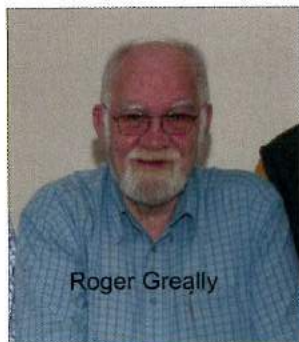
This clearly shows the enthusiasm with which the Chapter in Galway was formed and how quickly they began organising their own meetings from the expertise within their membership.



Ciaran Forbes

The Chapter ran what in today's terms would be called closed Chapter workshops in 1992 and 1993. In 1996 it ran its first One-Day Seminar with demonstrators Ciaran Forbes, Tom Dunlop, Des O'Halloran and Mike Regan. Since 1996, the seminars have been run with flair and ambition and always building on the strengths within the Chapter. We have always featured our own talented turners alongside our invited turners. This was always an opportunity to showcase our members and their work. In recent years we have featured international turners, mostly from the next parish to the West (the U.S.A.) and have attracted delegates from all over the country.

Our involvement with the Guild nationally has been there from the start being represented by Mary Tierney in 1994, Mike Regan in 1995 & 1996, Ambrose O'Halloran from 1997 to 2003. Ambrose also held the positions of Honorary Secretary 1999 – 2002, Vice Chairman 2002 -2003, and Vice President 2003 – date. Enda Coffey served on the Executive Committee 2001–2003 while Roger Greally served as Membership Secretary 2005–2008. Since 2006 John McGann has chaired the Chapter while Ambrose O'Halloran is Secretary.



Roger Greally



Sean
McGann



Ambrose
O'Halloran

Gorey and District Chapter

Woodturning in the Gorey region flourished well before the formation of the IWG. Willie Stedmond, a founder member of the Guild, started giving adult woodturning classes in 1980, taking over from John Shiel who ran them in the late 1970s. These classes



continue today and a number of high profile turners have demonstrated with Willie, including Liam O'Neill, Ciaran Forbes, Ray Key, Dell Stubbs, Mick O'Donnell, Mike St.Clair, Melvin Firmager and Stuart Mortimer.

A "Chapter" was formed in 1990 by Willie Stedmond with other members including Michael Murphy, Kevin Lee, Jim Redmond and Ronnie McCormick. Unfortunately no documentary evidence is available as"

Gorey folk seemed more interested in promoting the craft of woodturning rather than history or administration." (How often have we heard this refrain).

The first recorded outing of the Chapter was in 1991 when it won First Prize for the float in the Gorey St. Patrick' Day Parade. In this float Michael Murphy demonstrated a pole lathe, Sigfried Wendingh a treadle lathe while Jim Redmond and two Murphy sons manned a crosscut.

After this the "chapter" operated under the radar but continued to hold monthly workshops until 1995 when it was placed on a more formal footing with Willie Stedmond as Chairman, Paul Kavanagh as Secretary, Alan Thomas as Treasurer and with 34 on the members list.

The Chapter again went dormant until 1997 when Pat Kinsella, Dorothy Stedmond, Robert and Mary O'Connor and Ray McGrath joined Willie, Tom Dunlop and other members of the Executive Committee to make preparations for the National Seminars of 1998 and 1999 to be held in Gorey.

Again no official records were kept but monthly workshops rotated to various members' places until 2001 when Robert O'Connor kindly offered his facilities on a permanent basis.

The Chapter AGM of 2002 was to herald another new beginning when Sean O'Neill became Secretary and greater efforts were made to adhere to the Guild Constitution and Operating Procedures. The Chapter has since gone from strength to strength with almost 50 members and has staged successful One Day Seminars in each year from 2003 to 2009. At the request of the Executive Committee 2008 was deferred to accommodate the Anniversary Seminar.

Sean O'Neill is the current Chairman and Austin Gilroy is Secretary, while a special office of Chapter President has been awarded to Willie Stedmond to honour his contribution to Gorey and District.

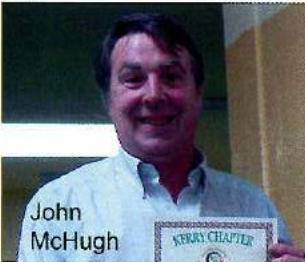


Kerry Chapter

The inaugural meeting of the Kerry Chapter was held at the Grand Hotel, Tralee on the 29th April 1996. Three members of the Cork Chapter also attended – Dermot Chapman, Michael O'Loughlin and Paddy Lynch who outlined the aims and objectives of the Guild. The rules and regulations covering the setting up of a Chapter and spoke at length of the activities of their own Chapter including the organisation of workshops and the exchange of ideas. The following were elected:- Chairman Timothy Scannell and Secretary Niall Scott with a Committee of Kieran O'Connell, Ray McManus, John McHugh and John J. Roche. In the first year there were twelve members.

The first practical meeting was held on October 12th 1996 in Ray McManus's workshop where he demonstrated spindle turning – and cut his finger in the process.

The big break-through for the Chapter came in 1999 when members were asked to produce goblets and platters for the Jeanie Johnson replica famine ship (see Journal 40, March 2007). They became a high profile exhibit in the Visitor Centre next to the shipyard in Blennerville, Tralee, for two weekends. With 6 lathes in operation the public interest was immense and that was what enticed our professional carvers John and Theresa Murphy to our midst. They were involved with carving the ship's name and draught marks on the starboard, port and bow, and on a platter, turned by Bill Holmes, that was presented to President Mary McAleese at the ship's launch. Since then Theresa and John have become real club stalwarts, both playing 'their parts as dedicated committee members and also producing some stunningly turned items.



The first Kerry seminar was staged in 2003 with great success, and the Chapter is about to embark on its 4th biennial event. There are now six regular meeting venues centred in and around Tralee with a committed nucleus of fifteen members rising to twenty three or four on big occasions. John McHugh continues to be the bedrock of the Chapter, always happy to share his infinite knowledge, skills, advice, time and patience and, more than that, he always knows a better way to complete a project than the

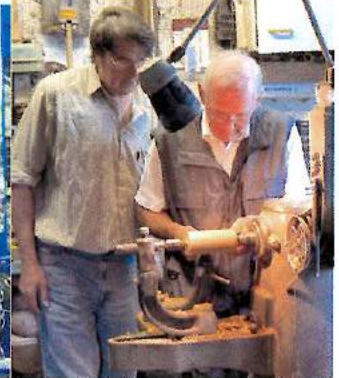
route I take. Don't you just hate people like that?!



Haulie Fitzpatrick



Phil Casey



Brendan Heaslip with John McHugh

Letterfrack chapter

The Letterfrack Chapter of the IWG was established at the college in 2004 by a group of furniture design students who wanted to learn the craft of wood turning. The Chapter is run by a committee of students and is specially aimed at students who have never turned wood before. In 2006 the Chapter obtained premises in which to house wood turning lathes for the use of members during, and outside college hours. From September 2009 a new wood turning premises specifically designed to house the lathes will be in place to continue the tradition of woodturning on the GMIT Letterfrack campus.

The Chapter holds wood turning classes with guest turners invited to demonstrate. Members can use the lathes in the wood turning workshop when they have free classes and also in the evenings and at weekends. The Chapter welcomes members of all levels from beginner to advanced. Members of the Letterfrack Chapter also become members of the nationwide IWG.

There is a large interest in wood turning in GMIT Letterfrack. Design and Technology Education students like myself have an added interest as we aim to bring a higher standard of wood turning to the students of secondary schools throughout the country. Wood turning is a worthwhile hobby to take up. It offers great relief from stress and the end results give a huge feeling of satisfaction.

Limerick and District Chapter

Founded by John Ryan from Ballyneety Co Limerick, in 1991, this was one of the first chapters to be formed. Originally referred to as the Limerick Chapter it adopted its full name of Limerick and District at the second meeting. A group of 12 including Jim Foley, John Ryan, Ciaran Forbes and Clive Killick met in the Shannon Inn on the 13th March 1991. After much



debate it was decided to hold two workshops and a tree planting. The members met at Castleconnell and planted 9 trees, a mix of sweet chestnut and hornbeam.

The first Demonstration was held at Ciaran Forbes's workshop at Glenstal Abbey on the 6th April when 7 members attended and the second at Jim Foleys workshop in Ballina, Killaloe, Co Clare on the 13th April when there were 8 in attendance. Donal Lynch, a woodwork teacher in the Crescent College, was later instrumental in getting the woodwork room in the school for demonstrations for the chapter and this is still the main meeting place.

On the 24th April 1991 the members met and elected a committee with Chairman Jim Foley and Secretary / Treasurer John Ryan assisted by Jack Liston. At that meeting the chapter adopted the name Limerick and District Woodturners and covered the area of Limerick City and County, Clare and North Tipperary.

One problem aired early on was the poor attendance at meetings and the reluctance of members to bring in and show their work. In 1992 the Chapter ran a one day seminar / workshop in Kilfinane Education Centre as a joint venture with Limerick Vocational Education Committee. Demonstrators were Jim Foley, Michael O'Halloran (First Aid), Martini Currans, Ciaran Forbes and Tom Dunlop. This event attracted an attendance of 32 and was a great success. In 1995 Limerick held an exhibition of woodturning in Foynes Library by members in association with National Tree Week. Trees were also planted in the vicinity of the library.

Over the years the Chapter has run, as well as the monthly demonstrations, several one- day seminars held in the FAS complex in the city with a mix of international and home turners demonstrating. Recent Seminars featured Bro Ciaran Forbes, Willie Stedmond and Mark Baker, with Ian Norbury, the well known woodcarver in 2000 and Liam Flynn, Ray Jones and Jim Johnston in 2003.

In 2007 Glen Lucas, Roger Bennett and Tom Dunlop covering aspects of woodturning, while Barry McKee explored the possibilities of carving and Ray Walsh showed how to apply the crafts to make bespoke chairs. An innovation to the usual seminars was an excursion into basketry by Peter Sheahan, an experienced designer and maker of willow baskets.

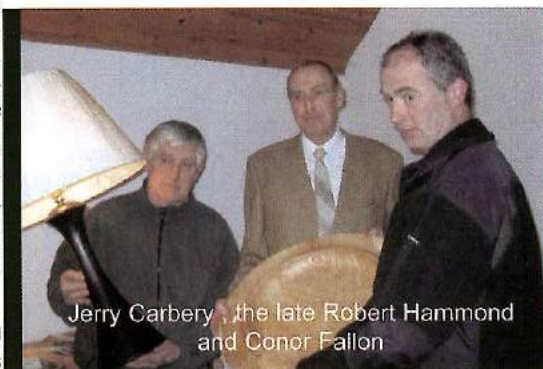
Midlands Chapter

Founded in the Carlow/Kilkenny region in 1994 with John Hutton as Chairman and Emmet Kane as Secretary. The first demonstration was given by Chairman John Hutton in Emmet Kane's workshop in Castledermot. This was on aspects of spindle turning and was attended by Gordon Rose, Treasurer of the Guild. This gave the imprimatur to the Chapter in March 1994. Demonstrations were then held monthly in members' workshops which spread Northwards into Co Meath ,while membership grew to more than 40.

In 1997 Emmet Kane became the youngest Chairman of the Executive Committee, a position he held for three years when he moved into the Presidency of IWG.

In 1997 the Chapter decided to exhibit their pieces in the Naas Library and the hard work, particularly of Robert Hutton, Paddy O'Connor and Jim Roche, paid off to the extent that the exhibition has been held in the same venue for the next nine years. It was very successful in introducing woodworking into the community and generating new membership.

In 2003 and 2004 a strong Committee under Arthur Dawson's Chairmanship hosted two Annual National Seminars in Maynooth. Some of the Chapter's top turners viz Paddy O'Connor, Martin Gleeson, Francis Morrin, Emmet Kane and John Shiels were well up to the standards set by the other Irish and international demonstrators Seamus Cassidy, Willie Stedmond, Tom Dunlop and Jim Johnston and Mark Hancock, Ray Key, Johannes Rieber, Mark Sfirri and Pablo Nemzoff.



Partly as a result of the setting of the Dolmen Chapter by John Hutton and others, numbers have dropped slightly but the quality of woodturnings is still high and can be seen at our monthly workshop displays held in the permanent home at Dan Sheridan's place in Newbridge.

Finally, we must say that we are honoured that Emmet Kane is still a member, and now Chairman, of the Midland Chapter even since he has become a professional woodturner and gives demonstrations abroad as well as in Ireland.

North East Chapter

The year was 2000, The Millenium year when every computer in the country was supposed to crash. At this point in the Guild's history there were woodturners in the Louth, Meath, Westmeath, Monaghan and Cavan regions unaware of the IWG. There was also a dedicated group of Guild members who travelled to Dublin, Ulster or even to Galway Chapter meetings monthly. There obviously was a need for something more local if we were to progress. This is where Francis Morrin stepped in. He was the Guild Journal Editor and a member of the National Executive Committee. At a public meeting about 40/45 people turned up and the North East Chapter was born. The committee elected were Chairman; Tom McCourt, Secretary; Francis Morrin, Treasurer; Karl Foley. Two committee members elected were Pat Power and Paul McElroy



Peter Donagh Seamus Cassidy

The first problem was to find a Chapter meeting place that would be central to all in the region. In June of 2000 the very first demonstration took place at Francis Morrin's workshop in Ratoath. Very soon after this first workshop we were offered the use of excellent premises near Newgrange, Co. Meath, home of professional woodturner Seamus Cassidy. Seamus has a beautiful workshop and gallery in a restored stone cart house.

Our first Chapter meeting and demonstration in our new home was on the 15th of July 2000. Tom McCourt was our first demonstrator and he turned a clock.

We had great support in these early days from our neighbouring Chapters of Dublin, Midlands and Ulster. In October of our first year we received a major boost with a very generous loan from the Dublin Chapter of a set of books and videos to help us start our own library. These books and videos have been enjoyed ever since by our members and indeed have been boosted by the addition of many donations from our members.

Our demonstration list for the first half of our first full year in existence in 2001 were; Tom McCourt, Francis Morrin, Peter Donagh, Karl Foley and Seamus Carter. Peter Donagh said "I always remember my first meeting with Seamus Carter from the Dublin Chapter. Seamus was to demonstrate for us his now famous barley twist. This immaculately dressed gentleman arrived at our Chapter meeting. He wore a lovely suit, shirt and tie and a red rose in his lapel. I thought at the time this guy has really raised the dress standards for the North East Chapter meetings. He was a brilliant demonstrator and had clearly done this many times before. I recall that demo because he had great Dublin wit and always had a story to put his point over."

In 2001 we were going strong, our membership was constant at just under 30. A perfect number for our venue. At our 2002 AGM, Francis Morrin announced because he was moving house back to Kildare he would not be standing as Secretary. Peter Donagh agreed to accept the job.

We came up with a simple formula for the Chapter calendar ie six home grown demonstrators and six visitor demonstrators. This worked well because it encouraged our Chapter members to step up to the plate and give it a go.

In October 2003 we had a One Day Seminar with Tobias Kaye the well known International Woodturner and maker of his famous sounding bowls.

2004 AGM brought about a change of Chairman to Ivan Cotterill. Ivan became a very active Chairman and soon undertook the publication of a Chapter monthly news bulletin with reports on the previous month's demonstration, tips and competition results, news etc. This was a great source of information for those who couldn't make a meeting or simply to file the information. It lasted for about two years but, sadly when Ivan moved to Galway with his work and now back to the UK, the bulletins have ceased. Nobody has taken up the challenge. Yet!

2005 Programme saw us with demonstrators like Martin Gleeson, Sam Abernethy, Willie Stedmond, Robert O'Connor, Tom Ronayne, Tom Gibson and a return visit from Francis Morrin.

2006 AGM Again a new Chairman, Bob Dier.

We have always had a competition in the Chapter. It is felt it encourages members to turn at least one quality piece of work each month. And those who enter the competitions have improved in leaps and bounds. Our secret to this great success is the fact that our judge of monthly competition work is none other than Seamus Cassidy. This has continued to benefit all who enter and the standard of work has risen remarkably.

Our programme saw some great visiting turners in 2006 ie Willie Creighton, Paddy and Robert O'Connor, Sam Abernethy, David O'Neill and Seamus Cassidy.

2007 Some big names on our demonstrator list for 2007 were Billy Henry, Paddy O'Connor, Sam Abernethy, Robert O'Connor, Hanspeter Bodmer, Owen Furness and our very own Seamus Cassidy

2008 Our visiting demonstrators were Sam Abernethy, Charlie Ryan, Robert O'Connor, Paddy O'Connor and Joe Laird.

Since our foundation in 2000 Sam Moore from the Wood Shed has visited and supplied our members with much needed turning kit. In more recent times our turning needs were also looked after by Stephen and Des Harbourne of "The Hut". Thank you guys!

2009 As we start into another year with a new Chairman, Peter Donagh, we look forward to our 10th Anniversary in 2010. The credit for the success of the North East Chapter must go to the hardworking committee members down through the years and to Seamus Cassidy for the use of his workshop each month. We have something special in the North East. We all get on well together, we enjoy our woodturning, we look forward to our monthly meetings, the friendship, the craic, the idyllic setting and the laid back atmosphere. A nice place to spend a few hours on a Saturday afternoon. You may end up going home with a piece of timber, good advice or even a half dozen free range eggs.(I hope this applies to all chapters, well except perhaps for the eggs.)



The father and son Halligan band entertain the North East Chapter at Seamus Cassidy's house and workshop



We owe Seamus Cassidy and Mary a special word of thanks for allowing us into their lives and Seamus's work space every month for the past nine years. The Annual BBQ in July has become a lovely event, a mixture of good turning, music, good food and fun.

North West Chapter

The first meetings where turners got together were at Riatts Hardware Store during Sorby demonstrations.

A more formal meeting was held on the 5th February 2007 at the Pin Tavern Letterkenny when Willie Creighton (Vice Chairman of the Irish Woodturners Guild) and Hanspeter Bodmer (IWG Journal Editor) gave the assembled 14 woodturners a talk about the "Workings and Advantages of the IWG".

At this meeting of 14 local turners from Letterkenny to Laghey decided to form a Chapter of the Irish Woodturners Guild. Elected Chairman was Tom Campbell, Treasurer, Brian Lavery and Secretary, Ed Wiazewicz.

A committee meeting was to be held to sort out Chapter accounts and meeting venue. On 17th February a committee meeting was held at Tom Campbell's house to decide on the day of the week it was possible to have a meeting. This was agreed to be the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm sharp. Tom kindly offered his premises to host the meetings which was gratefully accepted.

Since then we moved venues mainly using community centres and any available premises until Stanley Raitt finished his shed and offered it as a venue for the Chapter. This we gratefully accepted. We currently meet there on the second Tuesday of the month.

Since then we have tried to bring in top level demonstrators to the Northwest and in the last three years we have had Mick Hanbury, Tony Wilson and Dave Springett.

Last but not least thanks to all the Chapter members who have demonstrated since the Chapter was formed.

Sligo Chapter

Formed on the 17th May 1995, a group of like-minded people, with a passion for wood met in the Scouts Den in Sligo. Their aim was to establish a chapter of the Irish Woodturners Guild. This initial meeting was chaired by Danny McGeever. A total of twenty four people attended. Men and women, young and old from all walks of life, people with experience of woodturning and some just starting out.

Danny McGeever gave a history of the National Guild and set out the benefits of being affiliated. He was well versed in the workings of the guild as he had helped organise the Seminars in Sligo in 1989 and 1990. That night the Sligo Chapter was born. The following were elected: - Chairman; Danny McGeever, Secretary: Dymrna O'Carroll.



The first meeting was held in June and was well attended. Demonstrations on basic spindle turning were given by Danny McGeever, Sean Burke and Bobby Egan on a small Record lathe supplied by Danny. Initially meetings were held in the Scouts Den but in October 1996 it was decided that meetings would rotate among members' workshops. This meant that demonstrators could use larger lathes. Apart from the monthly demonstrations the Chapter ran a competition with a different item to be turned each month. Instead of "judging" it was agreed by members that all members present would assess each piece on a scale from 0 to 10. Points were added up after each meeting and a prize is awarded to the person with the highest total at the end of the year.

Around the same time Danny McGeever and the V.E.C. were holding courses in woodturning and many participants became members of the chapter. On the 5th March 1997 in association with National Tree week the chapter held a very impressive exhibition of woodturning in the V.E.C. College, along with demonstrations, which was open to the public and, of course, the students of the college.

Meetings were held in various members' workshops and they were from time to time held in Mayo to save the Mayo lads so much travelling. Attendances were fairly good and demonstrators were usually from within the chapter. The chapter benefitted greatly from the experience and skills of Danny McGeever. Danny, being one of the founding members of the IWG was and indeed still is a great source of learning and is always very keen to pass on his knowledge. John O' Sullivan, John Rynne and Sean Burke are also long standing members of the Sligo chapter who give of their time and talents on a regular basis.

1997 onwards was a period of consolidation for the Sligo Chapter. Membership fluctuated during this period as did the interest of members. This it seems is not unusual apparently as other chapters have had the same problem. However towards the end of the nineties a good number of members hailed from the Ballina and wider Mayo region. This was good for the Sligo chapter as it increased membership and it was also good for the lads from Mayo as it gave them a place where they could feel part of the wider woodturning fraternity.

Around 2004 the members from the Mayo region decided that they would form their own chapter, as numbers from that area had increased sufficiently well enough to do so. It was a period of reforming ranks for the Sligo Chapter as it faced up to a loss of 8 or 9 members. However it was not long before the numbers built up again and we were back to what we had been before the Mayo Chapter was formed. Our membership has remained fairly constant with good attendances at our monthly meetings. Membership is drawn from counties Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal and Roscommon.

Our programme is varied and we try from month to month to cover all aspects of woodturning. Special demonstrators are invited to our meetings to deal with specific topics and this has proved popular, as has been the practice of having well known UK Woodturners come to our chapter for all day demonstrations and master classes specifically for our own chapter. We have also had a number of excursions recently as well as a date in the New Year when we go out for a meal and we bring our wives and partners to this and again this has been much appreciated.

Office bearers have come and gone over the period and all have played an invaluable part in the ongoing work of our chapter. We thank all those who have held office over the years. They are too numerous to mention but they can be assured that their work and efforts have played an invaluable part in the ongoing success of the Sligo chapter.

In recent years we have seen new members coming to us and this has helped to keep us on our toes. The skills that these have brought to the chapter is considerable and we are only too glad to give them their heads and also to use them as demonstrators (and also to use their well appointed workshops). We also have a good number of younger members and we had occasional meetings especially for them.

So all in all, the Sligo Chapter is in good shape and we are confident that as we go forward we will continue to do well and play our part in fostering the aims and ideals of the IWG.



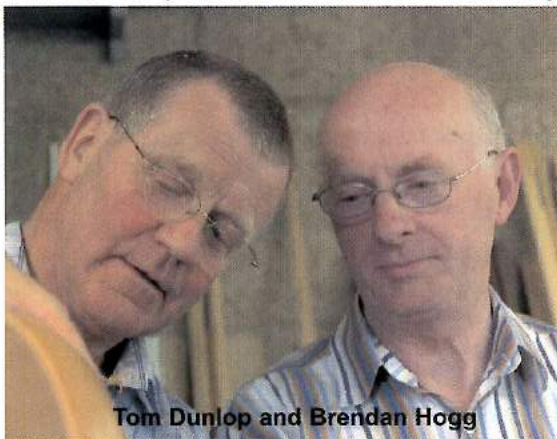
Danny McGeever

South East Chapter

This Chapter was set up at a meeting in Waterford on 25 September 1990 when the officers elected were Tom Dunlop, Chairman; Gordon Rose (RIP) Secretary; Tom Larkin, Treasurer.

The first Chapter workshop was held in Tom Dunlop's on the 17th Nov.1991 followed by the second at Tom Larkin's in June 1991. After that, workshops were held on the 3rd. Saturday of every month with the exception of August, without a single cancellation to date. Locations of our monthly workshops varies as they are normally held in members workshops, with the host or a visiting demonstrator doing the honours.

In the early days of the chapter, we had members from Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, and Tipperary but in 2002 the Waterford members formed their own Waterford Chapter.



Tom Dunlop and Brendan Hogg

For a Chapter with only about 30 'active' members we have had some outstanding results at National competitions. Our first National winner was in 1993 when Kate Walsh from Wexford took the top prize with a beautiful set of vases. This is the only time in the 25 year Guild history that a lady member took top honours.

The next year Glen Lucas took the top prize, while Paddy Murphy took the honours at the 17th Annual Seminar in Gorey in 1998 .Our members ' took a rest' for a few years until 2009 when Glen Lucas again took top honours.

Another member Brendan Hogg gave his first demonstration at a Chapter workshop at George Wills's workshop in Inistioge in February 2000, and has not stopped since. He has won numerous awards at national and local seminars including second prize at the Anniversary Seminar 2008.

However, the highlight of our Chapter's history must surely be the winning of the inaugural 'Chapter Challenge' at the 2008 National Seminar. For this, Paddy Murphy produced a stunning set of 35 boxes, all of which fit inside each other. The size of the biggest one was to be no more than 10in.by 5in. (254mm. by127 mm) For this magnificent feat, Paddy has received National and International acclaim, which is only fitting for this pure gentleman of Irish woodturning.



Over the years, our Chapter members have served on the Irish Woodturners Guild National Executive with distinction. Gordon Rose, Tom Dunlop and Evan Petty have all served as officers over the years with the latter being the present President and Editor of this book. Chapter members are also prominent at our National Seminars with up to 50% of our Chapter regularly attending.

The Chapter has also hosted the National Seminar in Kilkenny on three occasions – 1993, 1994 and 1995 – (another three in a row for Kilkenny and a first in the Guild history!!!)

The South East Chapter's annual Exhibition and Sale of members' work at the Kilkenny Arts Festival must be the longest running annual exhibition of woodturning in Ireland. From humble beginnings in August 1991, this event has grown annually and is now recognised in the South East and by the many national and international visitors to the festival for its excellence, both in quality and range of woodturnings displayed.

With a core group of about 25 members who attend workshops regularly and another 10 or so not so active , the South East Chapter members are dedicated to helping each other achieve their maximum potential as woodturners.

As well as that there is an immense camaraderie amongst our members and our workshops are as much a social outing as a learning experience.



Kilkenny Exhibition



Glenn Lucas wins the 25th Anniversary Seminar Competition
Chris Hayes presenting the prize



Paddy Murphy, maker of the Boxes
getting the trophy from Joe Laird



Brid O'Halloran demonstrating at a
SE Chapter meeting

Tutor Chapter

The origins of the Tutor Chapter go back to the analysis of the membership survey which was conducted by Ambrose O'Halloran in 1998. It was suggested that there was a need for the Guild to have a formal policy on woodturning courses to ensure that the highest standards of tuition applied. In April 2000, the Executive Committee set up an initial sub-committee to formulate a syllabus. Tom Dunlop, Danny McGeever, Ambrose O'Halloran and Seamus Quinlan met and formulated a Foundation Course Syllabus. This syllabus was then run on a pilot basis under the local Vocational Education Committee in Galway and Cork in the autumn of 2000.

The main aim of this syllabus was to provide the basics of tool control and sharpening for between-centre turning. The course is designed to be given at a slow pace, ideally over 10 weeks, to allow the students to develop confidence. Each of the nine lessons consists of a brief description of the technique by the tutor, a demonstration of the technique, and then the students get hands-on practice. In a typical 2 hour session the description and demonstration should be 20 minutes maximum. Emphasis is placed on getting a good finish from the tool. As such no finishing or sanding is incorporated into this syllabus.

One of the main aims of the IWG is to promote woodturning and properly structured classes were seen as one way of achieving this aim. It was a recommendation of the sub-committee that a permanent syllabus sub-committee be set up. This was accepted and subsequently incorporated into the Guild's Standard Operating procedures. Under the Guild's Constitution, the syllabus sub-committee is a permanent sub-committee of the Executive Committee and it was a recommendation of the sub-committee that a Tutor chapter be formed. On Sunday 2nd February 2003 all the members of the Guild who had requested a copy of the syllabus were invited to a meeting in Portlaoise. At that meeting the Tutor Chapter was formed. The aims of the Tutor Chapter are:

- 1 To ensure that a permanent body is in place to monitor the syllabus.
- 2 To allow the people delivering the syllabus to have a forum.
- 3 To allow a structure to develop tutors' skills.
- 4 To allow a mechanism for syllabus review and update monitoring.
- 5 To be the Guild's body promoting education in woodturning.
- 6 Membership is open to any Guild member who is either delivering the syllabus or wishes to do so. The only criteria for membership are:-
 - A Ability to turn to a high standard.
 - B Good communication/teaching skills.
 - C Willingness to demonstrate any part of the syllabus to their peer tutors and be prepared to receive an honest critique.

It is important to point out that for insurance considerations the Guild, through the Tutor Chapter, cannot issue certificates of competence to Tutor Chapter members.

By September 2004 the Tutor Chapter had twenty-two members drawn from ten different Chapters around the country. The first workshop was held in June 2003 and the second held in August 2004. The Tutor Chapter is not like a normal Chapter. It meets only once a year and not at a fixed date or venue.

Ulster Chapter

The newsletter of June 1991 stated that the Guild would like to see a Chapter forming in Northern Ireland. The Guild offered financial support in the form of a grant towards the start of a chapter. The call was to any members who were meeting regularly with other woodturners to form a chapter.

This Chapter was founded on the 11th January 1992. The person most responsible was Archie McVeigh, who joined the Guild in 1990 and attended the Sligo Seminar. He put an advert in the Belfast telegraph about a meeting to start a branch of the Guild and 70 turned up for the inaugural meeting at Lisburn Leisure Centre. A minority were members of the Irish Woodturners Guild. Two attendees were Cecil Brown from Omagh and Michael Dickson from Muckamore who had been principal office bearers in the IWG in its formative years. Along with several others they formed the Ulster Chapter. Archie McVeigh was elected first Chairman and in 1984 Michael Dickson took over. Pat McKeefry was elected Secretary and he kept accurate minutes as well as starting our local Newsletter.

Nial Fitzduff, an active member of the Executive became Chairman in 1984-1986 and continued to demonstrate on a regular basis. However, due to pressure of community development work, at first in Northern Ireland and later in many other countries, he took a less active role in our activities. In 1977 he had set up a woodworking business in Ardboe, Co. Tyrone and turning became a passion (it does, doesn't it?). In 1983 he was awarded the Crafts Council Medal but five years ago he decided to get on his bike and find sponsorship for his main work in community development. This involved cycling against the clock 75 miles around Lough Neagh, then later 1000 miles around Ireland followed by races from Land's End to John O'Groats and several routes on the Continent. His most recent spin has been across the USA from Los Angeles to Boston which he completed in 40 days raising several thousand dollars for a development organisation in South America. Maybe his next trick will be to take his lathe on the handlebars!

During one of his stopovers in his home country he wrote an interesting article for our Journal (Issue 48) showing how things have changed in the woodturning scene here. I think some extracts are well worth repeating :-

Returning by Niall Fitzduff

"Turning down a very generous offer from Peter Lyons of a lift from Hollywood I set out on the bike on a cold 12th January Saturday afternoon in good time for my first Chapter meeting in 12 years. I hadn't planned on a puncture, rain and high winds which would leave me half an hour late. Such concerns would have been of less consequence in the easy going days when the Ulster Chapter got underway in the early 90's or indeed in the early days of the IWG in the 80's. I was greatly relieved to step into the shelter of the Woodshed and the welcome from Sam (Moore) and to see only a few people viewing the tools and blanks for sale. I presumed things would soon get underway when a few more gathered!

I opened the door into the demonstration room to be met with a packed gallery of faces a number familiar to me like Michael Dickson first Hon. Sec. of IWG and Cecil Brown who had become Chair after I had stood down from the post in 1986. The demonstration was in full swing.

Something has changed I thought! The Chapter had found a home everything around it spoke of woodturning. There was no longer the need to stand around the lathe to sneak the odd glimpse of what was going on.

David O'Neill demonstrated from a platform, cameras caught and displayed the images on screen from a number of angles.



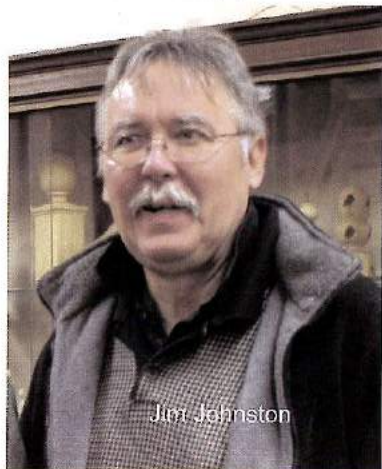
Michael Dickson and Nial Fitzduff

I had a sneak preview of the competition time pieces in the upstairs room, the quality was high and the stakes higher. No mistake; the competition was serious business no holds barred when it came to appraisal. This sharpness was new, the technical analysis left one in no doubt that excellence in design, innovation and choice of wood were the order of

the day. Not for the faint hearted I thought."

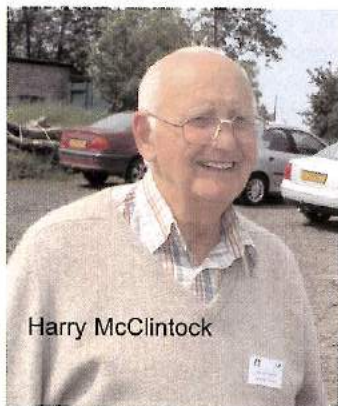
Another outstanding member of the Ulster Chapter was Harry McClintock. Harry was a school's craft teacher and, as well as demonstrating regularly, became our Treasurer, a post he filled with distinction for many years .

We enjoyed many workshops at Antrim High School courtesy of the efforts of Jim Johnston. Jim Johnston also served for many years as a Vice President of the



Jim Johnston

IWG. Jim also became a member of the Register of Professional



Harry McClintock

Turners in the UK and became the Northern Ireland inspector for the RPT. He helped Ulster turners Billy Henry, Eric Turner and Sam Abernethy to become members of the RPT. Jim is well known throughout the rest of the Chapters of the IWG. Jim is now living in Spain.

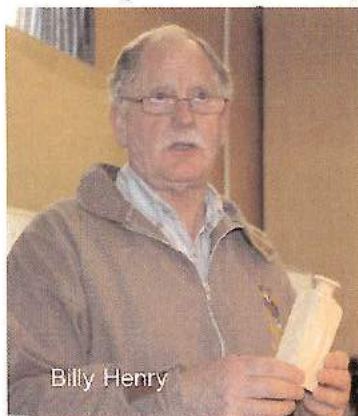
We well remember the venue for two vastly different reasons. Our Saturdays always seemed to clash with Ireland's Six Nations Rugby matches and some would often sneak off at half time and maybe only come back before the end.

The other reason was on one such day we heard the first news of the Omagh Bomb. People often ask us where were you when President Kennedy was killed? We only too well remember where we were on that day.

For our first local seminar at the Lough Road School in Antrim, Ciaran Forbes and Garth May demonstrated their skills. Garth combined redwood weaving as decoration on top of a bowl but Ciaran said "Sure all I can do is make an f--ing bowl". Danny McGeever also came up that day. It was 7th May 1994; I know, as that's what written on the f--ing bowl!

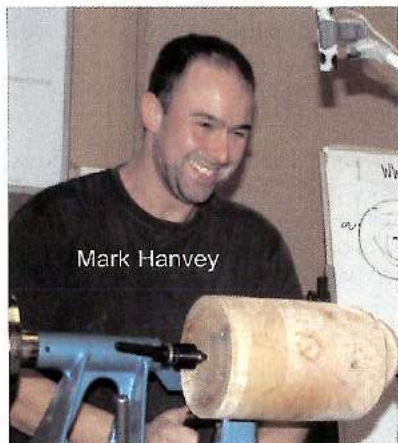
As in days gone by Ulster has produced its fair share of talent. Some names stand out; in recent times the names of Billy Henry, Tom McCosh, David O'Neill, Eric Turner are currently at the top of the league. A few from the past? Billy Barnard and his cabriole legs? Ricky Richardson from Bangor? Billy and Sam Ferris. Austin McNally, Pat McKeefry, Sean Gibson.

Who remembers Charlie Watts? Won his first prize in the open class aged 10? David Ellsworth gave him first prize in the open class at a Galway seminar



the last time he was here. Charlie is still only 18 but sadly has taken up hi-tech engineering - a loss to our chapter as well as the IWG.

Finally the most iconic of all, Mark Harvey, whom Ellsworth once described as the most complete woodturner in Ireland and amongst the very best in the world.



Around 2002 Peter Lyons joined the Guild as part of the Ulster Chapter. Peter took over the secretary's job from Alfie Conn, who had succeeded Shaw Campbell. Peter also set up the Ulster Chapter web site, he still maintains it at www.iwgulsterchapter.com

In 2006 the Ulster Chapter was offered a permanent residence for chapter meetings by

Sam Moore of The Woodshed at Templepatrick, Co Antrim, After a special meeting of the Chapter we have been there since. Recently we have encouraged young turners to take part in our Chapter, we have had some limited success with this.

Ulster woodturners all we salute you! Keep up the good work.



Waterford and District Chapter

The Waterford and District Chapter of the IWG was set up in the year 2000. A group of woodturners, already members of the IWG, recognised that there was a sufficient number of people living in Waterford and the surrounding district who were already involved in woodturning or who were interested in taking up the craft, to warrant the setting up of their own chapter. Two other major reasons for setting up this chapter were to reduce travelling distance and travelling time to workshops of other Chapters. The original founding members in 2000 were: J Murray, M Dunphy, R Crowley, F O'Connor, N Daly, H Monks, A Browne, N Ryan, D Mullane, T Goulding, S Callanan, E Hoffman, and C Barrett.

Meetings were held on 20/12/1999 and 5/1/2000. At the latter, a committee was appointed. It consisted of: Richard Crowley (Chairman), John Murray (Sec), Anthony Browne (Treas). Interestingly, Richard is still our Chairman while John is now our P.R.O. (Unfortunately, founder member Ned Daly passed away in January 2009. R.I.P).

Richard Crowley also provided us with a "base" where we still hold our workshops to this day. A decision was made in the beginning to hold two workshops per month, and that arrangement still continues - on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

By the end of the year 2000 the chapter had 14 members. Over the next few years the membership fluctuated between 14 and 30. As usual, some people signed up over the years only to disappear as soon as the initial enthusiasm wore off or other demands had to take precedence. Our membership has settled at approximately 18 over the last couple of years, with a very regular attendance at workshops.

In the early years of our existence we regularly invited turners from other chapters, especially from our nearest neighbours in the south east chapter, to demonstrate at our workshops. Gradually, our own members became more proficient at turning and demonstrating. At this point most of our workshops feature our own members demonstrating a wide variety of projects. However, visits from "outside" turners are still always welcome.



Each year since 2001 we have arranged a one day workshop for our members, featuring a number of demonstrators from the UK, in particular Joe Balmer, Albert Harrison, Dave Kelly, and others. These have proved to be very successful events and are very popular with our members and visitors from other chapters.

In the last few years we have arranged trips to National Seminars, one day seminars and events in the UK. Our members have taken part in exhibitions in the Waterford area and have tried to encourage as many people as possible to take up the craft of woodturning. All of our members are hobby turners, and are constantly trying to learn and improve their knowledge and skill.

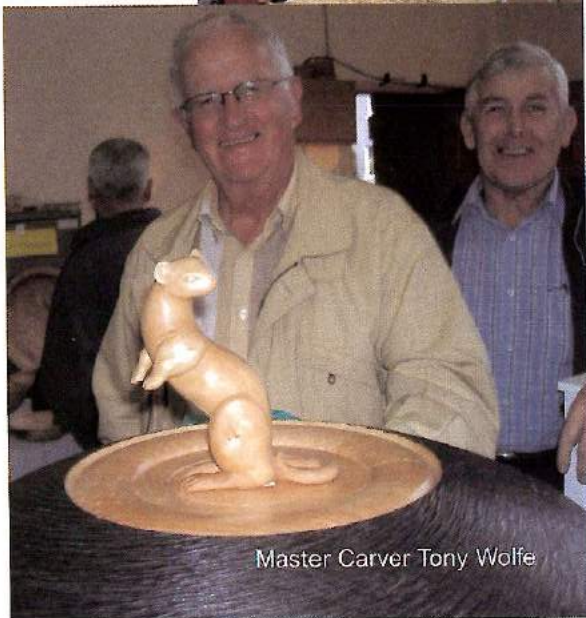
Our present committee consists of: Richard Crowley (Chairman), Dave Gunn (Treas), Finbarr O'Connor (Sec), and John Murray (PRO). While it may be admirable, and sometimes unavoidable, that some people are willing to hold positions for many years, regular changes should be encouraged to breathe new life into Chapters.



A bowl by Christine van Bussel



Bog Oak by Pat Carroll



National Seminars

In the autumn of 1982 a 'seminar' was held, organised by Liam O'Neill. Liam had already attended a seminar in England and other similar events had been held in different locations. Nothing on these lines had been held here before so there was no way of knowing what the reaction would be. This meeting was a step into the unknown. When Liam and his committee organised the meeting they must have wondered if enough would turn up to make the effort worthwhile. However Irish woodturners turned up in numbers (no pun intended) which encouraged the organisers to take things further.

It was essentially Ireland's first ever upgrading of skills course in craft wood turning. It was a two day course held in the Retos factory on Shannon Industrial Estate and supported by Craft Supplies Ltd, UK.

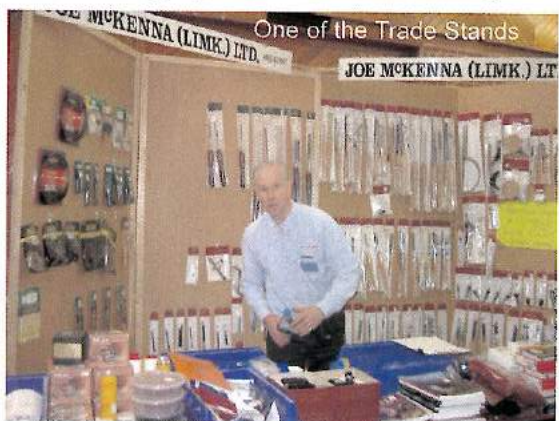
Basic woodturning skills were taught by Phil Reardon, a full-time instructor with Craft Supplies while advanced techniques were demonstrated by Ray Key from UK, who had previously demonstrated and exhibited on both sides of the Atlantic.

Since then "The National Seminar" has become the main event in the Irish woodturning calendar. From its beginning the best woodturners from around the World have been invited to demonstrate and lecture. Related topics such as timber conversion using band and chain saws, woodcarving, arboriculture, harvesting and safety have been included, so presenting a more complete learning experience for those attending.

The exhibition of members work has also become a major annual event that has given increased publicity to the craft and the Guild while encouraging the improvement of skills and quality. The attendance of many suppliers of tools and equipment also helps to improve the accessibility to new tools and techniques to turners.

Numbers attending the first meeting were restricted but it was agreed by all of those present that the meeting was a great success and it gave a huge boost to the craft of woodturning. Its success can be judged from the fact that almost immediately the organisers began to plan the next meeting as a major National Seminar.

Liam
O'Neill

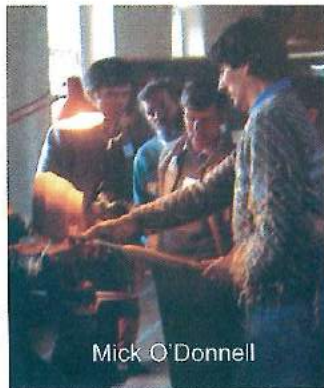


1983 Shannon

Following the success of the 1982 meeting it was decided to hold the next one again at Shannon. Held on the 10th and 11th September at the same venue as last year, it was a much greater success due to the hard work of the newly formed Guild members and committee, the dedication and professionalism of the contributors, and the help and encouragement of various outside bodies and individuals whose contributions were substantial.

This was recognised as the First IWG two-day Seminar. On Saturday morning all three guest lecturers Michael O'Donnell, Ray Key and Richard Raffan gave lectures with slides. In the afternoon simultaneous demonstrations were run by all three :- Ray Key – Platters; Michael O'Donnell – Green Bowls; Richard Raffan – Large Bowls; and Jim Foley did a session on Spindle turning.

Jim Foley of Killaloe, Co Clare represented the Guild. There was a feeling before the Seminar that the aspect of spindle turning was being neglected and the committee were determined that this would not happen. Jim was recognised as an expert spindle turner and was invited by the organisers to represent the Guild in this type of turning and this he did to perfection.

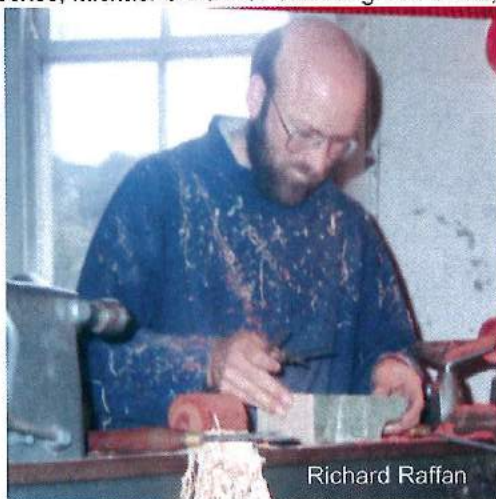


Later in the afternoon all demonstrators held clinics at their lathes to answer any questions and to allow some of those present to "have a go" on a limited scale. On Sunday morning simultaneous demonstrations were given again:- Ray Key – Exotic Bowls; Michael O'Donnell – Natural Top Green Bowls; Richard Raffan – Boxes / Scoops and use of skew chisel; and again Jim Foley on spindle turning.

In the afternoon Ray Key demonstrated boxes; Michael O'Donnell stained green bowls; Richard Raffan demonstrated with green holly and again Jim Foley doing more spindles.

Throughout the seminar there was a display of Craft Supplies tools and accessories, all items available for purchase with a discount. At this stage the Guild had 72 members.

The Crafts Council of Ireland, to which the Guild was already affiliated, provided a grant of £500 towards the running of the seminar. They were also very helpful in encouraging and in assisting the setting up of the Guild.



1984 Letterfrack, Co Galway

David Sloan wrote a report for Fine Woodworking magazine in July 1985. Details from his report are abstracted below:-

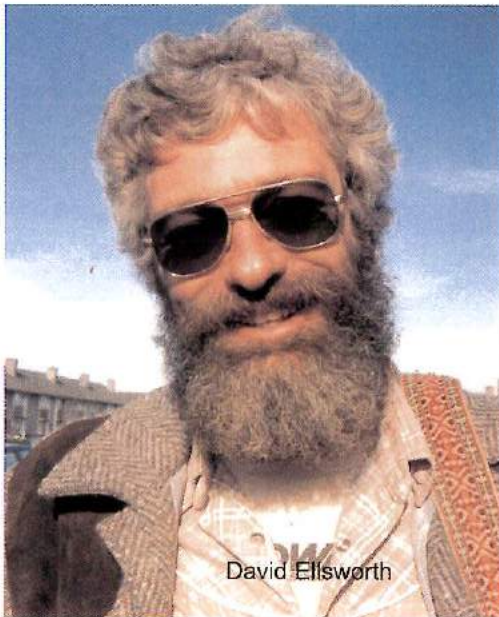
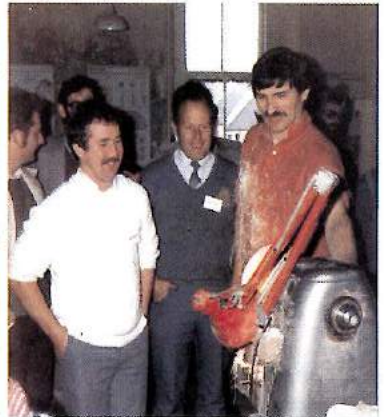


Felden's Pub 1984

unemployed young people receive full-time training in woodturning, cabinetmaking and woodcarving with the hope, that after they are trained, they will provide jobs in the area for themselves and others.

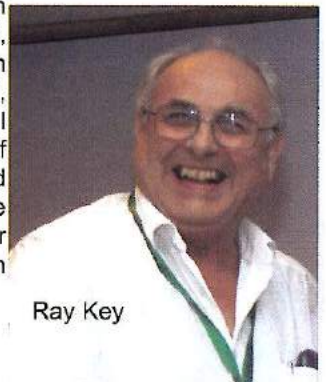
For me the high point of the weekend was the tables where everyone's work was displayed. Here was a sampling of the best turning in Ireland, all in one place. The design sophistication and the level of technical proficiency were consistently high. Judging from the disproportionately large numbers of delicate, green-turned natural-edge bowls, I guessed that Irish turners as a group were drawing their design inspiration from internationally known turners invited to demonstrate each year. This year

"The conference provided a chance for turners to discuss their work, get inspiration and evaluate the work of their peers. The village of Letterfrack was chosen to host the Seminar to take advantage of the facilities of the Connemara West Centre. This cavernous building, was once a reformatory but today operates as a craft school communally owned by the people of Letterfrack. There,



David Ellsworth

Michael O'Donnell from Scotland, Richard Raffan from Australia and Ray Key from England. Because these demonstrators were seen by so many Irish turners, their influence has been pervasive. Other demonstrators that year were David Ellsworth from the United States and Guild members Ciaran Forbes, Liam O'Neill, Niall Fitzduff and spindle turner Jim Foley.



Ray Key

1985 Letterfrack, Co Galway

This year's theme was "From Forest to Finish". Prior to this year the Seminar Committee decided to work out detailed potential expenditure. In future any notable overseas guest turner be asked in writing to attend for a specified period and in return for the agreed expenses, to sign a contract for the relevant period. If other seminars, workshops or demonstrations were held, they would require payment from the Guild for such services in view of the expense incurred.

Eighty members attended this year's seminar held on the 26 / 27th October. Del Stubbs (described by David Ellsworth as a "turners turner") was a revelation demonstrating his virtuosity, from very small miniatures to very thin bowls. His attention to the cutting edge and his demonstrating of shear scraping were amongst the highlights of his contribution. In general his young, almost childlike enthusiasm for everything he did was inspirational and reminded one of a latter day Pied Piper of Hammelin.

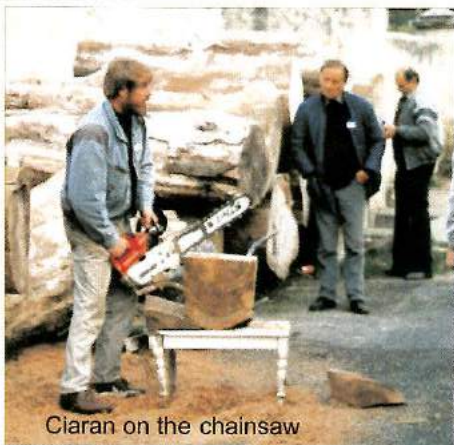
He was accompanied by Ciaran Forbes on the chain saw of Seminar and selection of timber for platters and scoops; Liam O'Neill on bowls and finishing; Niall Fitzduff on larger natural edged bowls; Michael Dickson made boxes; Willie Stedmond on spindle turning and the use of the skew -- even using one in each hand!

A feature of this years seminar was the provision of comprehensive handouts by the demonstrators.

The newsletter also encouraged members to bring along examples of their most recent work. The prizes were open to all Guild members and The Irish Woodturners Guild Committee Prize for the most outstanding piece was £100.

A letter was received from a member which outlines the benefits of the seminar; this letter is particularly valuable as it gives an account of his first seminar through the eyes of an average member of the Guild.

"...previously I had been pottering around with a small lathe attachment on my drill, which I used to turn small items like finials, chair rails etc, which I used to repair antique furniture. Gradually I realised I was missing out on one of the most creative branches of woodworking. I purchased a larger lathe and a larger range of tools and a whole new world opened up to me. At this stage I was following articles by Bruce Boulter and Geoff Peters in Practical Woodworking, but found it difficult to understand the right way to hold the tools due to some of the photographs not being too clear. I discovered that a friend of mine was doing a course in woodturning in Retos Ltd and he told me about a seminar to be held in Ireland. I booked my place and within a hour of arrival saw Ray Key make a platter in sycamore, and sending long shavings across the room like carnival streamers. Now I was seeing in reality what I had never seen before, wood being cut as it should be cut. Later in the afternoon I watched Ray turn out little boxes, so small that previously I just would not have believed could be done on such a large lathe.



Ciaran on the chainsaw

How little did I know?

To sum it all up, I feel I would never have reached the standard I am at now if I had not attended these seminars and I am looking forward to increasing my knowledge when I attend the third seminar in October. I would highly recommend anyone, turner or just handyman to make a point of attending and so spend a highly profitable and entertaining two days."

1986 Letterfrack, Co Galway

Following last year's seminar a number of points were put forward by members at the AGM held on the 19th April 1986 which gave the incoming committee much to think about when organising the next seminar.

Suggestions made included

1 There was too much emphasis on bowls and that other categories should be encouraged.

2 The contribution by Del Stubbs was particularly successful because of the small seminars he conducted around the country in the weeks following Letterfrack. (With regard to basic turning, this was the basis of the regional seminars).

3 Some considered that the high standards and specialised demonstrations of recent years could disillusion less experienced Guild members as the standard was pitched too high for the average member. ("A man's reach should exceed his grasp or what's a Heaven for?" .. Ed... or actually, Robert Browning).

4 As Richard Raffan would be visiting England during the summer he might be interested in coming to the seminar. The value of Del Stubbs providing small seminars around the country suggests that the Guild could consider this arrangement with future demonstrators invited to the main seminar. It was pointed out that the cost of paying a demonstrator for a series of seminars would be too high. Del Stubbs was making an extended visit to the country and this arrangement suited him. There are other excellent turners in the UK who could be invited such as Peter Bossam.

(NB These local seminars are now fairly widespread. Ed")

5 A lecture on design would be helpful and also raised the possible use of videos.

6 Suggested that demonstrations and proceedings should be recorder on either film, slides or video.

7 Some discussion took place on the siting of future seminars. It was agreed that the facilities at Letterfrack together with the Guest House accommodation would be difficult to improve but, that while this was true, other venues should be considered.



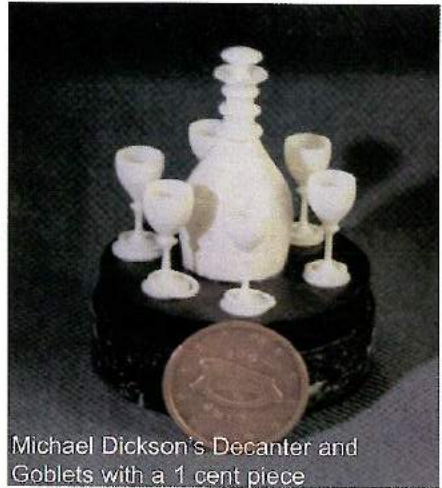
Work by left
Peter Lyons

Right
Eric Turner



1986 Letterfrack, Co Galway

The Annual Seminar entitled "Turn on to Wood" was held on 4/5 October. Guest demonstrators were Richard Raffan, Australia who showed how he makes his boxes so exceptionally quickly and well. Peter Bossam, UK and his son Michael made more functional items such as breadboards. Peter also showed how to make a dust extraction unit from a vacuum cleaner motor, plywood and rubber bands. Guild demonstrators included Liam O'Neill (bowls); Michael Dickson (miniatures, for which he won the spindle section with a bone decanter and six goblets); Keith Mosse (large bowls up to three feet diameter); Willie Stedmond (spindle work); Tom and James Dunlop (lamination); Terry Cromer (exotic woods); Patsy Hogan (how to use a chain saw) and Lech Zeilinski (finishes). Lech, who was a London based member for some years, wrote an article in Practical Woodworking.



Michael Dickson's Decanter and Goblets with a 1 cent piece

An innovation this year was the presence of a relief carver viz Christie Glynn, who comes from a family long associated with woodcarving in Dublin. Christie enthralled his audience with his expertise and dexterity in carving as well as with endless stories about his work and times as a carver in his native city.



Once a reform school, this is the Letterfrack Connemara West Centre
In which some of the early Seminars were held

1987 Riverchapel, Gorey, Co Wexford

This Seminar took place on 3rd and 4th October. A report by Ray Key as an additional page in the Journal gives a flavour of this seminar :-

"It proved to be a popular choice being the best attended event held so far with some 90 people coming for the two days. The invited demonstrators were Todd Hoyer from the USA, myself from England, Christy Glynn, as last year, a relief carver from Dublin, plus Guild turners Ray Cornu, John Kelly and Willie Stedmond. The demonstrators were introduced by Chairman Cecil Brown, and the ground rules laid down by Garth May, the hardworking secretary.

Todd Hoyer started proceedings, with a slide lecture that acquainted the audience with his more sculptural type of work. He displayed slides of objects that reflected progression in both aesthetic and technical achievement. One three branch winged crotch turned sculpture brought a stunned gasp from the audience and then spontaneous applause. It is not often that a slide provokes such a reaction.

After a short coffee break the demonstrations got underway in earnest with delegates free to circulate around the demonstrations as they chose, the emphasis being not just to look, learn and listen, but to question what they saw going on. In the audience there were a number of youngsters, who showed tremendous interest, that must bode well for the future of Irish woodturning. Workshops continued throughout the afternoon with the delegates continuing to circulate.

Saturday evening came and Todd showed a range of slides (he was earning his money) from harvesting wood to making objects from almost every position from within a log, throughout explaining the reason for various distortions, shrinkages etc and giving a clear insight into wood technology.

Good Irish hospitality was to follow (now a standard Seminar item --Ed) and Sunday morning was to find delegates and demonstrators a little more subdued, but after a good breakfast things were soon back to normal.

Demonstrations continued, and I was asked to lecture on marketing, goodness knows why, except perhaps on the grounds that I have survived 15 years as a self employed woodturner. There must be a great desire for many to achieve this aim, as this was a very well attended lecture. After this it became my task to select prizewinners in various classes of competition. This was to prove extremely difficult, particularly in the previous winners class. There was excellent work from Ray Cornu, Liam O'Neill, Niall Fitzduff, John Kelly, John Ambrose and Keith Mosse. Keith had one elm bowl three feet in diameter, ten inches deep with one eighth inch walls (yes one eighth) thickening to a quarter in the base, an amazing display of technique, but for me it was technique for its own sake. My vote went to a superb spalted beech vessel by Ray Cornu, followed by an extremely tactile vessel in bog oak by Liam O'Neill.

The largest class saw strong work from Gerry Roche, Tom and James Dunlop, Peter Sweetman, John Kemp, Garth May, Willie Stedmond, Terry Cromer, and Liam Flynn. My vote went to an excellent yew platter by Willie Stedmond. A close second came a turned and carved ash bowl by Garth May; third was a tall elm 'Ellsworth' inspired vessel by John Kemp; fourth a natural topped dish by Peter Sweetman. The winner of each class received a voucher presented by Henry Taylor Tools.

The beginners class was won by Kevin Doyle with a traditional style table lamp of excellent proportions. This attracted the Guild's prize of a free Seminar next year.

Demonstrations continued after lunch. My return to the lathe was marked by a presentation of some "coarse abrasive" (pebbles stuck to a backing paper), one could call it 2 grit. This originated from Willie Stedmond, who after a minor dig-in earlier in the day, he suggested I try 60 grit. I assured him 150 grit would be the coarsest needed after rectification. One could say he had the last laugh. This just underlines the good humoured banter which is always present on these occasions.

Presentations of the prizes late Sunday afternoon prior to the end of two days of intense activity for delegates and demonstrators alike, was marked by a strong feeling that this was the Guild's best Seminar yet."

1988 Riverchapel, Gorey, Co Wexford

Discussions with the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain resulted in reciprocal arrangements whereby members of each organisation could attend each other's seminars at the equivalent rates. Also the Chairmen of the two organisations would be invited to attend the other's seminars.

Alan Stirt from the USA showed his technique for decorating his work using the rakuda chisel. Mick O'Donnell from Scotland demonstrated how he makes large turnings in green sycamore. Niall Fitzduff from Co Tyrone then demonstrated how he makes burr bowls with natural bark on the outside and the finish insides showing beautiful grain configuration.

Angela Williams, one of our first lady seminar demonstrators, showed the use of colour to great effect. Other Guild demonstrators were John Kelly, Peter Sweetman, Willie Stedmond, Jim Foley and Tom Dunlop with relief carving by Christy Glynn again.

By now the seminar was being advertised in Practical Woodworking and Woodworker. Following the Seminar an Instructor Course was held in Willie Stedmond's workshop. Courses were also offered by Liam O'Neill and Bob Pinker.



Gorey
Exhibition
2007

1989 Sligo September 15th-17th

Demonstrators:

Del Stubbs made a welcome return to us this year from California. He is a production turner and a craftsman who is well known for his translucent bowls.

Guild members Niall Fitzduff, Christy Glynn, Liam O'Neill, Willie Stedmond and Peter Sweetman demonstrated aspects of spindle and faceplate techniques, chainsaw operation, carving and chairmaking.

Numbers attending 75.

1990 Sligo 5th-7th October

Jack Hill is a well known English chairmaker who showed his skills in making Windsor and country chairs from both green and seasoned timbers. He explained his approach to choosing timber, design, components used and construction and gave advice on angle drilling, assembly and finishing of stools, ladderback, spindleback and children's chairs.

Stuart Batty, a very experienced English turner, demonstrated square edged bowls and using a variety of exotic woods. Meryll Saylan, from the USA, imparted extensive knowledge of texturing, colouring and finishing.

Liam O'Neill produced some natural edge burr bowls and outlined his methods for cutting spalted wood.

Bro Ciaran Forbes showed the use of the Stuart tool for multiple turning of large bowls



Willie Stedmond outlined repetition work and fine finishing in spindle turning. Also demonstrating was Chris Stott as part of the Craft Supplies stand at the seminar. Number attending 93.

Liam Flynn being awarded his prize by Liam O'Neill

Liam Flynn's
prizewinning bowl



1991 Dublin City University 9-11 October.

Demonstrators: Dale Nish, Mike Scott, Mike St Clair, Ciaran Forbes, Liam O'Neill, Willie Stedmond, Kurt Johansen, Noel Hoare. A lady woodturner was also demonstrating, Martini Currams. Other attractions were Michael Murphy with his pole lathe and Willie Stedmond with his treadle lathe.

The number attending the seminar was well over 100.

Prior to this seminar the Crafts Council of Ireland agreed to grant a total of £2,500 (£1,000 balance from 1990 plus £1,500 from 1991 budget) towards the Woodturners International Seminar and their Annual Exhibitions.

The magazine Practical Woodworking had an extensive report on this year's seminar by Jack Hill. His report followed the order of appearance of the demonstrators and gives a good idea of proceedings.

First Michael Murphy splitting logs, shaping them with the draw knife and then turning them on a pole lathe. (Jack's surprise at the inclusion of a pole lathe suggests that this was not a regular feature of seminars in other countries.....Ed). Next was Willie Stedmond a professional turner who is mainly a turner of functional items. Willie's method is hands-on and people were gathered around his lathe to watch closely the master's hand and then have a go themselves. Next up was Tom Dunlop whose session was "Back to Basics" which began at selecting wood, lathe speeds, safety precautions and basic tool use, all in a simplified good teaching style.

Jack then attended Swedish turner Kurt Johansen who showed how a variety of tools could be used to achieve a desired result. His idea being that there is no one tool for a specific task and to prove this he used a variety of tools to achieve the same result. He introduced us to the Scandinavian hook tool.

Demonstrating in the next room was Mike St. Clair from Australia who turned from 1,000 year old grass tree roots, their composition and texture being unlike the wood from true trees.

Next was Liam O'Neill, Chairman and co-founder of the Guild, who turned an elm bowl concentrating on the shape of the rim, an important part of the design as it frames the bowl's contents. Next was Ciaran Forbes, who had demonstrated at the previous year's International Practical Woodworking Show, turnings bowls in his inimitable fashion. He showed that he could hold his audience as a good teacher should, making what he says and does both informative and entertaining.

Martini Currams, from Shannon showed her talent for turning exquisite small boxes. She learned her craft from Liam O'Neill but had been off the scene for some time working and studying. Clearly her presence was much appreciated by her audience.

Mike Scott from the UK was next. His six demonstrations attracted very good crowds who appreciated his techniques and methods.

Lee Carten from USA gave one session turning alabaster, which is a soft stone, using home made tools. He made some small items both useful and decorative. Dale Nish Professor of Industrial Education in Brigham Young University, Utah, USA and author of two books on turning and one on turners, demonstrated reverse turning technique taking the audience through the procedure.

Noel Hoare from Dublin showed why he is a sculptor and wood carver of international repute.

At the the judging of the annual competition Willie Stedmond received the top award for his rocking chair. A special prize was awarded to Brian Dunlop aged 13 for a set of goblets showing himself to be a talented woodturner of the future.

The usual friendly banter was augmented in the evening by sounds of accordians, fiddles and flutes resounding through the halls of academia as the post seminar party got into full swing. This was encouraged by the availability of a little Guinness and other assorted beverages.

In the opinion of many this was the most successful seminar to date. The number of top demonstrators afforded something for everyone and for all levels of achievement.

1992 Dublin City University August 21st-23rd

Dublin City University was the venue again this year. Guest demonstrators were David Ellsworth, Michael O'Donnell, Christy Glynn, Tom Dunlop, Willie Stedmond, Alan Lacer, Liam O'Neill, James Shiels, Martini Currams and Melvyn Firmager, who stood in for Ciaran Forbes at short notice. Also present were Reg Sherwin, Maurice Mullins, Stephen Cooper and Zachary Taylor.

For most members of the Guild the annual seminar is an event that just happens and rarely is any thought given to the work involved. The editorial of the October Newsletter carried a report of the seminar giving an insight into the philosophy which guided the Guild's thinking in organising seminars. Possibly it was prompted by some adverse comments about the running of the seminar which made their way back to the executive. It is worth quoting it in full:

"...the Committee of the Irish Woodturners Guild put together seminars to equal or even better any Seminar in the world. At our recent seminar reporters from magazines from America and Britain attended. We have tried for the first time to include children in the seminar in a serious way, something I know that the British and Americans have not done but are now contemplating. The Seminar is not only important for us here at home to learn from each other and have a social and educational aspect but also to learn from turners from abroad.

We send abroad Liam O'Neill, Ciaran Forbes and William Stedmond to demonstrate. This is recognition of our talented woodturners here, so why should we not recognise talent abroad and bring it here. Liam Flynn another talented Irish turner was recently accepted into the Chelsea Fair in London and was the only turner exhibiting at the show in 1992.

Our reason for saying all this is that on occasion members have queried the need for visiting demonstrators and spending so much on them? To answer the first question we need a constant stream of new and fresh ideas on design, techniques, colouring, texture, cutting angles etc. We need a fresh approach.

To the second question, we spend the money because we want the best that your money can buy and bring them to you to see and enjoy. There is no point in holding money in the bank as we are not a 'for profit' organisation. We are here to promote woodturning.

The children and young people at the seminar who watch Ellsworth, O'Donnell, Firmager, O'Neill, Stedmond, Currans and Dunlop will, I hope, be our demonstrators of the future”.

For the first time this year the organisers introduced under 13 and under 19 competitions. These new categories were to encourage young people to turn. Young attendees were offered a considerably reduced rate at £40 for the seminar.

Following the Glasnevin seminar the Committee received a good deal of constructive criticism. In particular members felt :

- American Demonstrators were not proving popular.
- The Exhibition should be open to the public.
- Should overseas demonstrators be allowed to win prizes?
- Better structured timetable and better timekeeping.
- Sponsored prizes should be allocated to sections before the Seminar.
- The committee took these criticisms on board and with a view to improving the seminar in 1993 it :-
- Carried out an in-depth survey of what they consider ideal facilities in Kilkenny – the well equipped workshops in the Adult Education Centre with the adjacent Clubhouse Hotel for fringe events and socialising.
- Prepared a panel of prospective demonstrators. Detailed questionnaires were completed by those chosen so that their requirements would be available.

Woodturners Training International

In conjunction with the 1992 Seminar the Woodturners Training International Conference was held in DCU to promote the ideals of the organisation. This organisation was founded by Michael O'Donnell and others at an initial conference in 1990. This conference was chaired by Jan Sanders. The basic premise was and is that the craft of woodturning was suffering from 'cowboy teachers' who were neither trained nor capable of passing on the required knowledge or skill. The conference was attended by professional woodturners, teachers and those interested in organising the craft for the benefit of the craft. Participants came from Ireland, Britain, USA and Belgium.

Right, Dublin Chapter Pole lathe demo
Below work at the Dublin Seminar 2006



1993 Kilkenny October 29th – 31st

Demonstrators included Paul Clare, Reg Sherwin and Stephen Cooper from UK and many local turners such as Willie Stedmond, Niall Fitzduff, Ciaran Forbes, Garth May, Tom Dunlop, Liam O'Neill and David Comerford.

Paul Clare from Wales whose first venture into decorative turning took place seven years previously when he was aged forty. While he is most famous for his slit vessels his work also has many innovative techniques. His finishing, both texturing and colouring, has gained him a very high reputation. His work also includes – carving, pickling, multiple axis turning, slit vessels, microwaving, use of metal filings and chemicals in finishing.

Reg Sherwin repeated the presentation which he had arranged at Albert LeCoff's 1993 World Turning Conference in Philadelphia entitled "Short Run Repetition Turning for the Furniture industry." He also undertook to address problems with the skew and end grain hollowing techniques.

Stephen Cooper (England) best known for his articles on precision spindle projects concentrating on the tools and techniques used in creating his magnificent gallery pieces e.g. hollowed endgrain pieces with polished crystals which can be viewed at different angles through the holes formed by bark intrusions. Stephen won a prize at the 1992 Seminar with a stem box in yew.

Niall Fitzduff, returning by popular demand, demonstrated wet and dry bowl turning, special chucking devices and ran a continuous hands-on clinic.

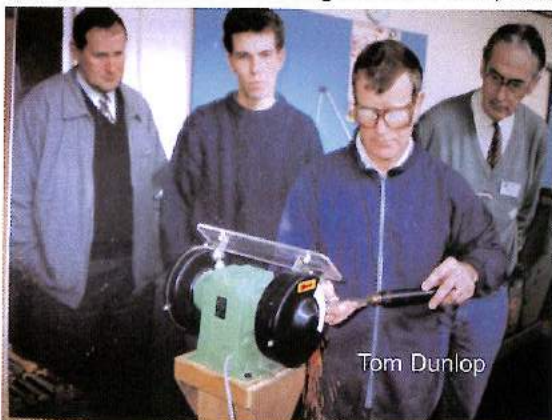
Garth May ran a belated debut for one of our top turners on decorative applied work, carving, combined turning and basket weaving and using metal as a decorative feature.

David Comerford and Martin Francis showed how to make, over the seminar week end, a large bowl turning lathe for under £500.

Tom Dunlop went over all you need to know about the basics – for beginners and those of us who have developed sloppy ways.

Liam O'Neill, our own and one of the worlds best turners, did two sessions.

This year's seminar had delegates from USA, Australia, Belgium and Britain and, with



149 attending, it was the largest attendance to date. In all, thirteen demonstrators gave sixty one demonstrations over the two days.

Kilkenny also featured many fringe events such as demonstrations by a resident wood carver, slide shows, a variety of musical entertainment, a public exhibition and guided tours of the city for spouses or non-turners

1994 Kilkenny October 28th- 30th

The venue was the Technical School Ormond Road (in Kilkenny again). The visiting demonstrators were Hans Weissflogg, Tobias Kaye, Willie Stedmond, Tom Dunlop, David Comerford, Liam Flynn and Ian Donnelly on a Pole Lathe. Also Allan Batty replaced Peter Bossom who had to withdraw for family reasons. The Seminar turned out to be a most enjoyable event with a great atmosphere and an ideal venue.

As an innovation each chapter was invited to nominate one member to give one demonstration during the seminar. These were Dermot Chapman from Cork, Mark Harvey from Ulster, John Ryan from Limerick and Hugh Flynn from Dublin. Delegates were urged to enter pieces of their work in the Exhibition with prizes awarded for the best pieces

Hans Weissflogg's delicate and beautifully coloured boxes with revolving sections sometimes three in number, cut from the same piece of wood seemed far ahead of the capabilities of the audience. However the 12 year old son of one of the local members went home on saturday night and made a lid 2" in diameter with a revolving centre from one piece of wood and showed it to all on Sunday. He ground a masonry nail to a fraction of a millimetre to make the necessary incision.

Allan Batty showed the skills of a lifetime at woodturning. He demonstrated thread cutting using the skew chisel. He also turned Queen Anne legs. During his demonstrations he never produced callipers and yet his spigots whether 5/8" or 1" were accurate. He also demonstrated thread cutting by hand to fit a nut already threaded with such skill to make it look easy. He did say, in his witty patter, that it took years of experience to learn the sensitivity to cut threads accurately.

Tobias Kaye, who was brought up locally before moving to England, demonstrated the use of the band saw and off-centre turning to produce his unique candle holders. He showed a very good sense of shape and form in turned objects. He is, of course, well known for "Sounding Bowls" and "Involute Turnings"and his work has been shown in galleries in Germany and the USA as well as in Britain.

Irish turners David Comerford and Liam Flynn were well received, David explaining the philosophy behind his approach to turning and his efforts to raise his woodturning to an art form and Liam showed a very delicate touch when turning his thin walled bowls and was most impressive.

Liam O'Neill and his son Paul introduced the audience to vacuum chucking.

Because of the success of this Seminar it was decided to hold the 1995 seminar yet again in Kilkenny



1995 Kilkenny October 20th – 22nd

Visiting demonstrators were Stuart Mortimer, Chris Stott, Jan Sanders, John Sanders, Mick O'Donnell, and Liam Flynn. IWG members were Glen Lucas, Tom Dunlop, Willie Stedmond, Mark Harvey and Pacelli Breathnach. Ray Key was also in attendance demonstrating for Henry Taylor Tools.

Although the ban on smoking was introduced in Ireland this year, it did not seem to deter the large enthusiastic audience

Stuart Mortimer gave his usual competent and confident presentations of spiral work and twisted hollow forms. His demonstrations included putting a twist on a goblet, open twist candlesticks and twisted hollow forms.

Chris stott made his own hollow form together with miniature and standard bowls.

Jan Sanders showed a range of dyeing and colouring techniques including grain filling and enhancing colouring with gilt.

Her namesake John Sanders got down to the basics of the lathe and tools and how to get the best from your wood.

Mick O'Donnell, Scotland, demonstrated tool sharpening and how to get the best from your tools – something we always need reviewing.

Liam Flynn demonstrated his now familiar inner rimmed hollow form bowls while Glen Lucas showed how he made his large thin walled bowls.

Newcomer Pacelli Breathnach gave a chainsaw presentation sponsored by Coillte. Some of the demonstrators managed to run six (6!) shows in the two days – some effort. Presumably they don't smoke !



Dick Ross at Limerick



Glenn
Lucas

1996 Monaghan Seminar, Ulster Chapter

Held at Beech Hill College on 17-19 October with demonstrators:- Hayley Smith, Stuart Mortimer, Keith Rowley, Tony Boase, Ricky Richardson, Mark Hanvey, Glen Lucas, Emmet Kane, Mike Regan, Bill Barnard (Woodcarver) and Seamus Kerr.

Stuart Mortimer, well known for his spiral turnings, wrote a very complimentary article for the Journal in which he referred to various aspects of the seminar.

Hayley Smith, a graduate of Cardiff Art College, was congratulated on her first public demonstration in which she coloured and textured bowls and platters and inlaid them with silver wire. Her work is much sought after and has sold throughout the UK, Germany and the USA.

Tony Boase from England demonstrated the Kell McNaughton system for producing nesting bowls from one piece of wood and also lectured on photography with respect to turnings. He is the author of Woodturning Masterclass and an expert photographer as well as turner. (Alas deceased and remembered by friends who created the Tony Boase prize).

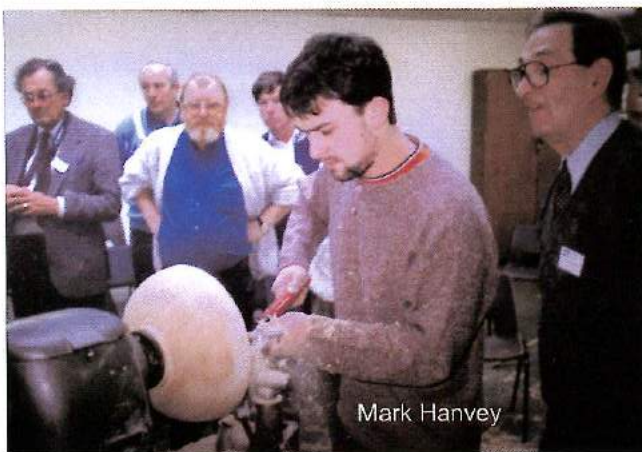
Keith Rowley is an English woodturner of international renown and the author of the best selling Woodturning: A foundation Course followed by his book on Projects. He produced pomanders with ease without referring to his best selling books.

At the dinner Keith encouraged both Mark Hanvey and Glen Lucas with the statement "There is no comparable up and coming young talent demonstrating on the far side of the water."

Ricky Richardson from Ulster started as a hobby turner but in 1991 began turning professionally. He showed how to make components for a coffee table, face plate work and the use of wet wood.

Most of the 'locals' are well known to regular attendees except perhaps Seamus Kerr who demonstrated on the lathe during the display of exhibitors' work to the public. Felix Mc Coy has a long-time association with woodcraft in the Armagh area and has given stalwart service to both chapter and National Committee.

Stuart also referred to the Sunday session being open to the public – a nice touch to attract new turners to the craft. Unfortunately several pieces disappeared resulting in a return to public exclusion.



Mark Hanvey

1997 Monaghan, Ulster Chapter

Held again at the Beechill College Monaghan on 17, 18, 19 October. Demonstrators were: Bob Chapman, Phil Irons, Gary Rance, Maurice Mullins, Dave Kelly, Roger Bennett, Tony Rea, Bill Barnard (woodcarver), Jim Johnston and Joe O'Neill.

Not wishing to detract from the ability of the talented woodturners above, the highlight without doubt was the demonstration by Guadalupe Campos Ceron from Mexico. He had already given one demonstration at the Dublin Chapter and was introduced in Monaghan by Mick Healy, a member of the Dublin Chapter. Guadalupe gave a virtuoso display of what skill, practice and a little improvisation can produce from the simplest of lathes and the most basic of tools. Through his interpreter, for he spoke no English, Guadalupe told his audience that he was born about seventy years ago in a small village not far from Mexico City. He is one of a fast diminishing band of bow lathe turners in Mexico and makes his living from turning souvenir and other items in a village about 20 miles from the capital. In addition to brightly coloured birch (with Mexican hats of course), Pinocchio style puppets and baby rattles, the output from the village workshop includes practical items such as salad servers and of course Guadalupe's own speciality the Molinillo. This is a wooden device about 18" long with captive rings and much ornamentation and is used to whisk drinking chocolate into a creamy froth.

Guadalupe concentrated on turning molinillos during his demonstrations at the seminar. His lathe was of the simplest possible construction. It consisted of a wooden bed about 2ft inches square and three feet long with the top and sides protected by a steel plate. The bed rested on two wooden blocks about eight inches long and four inches square, the tailstock end being fixed, while the headstock end slid under the bed and was kept pushed against the workpiece by the operator's left foot.

A pointed steel spike fixed to the tailstock and another to the headstock held the wood being turned in place – not over the lathe bed as usual but at the far side of the bed. The workpiece was rotated by a bow, similar to a violin bow, with the strings wound around the workpiece. That was it – no electric motor, no four prong drives and no revolving centres.

The tools used were also very basic. They were mostly unhandled and fashioned from files or round steel but despite this they were kept very sharp and the edge was kept touched up on a stone by Guadalupe throughout his demonstration.

The dark colouring which ornamented the molinillos was created by shaping a piece of hardwood into a sharp wedge by the home-made skew and used by presenting the hardwood to the turning wood, burning the colour on to the softer workpiece.



Throughout the demonstration Guadalupe was seated on a small chair about ten inches high, his right arm working the bow to turn the workpiece, right foot and left hand shaping the wood with the home made skew chisel resting on the lathe bed, and his left foot holding the moveable headstock in place. (Remind anyone of Jimmy Snuzzle Durante's The Man who found the Lost Chord? " while his left foot was cracking walnuts, you see he had to eat too"...Ed). The end result after about twenty minutes was a highly ornamental and decorated piece of work. Captive rings were produced without a captive ring tool, accurate dimensions without using callipers or sizing tools and the finished work parted off without any special parting tools. All who saw this demonstration were very impressed. It was also revealed that at home he works a 70 hour week and earns about \$80.

Bob Chapman was reluctant to attend, he must have heard about Guadalupe, but was persuaded by Felix McCoy that he would be well looked after. He began with a slide show of himself and the other demonstrators. During the seminar he gave six sessions covering four different topics and was very well received.

Tony Rea began his first session showing his audience how to get the best use from a log. His chosen timber was a wet piece of sycamore nine inches by four. He started by preparing the base leaving a spigot for rechucking. His method of leaving the centre of the bowl as a support caused much interest. He also demonstrated a method of bowl turning between centres.

Joe O'Neill's demonstration on pen turning was informative, well prepared, full of spontaneous wit and many useful tips. He recommended preparing blanks for five or six pens at a time and always having a few spare blanks as it avoided the temptation of turning the pens before the glue had set properly. He then used shellac sanding sealer and used the lathe to press the pen parts together using a special v-shaped jig of his own design.

Dave Kelly turned a box in yew using a tool of his own design. This tool produced a very good finish without the use of sandpaper even across the bottom. He made and fitted a lid in the normal fashion but slightly domed the lid. Then, using a router, he created a flower-like motif on the lid. He showed a home-made device for locking the indexing head and many who saw his router carrier-indexing lock and cutting tool in operation thought it had commercial potential.

Roger Bennett from Co Laois is a graduate of Trinity College in English and French and a former teacher. He took a career break in 1992 and began woodturning. He became a professional woodturner in 1994. In 1994-1995 he was the first woodturner to participate in the Craft and Design Business Development Course run by the Craft Council of Ireland in Kilkenny. He spent a year at the Kilkenny Design Centre on a Craft Council of Ireland grant. This course was a great benefit to him in making the transition to professional turning. He specialises in the use of colour and silver wire inserts and his work is sold in galleries in Ireland and Britain.

This was his first time demonstrating at the National Seminar. He began by telling his audience that his influences were Bert Marsh and Paul Clare. After seeing Paul he began to experiment with colour. His style of bowl is tall coming from a narrow base to a wide opening. Colour is used to show the external form and to enhance the piece.



Roger Bennett

He uses mainly sycamore, hornbeam and holly and uses colour to enhance the bland wood. As the size of each piece is small he uses the microwave (on defrost mode for four minutes) and a kitchen scales to season his timber. With this approach he can go from a sawn blank to a finished piece within a week.

Roger pointed out that colour will not hide defects but will highlight them, so

the finish must be immaculate. He sanded up to 600 grit wet and dry, all sanding being carried out a low speed. It is essential to use a proper dust mask and filter. Before using dyes he wetted the timber to raise the grain. The piece was then dried with a hair dryer and the raised grain sanded down.

Gary Rance is a full time turner based in England. His demonstrations were a pepper mill, an idiot stick, a hanging pomander and a yo-yo. For his pepper mill his blank had the corners removed and was pre-drilled. He had several jigs to facilitate accurate sizing and centering. He emphasised the need for weight transference from foot to foot and supporting the tool with the body.

As an apprentice he had to turn several hundred pepper mills a week and like other full time professionals he had templates so that he could reproduce identical articles time after time.

Maurice Mullins demonstration was a box with the piece mounted between centres to cut the spigot. When cutting the spigot he cut forward a small recess to leave tolerance for any loose fibres that may get pushed forward during compression. This allows for a firmer grip of the piece. When the box and lid were complete he used a swivel jig fitted to the banjo to texture the lid. This tool was operated by turning the chuck by hand.



Gary Rance



Left a bowl by John o'Sullivan
Right Norman Alexander
Seamus Sullivan
Peter Donagh



1998 Gorey Community School October 16th-18th

Guest demonstrators included Mick O'Donnell, Scotland, who is well known through his publications and his previous demonstrations at our seminars starting with the very first in 1983. He lives and works in Scotland but has performed in many demonstrations and seminars in various countries. This year he showed how to turn green wood, make natural edge bowls and then staining and texturing.

Stuart Batty was taught by his father Alan, and has since been teaching and demonstrating since the age of 16. He showed his method of making square edge bowls and long stemmed goblets.

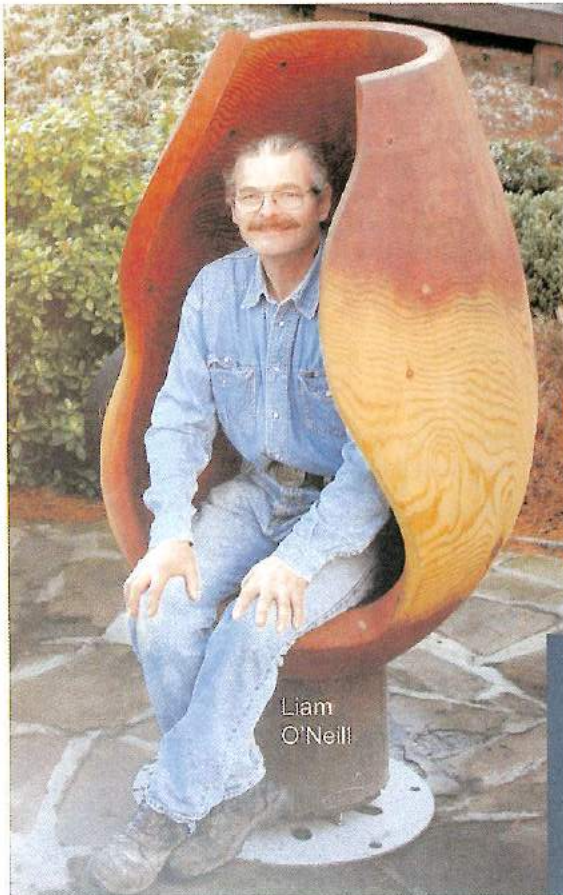
Ray Jones, also from England served his time for 25 years before becoming an instructor in a youth training scheme. This changed his life although he still thinks of himself as a production turner with his own turning business. He demonstrated how to make your own accessories and offset legs.

Liam Flynn comes from generations involved in joinery and the woodworking tradition but he now concentrates in perfecting hollow form vessels. He illustrated how he made

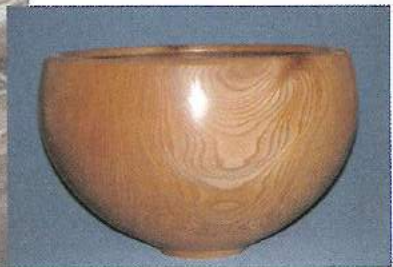
his hollow vessels from green wood, some with feet, and how to texture and ebonise them.

Guild members Liam O'Neill and Bro Ciaran Forbes need no introduction to IWG members as they were there at the very inauguration of the Guild. Ciaran showed how effortlessly he makes bowls while keeping up his usual banter, while Liam also made bowls, although he has moved into more artistic areas recently.

William Edwards showed the safe way to use the bandsaw.



Liam
O'Neill



1999 Gorey Community School

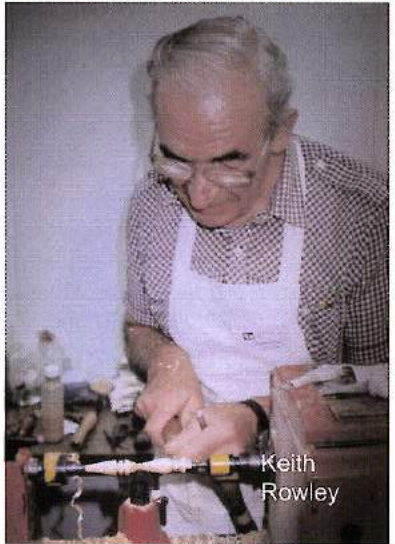
Held on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of October. The demonstrators were Ian Durant, Ray Key, Bert Marsh and Keith Rowley.

A new feature this year was six sessions aimed at total beginners. The Guild demonstrators were Tom Dunlop, Jim Johnston, Emmet Kane, Peter Mulvaney, Seamus Quinlan and Willie Stedmond while Philip Ward gave an illustrated talk and William Edwards demonstrated the proper use of the bandsaw and pillar drill.

Ian Durant specialises in off-centre turning, He has demonstrated all over the U.K. and had recently written a book on the topic.

Ray Key is no stranger to Ireland having demonstrated at several past seminars, Ray produces a variety of items from domestic tableware to artistic gallery pieces. He is also well known for his superb boxes. He is the author of three books and three videos and was the founding Chairman of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain.

Bert Marsh served his time as a cabinet maker and after years of experience in the furniture business ended up as Head of Furniture in Brighton Polytechnic. In 1979 he became a full-time turner. He concentrates on the creation of stimulating art forms which reveal the hidden natural beauty of wood He has written and lectured extensively and demonstrated at seminars all over the World



Keith Rowley



Emmett Kane

Keith Rowley, a professional turner for 15 years divides his time between commercial woodturning, teaching and demonstrating throughout the World. He is author of two books on woodturning (see 1996 Monaghan Seminar).

Emmet Kane was Chairman of the Irish Guild for the previous two years He lives and works in Castledermot, Co Kildare and is fourth generation in a family of wood workers. He has been a professional woodturner for four years and has won numerous prizes for his work in the more artistic side of turning. His work can be found in private collections in Ireland and abroad.

The Candlestick Project

At the 1999 AGM the Ulster Chapter expressed a strong interest in staging the 2000 Seminar. Since its inception the Guild had been a 32 county body with a strong input from the Ulster members. However, due to the Troubles, the Seminar had not up to then been held north of the Border but by 1999 peace had returned to the North and it was decided that the time was now ripe. The Ulster Chapter had plans to make the 2000 Seminar the biggest and best yet. They intended to try and invite back the demonstrators who participated at the first seminar in Shannon. The meeting gave Robert a warm round of applause and by unanimous consent it was agreed that the Ulster Chapter would hold the 2000 Seminar in Jordanstown.

Tony Rea suggested that something should be done to coincide with the 2000 seminar. The Executive Committee took up this suggestion and decided that an appropriate project would be the turning of 3300 candlesticks which would commemorate all the victims of the troubles and act as a symbol of hope for the new millennium. Based on Guild members this would work out at six candlesticks per member and, while being a small gesture for each individual member, it would be a substantial achievement for the Guild as a whole. It was also anticipated that the project would bring a lot of publicity. Almost immediately news of the project travelled to Great Britain, USA, Canada and Alaska.

By the 9th January 2000, 900 candlesticks had been pledged by three Chapters:- Dublin 500, Sligo 150 and South East 250. The Ulster Chapter had decided that the Childrens Hospice would be the designated charity to receive the candlesticks.

By February the candlestick count was 1300 short of its target. Interest continued with articles about the venture appearing in magazines World wide.

At the banquet on Saturday night the Chairman of the IWG, Seamus Quinlan, officially handed over the candlesticks for sale to Marcus Cooper, the representative of the Northern Ireland Childrens Hospice. He told the assembled members that they were delighted to get the candlesticks and how fitting it was that candlesticks were chosen as the symbol of the hospice is a burning flame.



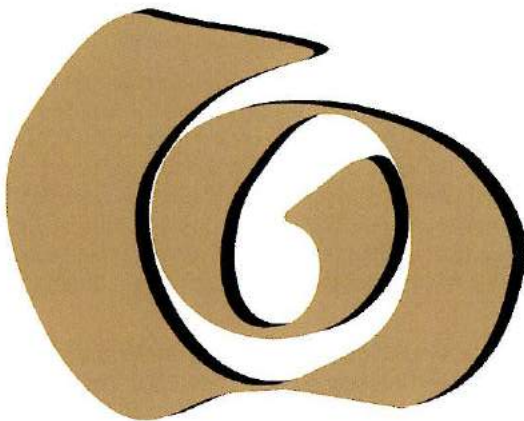
One of the Candlesticks in the Millennium project

2000 Jordanstown, University of Ulster September 8 to 10th

Demonstrators were Alan Batty, Jules Tattersall, Johannes Riber and Michael Hosaluk. Guild demonstrators included Tony Rea, Seamus Quinlan, Jim Johnston, Emmet Kane, Peter Mulvaney, Joe O'Neill, Also demonstrating was Nan Bushley. This was the first fully residential seminar with all facilities on the University campus.

We were so fortunate to secure the Jordanstown Campus of the Ulster University. Set on the foreshore of Belfast Lough with the backdrop of Cavehill and the County Down foreshore in front. They used the occasion as a "dry run" for the students return for the Christmas return, new staff new Refectory and recent redecoration. The accomodation was superb the food excellent and the general ambience very enjoyable.

The Jordanstown Seminar also saw the introduction of the new Irish Woodturners Guild Badge.



IWG Logo



A North East Chapter Audience at Seamus Cassidy's

2001 Gort, Co. Galway, 6th – 9th October

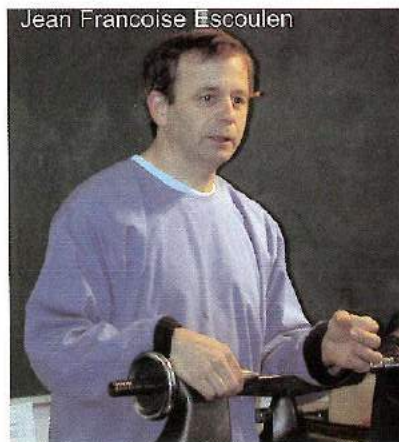
This seminar was organised by the Galway Chapter who, because of cost and logistical reasons, could not hold it in the city. Many potential delegates asked "Where on earth is Gort?" But once they found this small market town it was realised that the Community School and the neighbouring Lady Gregory hotel had ideal facilities for the 2001 Seminar.

The enthusiastic organising Committee, who had arranged five previous one-day seminars led by National Executive Secretary Ambrose O'Halloran, decided this was going to be a very special seminar, as all who attended the opening were soon to agree. The impact of the slide show accompanied by the inspiring music of Richard Strauss's "Also Sprach Zarathustra" (the theme music of the film "2001 A Space Odyssey") will live in our minds for ever.

The originality of this team was further stretched when an outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in the UK soon to be followed by the infamous destruction of the Twin Towers made travel from abroad almost non-existent. Nevertheless, the team was determined to broaden the range of demonstrations from previous seminars, which had used mostly local and UK demonstrators. The list of demonstrators for this year's seminar clearly shows that a wide range of aspects of turning were being catered for by the spread of nationalities of visiting demonstrators.

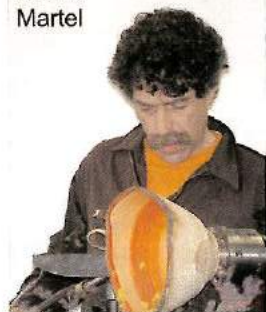
Jean-Francoise Escoulen (France) spent thirty years as a production spindle turner. During the previous ten years he developed his multi axis spindle turning which was described as ingenious. He turned multi-axis boxes, off centre legs and demonstrated the use of the bedan tool, a South of France equivalent of the skew chisel – but perhaps less difficult to use!

Allain Mailand, (France) an international turner who makes the most unique pieces that beg the question of "how did he do that". He demonstrated shapes that most turners would have thought impossible using a hook tool. After watching his demonstrations most turners



Jean Francoise Escoulen

Andre Martel



would have a go at what they had seen him do with ease. He made a wooden flower from a pistachio root, a thin vase, turning and carving the Mailand form.

Andre Martel (Canada) another international demonstrator and also a tool maker, has made significant developments to the traditional hook tool making it a very potent weapon. The stream of shavings up to twelve feet long from endgrain was a treat to behold. With his hook tool he made a fifteen inch lampshade and a goblet.

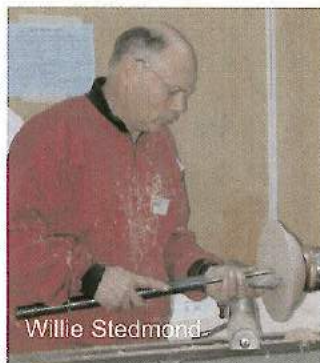


Tobias Kaye (UK) Founder member of the AWGB and an international turner, demonstrator, author and teacher. The depth of knowledge and the sense of fun he gets from the craft is evident in his demonstrations. He made a lampshade as thin as it is possible with wood. He also made some of his bowls that sing and a multi-centre bark edged bowl. What was not generally known was that, as a consequence of 9/11, Tobias's tools were confiscated at his airport, so he arrived in Ireland tool-less. The problem was solved by loans from Jim Johnston, Brian McAdoo and Ambrose O'Halloran.

Guild Demonstrators, Emmet Kane once again took his audience through his methods of turning. He was then the Guild representative on the Craft Council of Ireland and also a Board member.

Tony Rea, a professional who makes functional and artistic pieces. He has a common-sense approach to turning and a wealth of useful tips and techniques to pass on to the those who watch him. Her made a lantern candle holder using old pine and a banksia nut. He also turned an impressive bird house during one of his sessions, and a natural edged candlestick.

Willie Stedmond one of our regulars at seminars, a most technically accomplished turner and a founder member of the Guild.



Charlie Hostie gave a talk on trees and he provided samples of trees to illustrate his presentation.

John McGann gave an unusual session on the repair of hurleys. Brian McAdoo did a hands on demonstration on thread chasing. A number of those attending this session took up the challenge and under Brian's watchful eye some good efforts were made.

There were also other demonstrators: Enda Coffey showed how to do miniature turning; Kevin Thornton did a session on colouring; Joe O'Neill showed a video of the early history of the Guild; Des O'Halloran did a session on finials while his son Ambrose made a platter; Declan Brassil and Neil Sullivan worked on a pendulum clock; Ollie Burke made a square bowl; Tom and Cian Doherty made a fluted leg and Jim Johnston made some multi-centred figures.

This year's Seminar was hailed as the best ever with 250 delegates and several innovations. This year the Galway Chapter also decided to collaborate with craft workers and artists from the Galway area with an interesting exhibition of work being held in the city simultaneously.

Jim Johnston with one of his multi centred figurines



2002 Gort 11-13 October

The reaction to the 2001 Seminar was so great that the Galway Chapter was persuaded to run another one. This time they were able to go back to last year's plan to bring two turners from the USA, namely David Ellsworth and Bonnie Klein.

The Other visitors included Laura Ponting and Gary Rance while more local demonstrators were Roger Bennett and Glenn Lucas and leading the real locals was Ollie Burke.

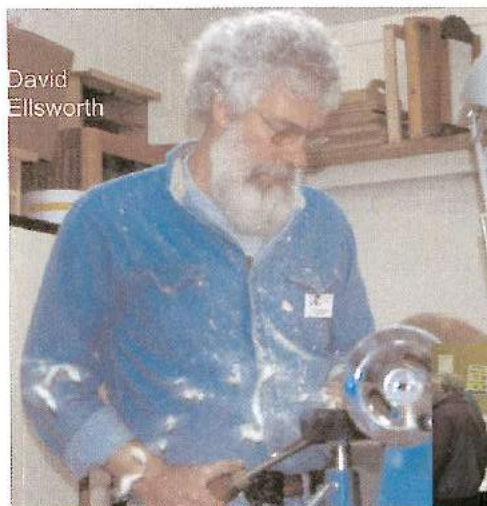
Roger, having won the prestigious IWG/RDS prize for the previous two years, is now well known for his very delicate coloured bowls often inlaid with metal wires.

Laura has an artist's feeling for texturing and colouring of her unusual forms.

Glenn is both a turner and a furniture maker and his large thin pieces are a delight to see and touch.

Gary was seen recently in Monaghan and showed his facility with every tool as befits a production turner. Like Gary, Ollie is a turner who makes anything that sells to make a living.

The two visitors from USA need no introduction; David has demonstrated here and in many other parts of the World during his distinguished career while Bonnie's very colourful (or should we call them 'colorful') pieces have often delighted readers of woodturning journals.



A busy trade stand at Gort



2003 Maynooth, Co Kildare 10-12 October

Seminars are intended to encourage turners to try something new and expand their skills. The team of demonstrators, both visiting and Irish, were chosen to achieve this balance. The work of the present demonstrators caters for a variety of interests from the usual bowl and spindle work to 'knacky' items and serious art

Ray Key has been a regular since the first seminar and needs no further introduction than to direct you to his books and video. Mark Hancock from Wales is amongst the new breed. He is known for his elegant vessels which are finished by carving and texturing.

Johannes Rieber (Norway) is an all round turner in spindle, boxes or joinery work. He is well remembered for his disc inserted into a drinking flask in the Belfast Seminar of 2000.

Mark Sfirri (USA) is new to us in Ireland but soon showed his expertise in spindle turning, primarily off-centre. His work was both innovative and humorous.

Jim Johnston is one of the best turners on the island having experience in cabinet making before teaching metalwork, woodwork and technical drawing. This has given him a deep understanding of tools and how to use them to reduce or eliminate sanding entirely. His demonstrations of box making, natural top bowls and vessels and off-centre turning were very well received.

John McCarthy almost another one of our own (well he hails from Cork), showed us how he makes closed vessels that scoop so many prizes in our competitions. His technique to obtain impeccable finish in large pieces taught his audiences a thing or two - or more.



The Audience at Maynooth 2005

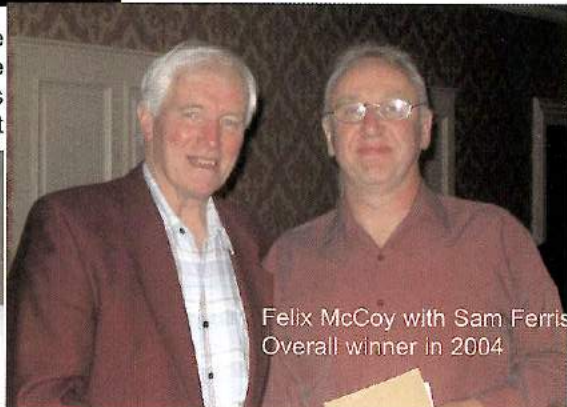


The Competition in Maynooth 2004

All in all, it was apparent that the aims of the first paragraph above were achieved to everyone's satisfaction. Yet another excellent Seminar.



Competition piece



Felix McCoy with Sam Ferris
Overall winner in 2004

2004 Maynooth, Co Kildare 8-10 October

Hosted by the Midlands Chapter over 200 participants attended.

Demonstrators were:- Liam Flynn from Co Limerick whose speciality is making hollow form vessels and is recognised by his peers as one of the leading exponents in the field. He has developed the method of inner rimmed vessels to an art form.

Peter Herud from Norway who took up turning in 1985 as a hobby but in 1995 he became a fulltime turner. He used traditional Norwegian tools such as the ring tool and produced flawless finishes to a variety of items.

Phil Irons who was born in Sydney, Australia and is well known for his timber hat. He is self taught and began turning in 1988. In 1994 he started turning full time. He is an expert on hollow forms and beautiful colouring.

Mike Mahoney is into bowls in a big way making 2000 salad bowls a year. He is a professional woodturner since 1994 and is an excellent demonstrator.

Christian Delhon is a Breton who was inspired by an old friend of ours, Jean-Francois Escoulen, to set up a studio for teaching wood turning. He is especially known for ornamental turning using regular lathes but with homemade chucks and tools. This was his first demonstration in Ireland.

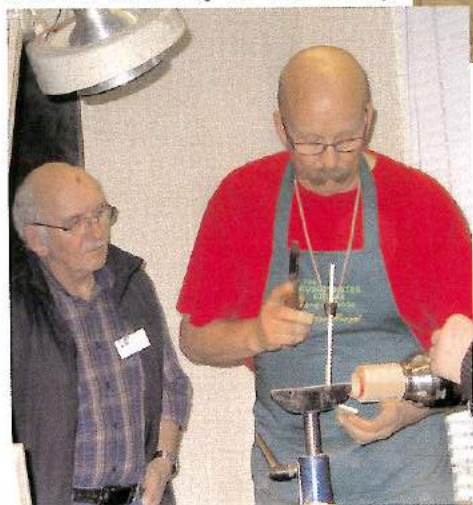
Tom Dunlop who is one of the stalwarts of woodturning in Ireland began turning in 1982 and attended the first seminar. A past winner of the RDS Crafts Competition he is an expert on spindle turning and tool technique.

The Irish-Norwegian-American-Australian-French mix of demonstrators with support from an array of Guild demonstrators produced a very varied and interesting programme, not to mention the tremendous enthusiasm generated and the banter by all and sundry.



Uilleann pipes by the Dublin Chapter boys

The competitions were of a very high standard and a set of Uilleann pipes made by a team consisting of Eddie Murphy, John Shearan, Cecil Barron, Sean Dunne, Niall Bracken and Tom McKeon of the Dublin Chapter was successfully raffled.



Roy Cochrane from the Ulster Chapter watches Petter Herud at work

2005 Carrigaline, Cork 7 – 9 October

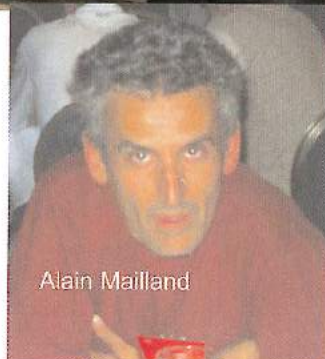
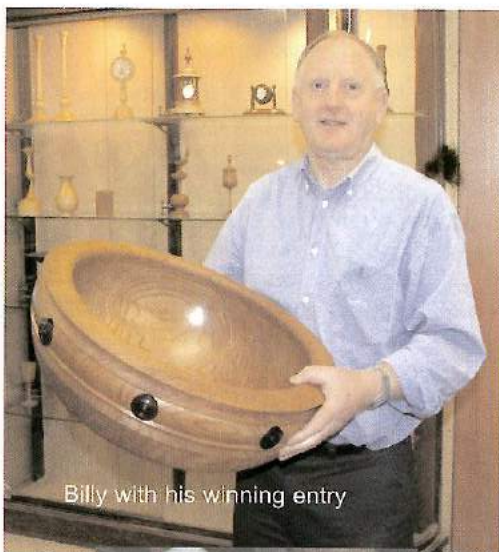
This was an appropriate venue for our National Seminar as Cork was the European Union City of culture for 2005 and the venue and the event were a great success. This was, of course, a result of tremendous effort by the Cork Chapter and their 'assistants'.

The very able demonstrators included;- Tony Farrell, Hans Weissflog, Helga Becker, Alain Mailland, Jules Tattersall, Seamus Cassidy, Kieran Higgins and ,once again, Willie Stedmond, each presenting a variety of techniques and ideas.

Alain Mailland showed his skills in producing his fantastic creations while Helga Becker demonstrated her subtle decorative techniques. Jules Tattersall showed how he relates his imagination to his skills as indeed did Seamus Cassidy with some of his artistic pieces. The very experienced Willie Stedmond and Hans Weissflog shared some of this experience with an appreciative audience.

Quite a few local demonstrators also showed their remarkable abilities such as John Aherne's honey pot, Paddy Lynch's barrell lamp, Tony Farrell's walking sticks and some good ideas from Leo O'Donoghue, Kieran Higgins and Rob Howe.

More than 200 attended including visitors from Germany and USA and the doors were opened on Sunday to the general public. The competition was well up to past standards with the overall winner being Billy Henry of County Antrim.



2006 Carrigaline, Co Cork 13-15 October

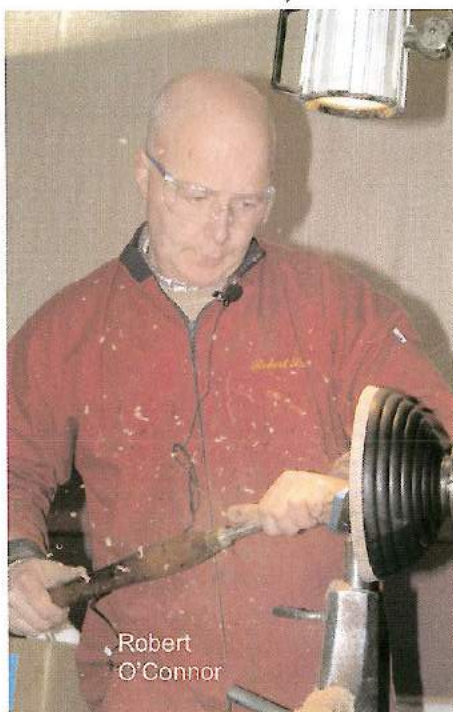
The second Seminar held in Cork was just as successful as that of the previous year in spite of not being quite so well attended.

The international spread of first class demonstrators included Jimmy Clewes and Reg Sherwin (England), JoHannes Michelsen (USA), Christophe Nancy (France), as well as two from either end of Ireland viz Billy Henry from Antrim and Robert O'Connor from Gorey.

The spread of the demonstrations was mind boggling from Michelsen's range of wet turned hats (at his first visit to Ireland) to Sherwin's teaching style and production emphasis; from Jimmy Clewes's relaxed experienced approach to colouring (again his first IWG Seminar) to Robert O'Connor's skill level and attention to detail (although local it is his first time demonstrating at the National Seminar.) Christophe Nancey was most entertaining while producing a delicately beautiful hollow form and showing the use of metal inlay and colour (once again it is his first visit to Ireland).



Seamus
Cassidy



2007 Ballina, Co Mayo 12-14 October

Held in the well-equipped Padraic College and hosted by the Craibh Eo Chapter, this was another smoothly run and very successful meeting.

The demonstrators were from France, Pascal Oudet, from USA, Fred Holder, from UK, Stuart King, Mark Hancock and Julie Heryet (via New Zealand) together with IWG members Ambrose O'Halloran, John O'Sullivan, Brendan Hogg, Tony Rea, and David O'Neill.



Pascal
Oudet

Pascal started turning in 2001 following courses with Joseph Deronzier in France, and Richard Raffan. He has demonstrated at a number of seminars in France and has written articles on woodturning in French journals.

Fred Holder demonstrated thread chasing and making Chinese balls. He has been turning since 1988 and is a member of AAW and of the New Zealand equivalent organisation.

Julie Heryet learned woodturning while living in New Zealand in mid-1990s but now has returned to England. She works with wet wood and also makes hand threaded boxes from seasoned timber. She has taught and demonstrated in the UK and in USA.

Stuart King started as a restorer of antique furniture but has researched



Brendan
Hogg

aspects of turning in many parts of the World. He now includes texturing, carving, piercing, staining and painting among his demonstrations.



Stuart King



David O'Neill is a joiner by trade but spends much of his spare time and passion spindle turning and, after 23 years is now is considered one of our best. He is a member of the Ulster Chapter since its inception and has demonstrated to many other Chapters. His son Andrew is a chip off the old block and is regularly winning turning prizes

John O'Sullivan is a Sligo member since the beginning in 1995. In spite of this heritage he only gave his debut demonstration at Ballina National Seminar.

Brendan Hogg retired from teaching woodwork and has been keenly interested in design and aesthetics. He is a Guild member for more than 20 years and a regular contributor to the Journal, see for instance issue 43 of the Journal.

A nice innovation this year was short articles in the Journal (No.43 December '07), one by young Peter Langan, son of Kevin and nephew of John Sullivan, and the other by a regular attender of IWG Seminars, Phil Duffy from Alabama.



Tom McCosh's Competition Winning piece

Below is Eric Turners Spindle Competition winning entry



Martin Wilson's competition winning piece



2008 ENNISCRONE, CO. SLIGO 3-5 OCTOBER.

THE ANNIVERSARY SEMINAR

This was the 25th Annual Seminar held by the Guild ("Silver Anniversary"—or is that only for weddings?). It was again organised by Craobh Eo Chapter (Mayo) but this year



the venue was the Diamond Coast Hotel in Enniscrone, just along the holiday coast from last year's venue. This proved to be an

excellent choice in view of the rather damp (!!) weather, as everything was under 'one roof'. As this was also a special event this 'special' place was very appropriate; all the needs of the seminar and its participants were immediately 'done as soon as asked' ranging from the excellent food and service to clearing the masses of wood shavings produced in the demo / bed rooms.

It was hoped to bring demonstrators who were present at the very first seminar of 1983 but unfortunately they were not all available; one was no longer even with us (Jim Foley RIP). Nevertheless, those who were present were given the floor at official functions and / or behind a lathe. This star-studded team included Liam O'Neill, the prime mover in setting up the Guild and the seminars as well as John Shiels



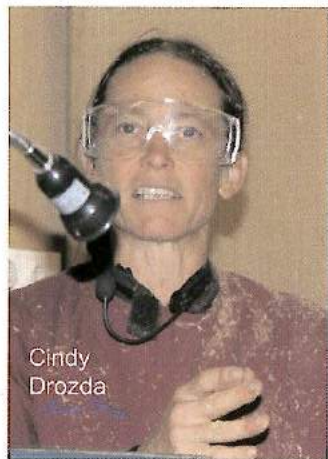
Guild Chairman Willie Creighton presenting a wooden bowl to Jennifer, the Hotel wonder woman

who took Liam as his first apprentice. Our Secretary Eugene Grimley read out some thoughts by Bro Ciarán Forbes (who was unable to be present) on Liam O'Neill's dedication to the Guild and an "Artist's Statement" of what bowl turning signifies to himself. Ray Key spoke about his memories of the first Seminar, since which time he has been frequently used at others.



Ciarán Forbes

Other demonstrators, some of whom had been here previously, were Jean-Francois Escoulen from France, Cindy Drozda from USA, Nick Agar, David Springett, Mark Baker and Tony Wilson from UK, together with our own Billy Henry, Willie Stedmond and Tom McCosh and last, but by no means least, Phil Irons from Australia. To further explain this last remark Cindy at about 5 foot 3 inches was at one point sharing a demo room with Phil at about 6 foot 7 inches plus his well known turned wooden hat.



Cindy Drozda

To get back to the demonstrations: with up to eight running simultaneously and with twenty sessions throughout the three days, those of you with a qualification in higher mathematics or without running shoes would see that it was difficult / impossible to get to every meeting. While it is disturbing for people to push through the door long after the demonstration is in full flow, it is sometimes unavoidable. Fortunately, many of the demonstrators seemed to accept the latecomers with equanimity and, in any case, visitors could try to see them at their next appearance – even if the demo was on a different topic.

In order to get some organisation into the proceedings we shall refer to the demonstrators as listed above. Jean-Francois Escoulen: initially a furniture restorer, he wanted to introduce creativity through new techniques and moved into eccentric – really eccentric–turning. For these amazing pieces he developed the Escoulen adjustable off-centre chuck which he used to make multi-axes turnings and eccentric boxes.

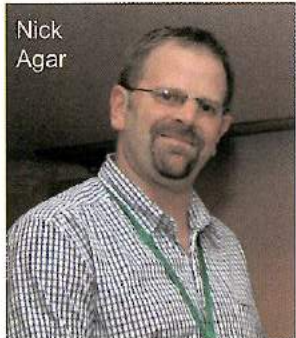


Cindy Drozda delighted her audiences with her beautifully delicate finial boxes multi-axial triangular boxes and finial star lidded bowls with scalloped edge.

Many examples of her work have been seen in various exhibitions and magazines – including our own Journal (see Boxmania, Issue 38 page 25). One might justifiably be tempted to call her the Queen of Finial Boxes.

The 25th Anniversary Demonstrator line up L to R Billy Henry, Jean Francoise Escoulen, Ray Key, Willie Stedmond, Cindy Drozda, David Springett, Tony Wilson, Phil Irons, Mark Baker, Liam O'Neill, Nick Agar and Tom McCosh.

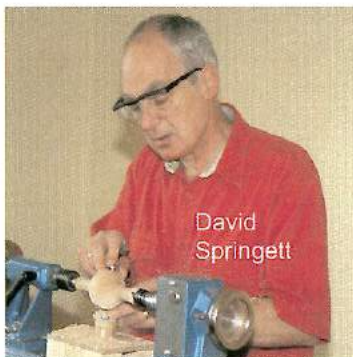




Nick
Agar

Nick Agar specialises in hollow forms and large sized pieces especially his astonishing wall sculptures. These utilise burrs and natural edges and almost anything that enhances his artistry such as carving, texturing, colouring and scorching.

David Springett is, of course, the woodturning Wizard who really makes one speechless, except to say "How on earth did he make



David
Springett

that?" Perhaps his 5 books would give one a few clues. His first demonstrations showed how to turn spheres the 'easy' way and lattice lids for boxes. On day two though he really took off with a 12 point spiked star inside a sphere followed by streptohedrons (unbelievable shapes and boxes). David is a fine teacher and frequently says "It's quite simple really". But don't believe him!

Mark Baker is another fine teacher who makes basic items look easy. He took design further to three-footed bowls and rim decoration. He is, of course, well known as the Editor of Woodturning magazine and the author of a number of books.



Mark Baker

Tony Wilson took up woodturning as part of his rehabilitation following a paralysing accident at work. It would seem that he took up comedy as well, as he kept his audience in fits of laughter throughout most of his demonstrations. These consisted of natural edge bowls, a 'cous-cous' pedestal bowl, a diamond-shaped winged bowl and finally a long-stemmed goblet box with a three foot finial – total height of five foot. This piece was turned in padauk with the white sapwood and red heartwood running centrally from top to bottom.

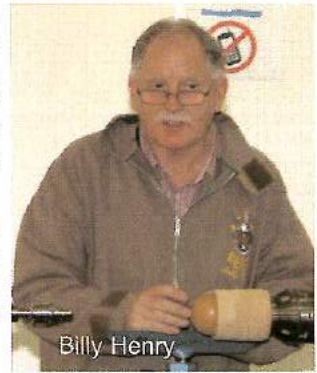


Tony's Goblet



Tony Wilson

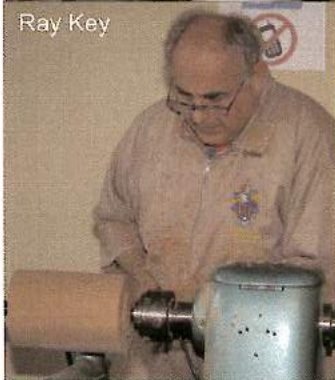
Billy Henry is one of our own and well known as a demonstrator throughout the island. He is a past winner of the IWG Seminar overall prize and is equally at home with spindle or faceplate work and with basic or more artistic items. His skills were shown in spindle work using skew chisel, a baby's ball rattle, carving on a long box and his signature piece the melon box.



Ray Key and Liam O'Neill put in seminar appearances once again, Ray with his stacking boxes, open topped vessel and decorative bowls while Liam made functional bowls and hollow forms. Willie Stedmond, also an early

and regular member of the Guild, took a smaller role making a three piece standard lamp in two parts – work that out.

Finally the 'long fella' Phil Irons gave two useful sessions on his new bowl saver and hollowing tools.



Tom McCosh, a regular contributor at IWG seminars, has concentrated his efforts on improving design and gave two well attended sessions on the topic on Friday and Saturday evening. Part



of Tom's ability can be seen in the special trophy he designed and made. This was presented to Paddy Murphy of the South East Chapter on winning the Chapter Challenge with an amazing 32 nesting boxes,

the biggest being no more than 10 inches high and 5 inches diameter



As usual the competition / exhibition attracted a good number of entries and the standard improves every year as the photographs show.

In view of the special significance of this occasion, it was very gratifying to hear everyone, locals and visitors alike, saying that

THIS REALLY WAS THE BEST EVER SEMINAR –

Well Done to all concerned!



Glenn Lucas's winning bowl



Right, Seamus Cassidy's winning entry
Below

One small section of the table of competition entries

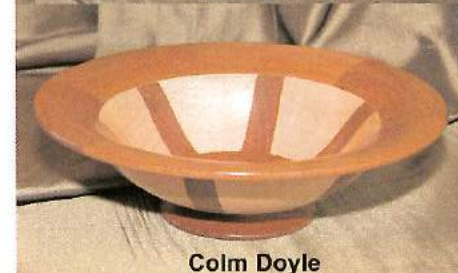




Brendan Hogg's winning piece



Bill Robinson's 3 winning segmented pieces



Colm Doyle



Johnny Harkness, 1st Beginner



Colm Doyle



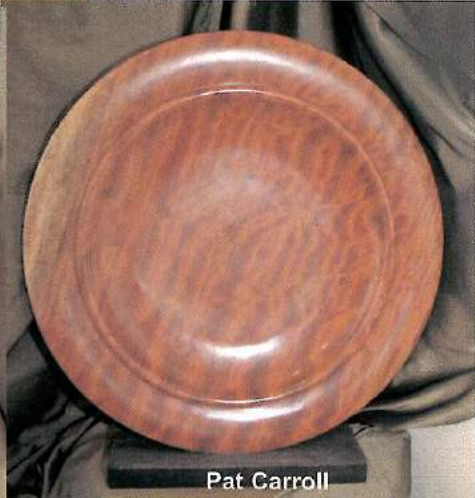
Simon Wilson
Presidents
Prize



Brian McDonnell



Simon Wilson



Pat Carroll



Seamus O'Reilly

Left Roger
Busfield from
England

Right Andreas
Dach from
Germany



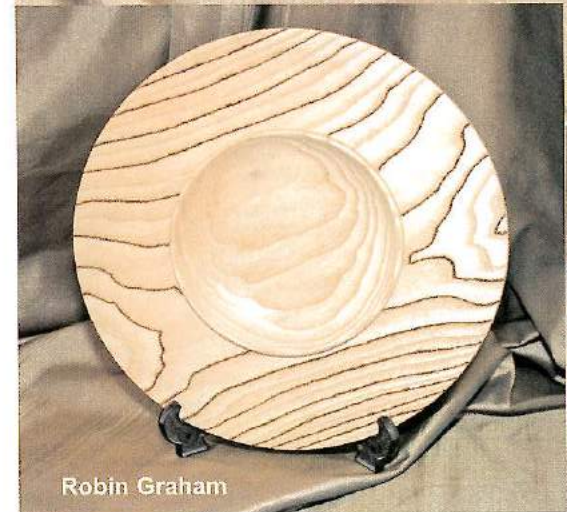


Pat Foudy

Michael Fay



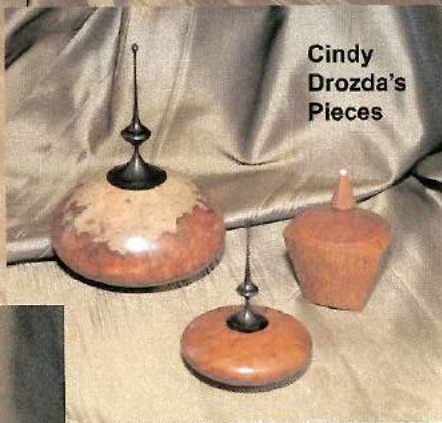
Ian McDonagh



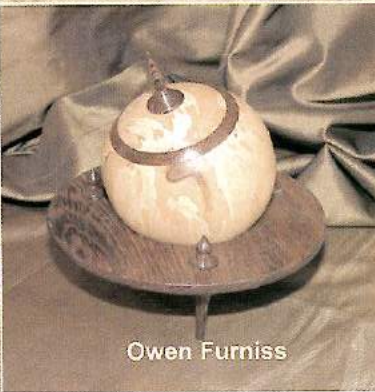
Robin Graham



Kirk
Nusum



Cindy
Drozda's
Pieces



Owen Furniss

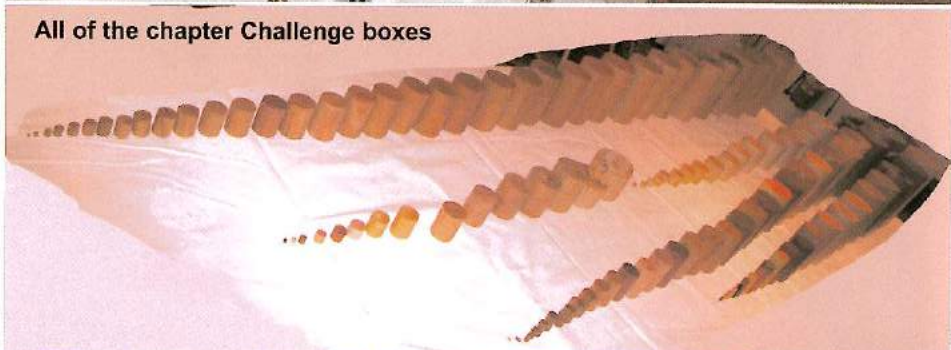


An attentive audience

All of the Compoetition entries

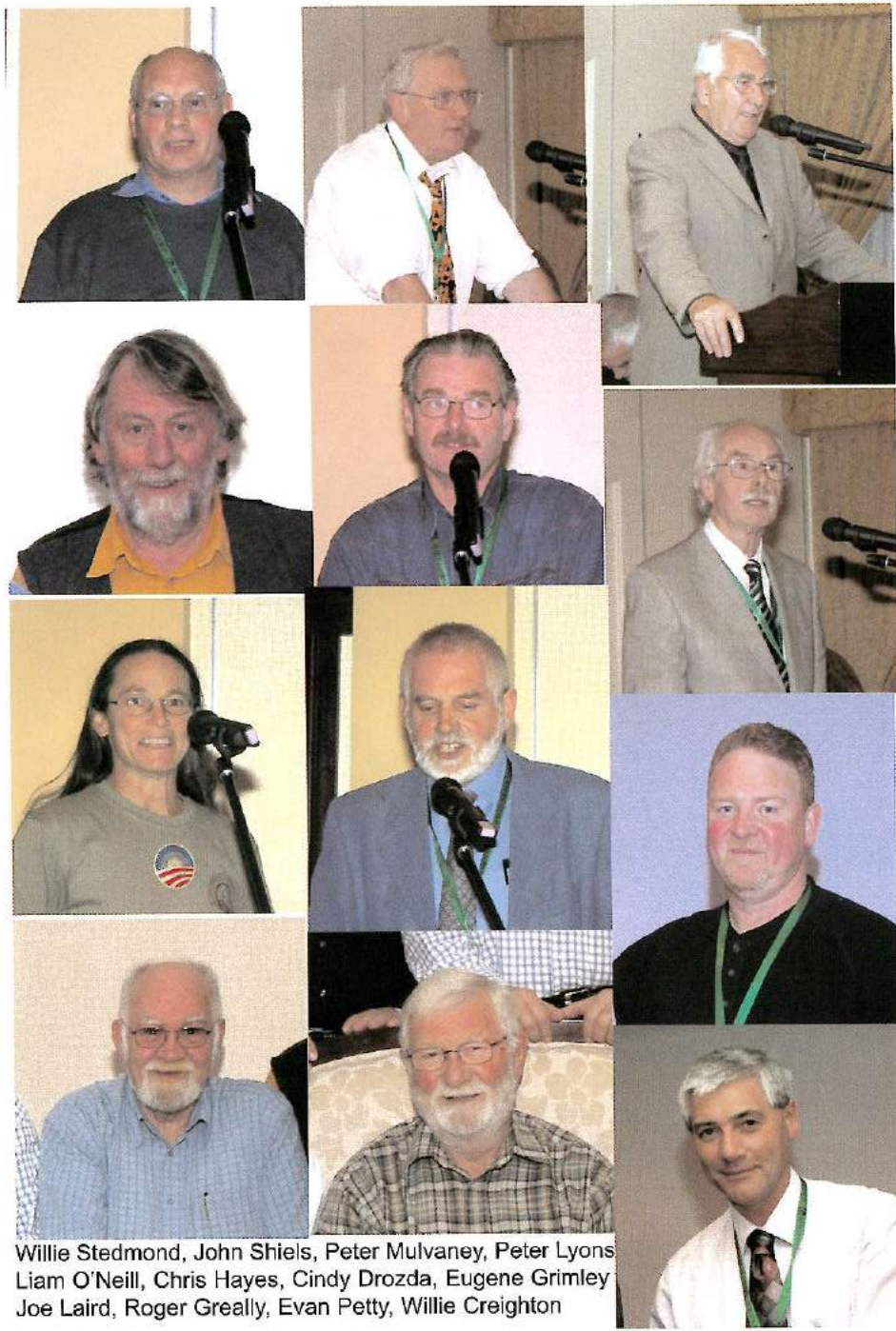


All of the chapter Challenge boxes



More happy punters

Jean Francois Escoulen

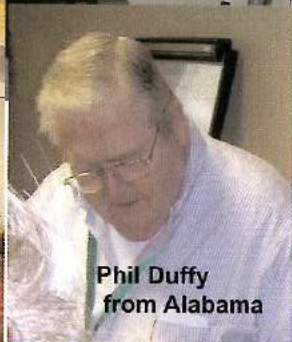


Willie Stedmond, John Shiels, Peter Mulvaney, Peter Lyons
 Liam O'Neill, Chris Hayes, Cindy Drozda, Eugene Grimley
 Joe Laird, Roger Greally, Evan Petty, Willie Creighton



Richard Murphy and Pat Kinsella

Trade Stands at Inniscrone



Phil Duffy
from Alabama

The Banquet



Local and One Day Seminars

While the National Seminar has been the flagship of the Guild and by far its most important event, it did not fully meet with all members' needs. For various reasons many members were unable to attend but were anxious for something on a smaller scale. Clearly there was a need for more frequent instruction outside the various chapters themselves. To fill this need the one day seminars were begun. These have proved enormously popular and are now a regular feature of Irish woodturning. They have brought outstanding turners from other parts of Ireland as well as from Britain, France, USA, Australia and other countries. These turners brought techniques and skills that were not available locally and so improved the standard of woodturning throughout the country.

From the outset the Guild did its best to avoid these one day seminars from clashing with one another and also put a limit on the number that could be held in any one year. They were also anxious that none would clash with the National Seminar. As the number of Chapters is now up to twenty these were necessary considerations.

The following guidelines for one-day seminars are based on the Great Britain Woodturners Association's experience of running one day workshops:- Chapters can charge for attendance at a rate that ensures costs are covered and also provide some profit for the chapter. It is advisable not to cater for too many and to set a limit to the number that could be comfortably accommodated in the premises available and to ensure the all those attending could see the demonstrator.

One of the first such workshops was held at Retos on 20 July 1985 primarily for members in the Munster area. Maximum places 18, cost £15. Demonstrators were Liam O'Neill, Jim Foley and Tom Dunlop. This event was so successful that another seminar was held on 24 July to accommodate those who were too late booking for the first event. Following the triumph of both these seminars, Tom Dunlop and Willie Stedmond began to organise a similar event for the Leinster area. As a result of these workshops the Guild gained ten new members. The newsletter also noted with thanks the generosity of demonstrators in waiving their fees, allowing a substantial injection of funds to the Guild.

By 1987 the Newsletter reported that a number of one day seminars had been arranged for Sligo, Wexford, Kilkenny, Co Clare, and Co Dublin.

A recent addition to this type of activity is the organising of two or three day local workshops hosted by Glen Lucas. One run by Mark Baker on 18th October 2008, was so successful that others have been arranged for 2009.



Grubs up at the Kerry Seminar

Exhibitions

From its early days the Guild was aware of the value of finding suitable locations in which to exhibit members' work. Such exhibitions would bring woodturning to the notice of the public and would give invaluable publicity to the Guild and its members. They would also provide a location for members to sell their work and provide an outlet that was not readily available to the majority of them.

When preparing pieces for exhibition Del Stubbs advised:-

- 1 Good use of material
- 2 Consistency of line
- 3 Advantageous use of grain/structure
- 4 Thoughtful design
- 5 Hand friendly feeling
- 6 Meticulous finishing – no sanding marks
- 7 Attention to bases

1983 World Crafts Council Exhibition

In July 1983 the Crafts Council of Ireland wrote to the Guild with a request to put together a representative selection of craft turnings to be exhibited in Dublin during the European section conference of the World Craft Council. The woodturners Guild and the Irish Patchwork Society were the only two groups to be honoured in this way. Members were urged to support this exhibition and to send up to five pieces along with workshop prices if for sale. A total of twenty pieces were to be selected for the exhibition. This was a unique opportunity to show European woodturners what was being done in Ireland.

Liam O'Neill was asked to prepare an article on the Irish Woodturning Scene for "The Woodturner."

1984 The Great Crafts Fair

This fair was advertised in the Newsletter of the Crafts Council in the May / June issue of 1984. Four exhibitions had been arranged for the week of the Great Crafts Fair in the RDS Hall. Four demonstrations were also planned – enamelling, pottery, basket making and woodturning. The reason for this choice is that these four crafts are relatively instant in their effect and the public can see the end result without waiting too long as might be the case with a large item such as a tapestry. The woodturning demonstrator was Liam O'Neill.

The Crafts Council Newsletter also reported the opening of a new Craft Village in Blarney where small businesses could manufacture and retail their products. Part of the Blarney Woollen Mills had been refurbished into a Craft Village. The project was designed with a selection of different sized units to cater for a variety of needs. Blarney, which is only six miles from Cork, has an excellent all year round trade. During holiday periods tourists come from all over the world providing an international market place.

1985 RDS

At the RDS Crafts Exhibition the competition results were:

- Joint 1st Liam O'Neill and Keith Mosse
Joint 2nd Tom Dunlop and Ciaran Forbes
Joint 3rd Terry Cromer, Niall Fitzduff and James Dunlop
H.C. John Kemp, Niall Fitzduff, James Dunlop, Ray Cornu and J. Long.
All of the above were Guild members

1985 First Exhibition Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra.

This was the Guild's first major exhibition and was advertised in November 1984. It was originally to be held at the Bank of Ireland Head Office, Baggott St, Dublin but it was later changed to the Ulster Museum. It was hoped that the exhibition would travel to other venues after its Museum run. A selection jury of three full members of the Guild was appointed by the committee and their decision was final.

This exhibition introduced the Guild Brochure which included all members names and addresses. All members were allowed to submit photographs for inclusion. Among those exhibiting were:- Willie Stedmond, Tom Dunlop, G Roche, Liam O'Neill, J Kelly, Garth May, E McDaid, Keith Mosse, M Currans, and J Dunlop. and would you believe Michael Dickson and Nial Fitzduff?

"What sells and what doesn't sell" Note that this was for 1985. Things have changed now, especially prices.

- 1, Plain boxes in exotic and interesting woods. Upper limit £15
- 2 Servicable bowls, interesting shapes and grain pattern. Limit £35
- 3 Platters similar to bowls
- 4 Oddities up to £19 ,Clocks £20

Do's and Dont's

- 1 Put fancy prices on not so fancy goods – they won't sell.
- 2 Natural edge objects have a limit of £20 after which the customer objects and won't pay.
- 3 Nothing over £40 workshop price will sell in this market segment
- 4 After three months all objects become shop soiled – light damage in summer, heat in winter and should be removed and refinished. Particularly so with green turned items.



Two of David
Comerford's Pieces
L Burr Elm
R Burr Oak



1987 The Woodturner

This was an exhibition from the Irish Folklore Collection of the National Museum of Ireland and consisted of a broad selection of wooden objects, ranging from butter prints and piggins to a spinning wheel. A photographic display of the work of two old -style wood turners, John Loftus of Borrisokane Co Tipperary and Joseph Hughes of Armagh both of whom were practicing their craft up to the 1930s. The exhibition featured a model of John Loftus's pole lathe and a selection of tools from his workshop. This exhibition moved around the country. During March/April it was in Cork Public Museum; May/June Irish Agricultural Museum Johnstown Castle ,Co Wexford; August/September Nenagh District Heritage Centre ,Co Tipperary; September/November Limerick Museum.

1987 Joint Exhibition with Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

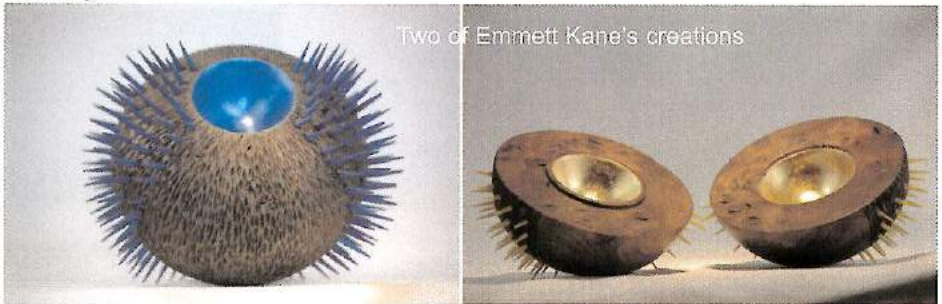
Held at the Bank of Ireland Exhibition Hall, Baggot St., Dublin 23 November to 4 December The opening reception was also shared with a concurrent exhibition of the Craft Potters.

The fee for entry was £5 and there was no limit on the number of entries but members were reminded that a high standard was required and that entries would be selected by an independent assessor.

1988 Annual Exhibition

Held at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin 8 from 13 to 31 October jointly with the Guild of Weavers. The catalogue shows that there were 65 exhibits; bowls, boxes, platters predominating but also an upright spinning wheel by Garth May. In her introductory remarks Terri Kelly C.E.O. of the Crafts Council of Ireland wondered why much more of the very fine work on display was not being offered to the Crafts Council for selection or display in Powerscourt Town House. Gordon Woods who was introduced by Terri spoke with great conviction on education in the area of art and design and made a special reference to the education and stimulation of the very young.

Peter Sweetman and Philip Quigley were complimented for their efforts on behalf of the Guild in organising and running the exhibition. The designing and setting of the exhibition was by Sean McCrum. The exhibition was very successful and sales were up on last year.



1989 University College Dublin

This was billed as the first National Exhibition of Irish Wood Products and Design and it was held on the 29 and 30 September under the title "Wood Ireland." This exhibition involved all sectors of the Irish Timber industry including Sawmilling, Construction, Furniture Making, Joinery, Crafts, Landscape and Garden Equipment, Woodturning, Boat Building and others such as Designers, Engineers, Architects, Research and Educational Bodies. Wood Ireland was organised by The Society of Irish Foresters and consisted of 40 Trade and Educational displays, illustrated talks on the wood industry, including marketing, new standards of Timber quality, wood treatment and research.

Videos on traditional woodworking such as furniture and musical instrument making, boat building and hurley making were shown. Unfortunately, the Guild only had two weeks' notice of the event immediately after our own Seminar and they decided to hire a stand to promote woodturning. Liam O'Neill, John Shiel and Willie Stedmond gave their time and machinery for the demonstrations. Jim Clark and Kevin O'Byrne gave unstinting service in promotion and sales. Sales topped £1,100 and the Guild gained 25 new members. There were also many enquiries from prospective turners for woodturning classes.

1989 Wood and Wool Irish Life Centre

This was the Guild's Annual Exhibition held jointly with the Weavers and was a resounding success. Peter Sweetman, Jim Clarke and Kevin O'Byrne together with Sean McCrum mounted a very impressive Exhibition which was opened by Mr C J Haughey, the then Taoiseach. Both he and Terri Kelly of the Crafts Council expressed a fine appreciation of the part which hand skills play in the artistic life of the community. Liam O'Neill presented Mr Haughey with a fine piece in maple turned by Garth May. Mr Haughey, who has a number of turned pieces in his collection, graciously acknowledged the gift and expressed his thanks to all members. All items on display had passed the assessment committee's scrutiny and 27 members showed 83 pieces. Sales topped £2,400 and the Guild took a 25% commission. Congratulations were offered to David Comerford on his breakthrough into the top end of the market.

At this exhibition one family made headlines; James Dunlop, his son Tom and grandson Brian all exhibited. Brian, at 10 years of age, showed three pieces and all three sold on the first night. Jim Dunlop, a retired carpenter took up turning eleven years previously. Tom, a joiner and a woodwork teacher at New Ross Vocational School also took up turning. The craft fascinated young Brian who began using his father's lathe three years earlier to create his own pieces.



Left
Eugene
Grimley's
entry at
Inniscrone



Liam
Flynn

1990 Joint Exhibition with Weavers Guild.

This exhibition entitled "Colour & Contour" was a joint venture with the Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers and the Irish Woodturners Guild.

Members were invited to submit five pieces for assessment for this exhibition, the work submitted not to have been shown at any previous exhibitions. The items to be brought to Sligo Regional Technical College for assessment during the national Seminar. The Guild was to retain 20% of the sale price and reserved the right to increase the price if they considered any item undervalued. Those exhibiting were Noel Badrian, David Comerford, Brian Dunlop, Tom Dunlop, Br Paul Dunlop, James Dunlop, Liam Flynn, Ciaran Forbes, Gerard Fox, John Kemp, Alex Latimer, Kevin Lee, Garth May, Wayne Murnagh, Michael G Murphy, T.P.McGill, Tom Newman, Kevin O'Byrne, Liam O'Neill, Joe O'Neill, Gordon Rose, John Ryan, John Shiel, William Stanley, William Stedmond, David Sweeney and Peter Sweetman.

1990 Work in Hand

This was an exhibition of short run production craft jointly organised as a cross border venture by The Crafts Council of Ireland and its Northern Ireland equivalent, Craftworks. It was anticipated that this Exhibition would provide an important platform for the crafts people exhibiting ,as it was scheduled to run in Dublin, Derry, Belfast and Cork

Several woodturners took part: Liam Flynn, Ciaran Forbes, Brian Dunlop then only 11 years old, Garth May, Liam O'Neill, Willie Stedmond, John Ryan of Ballyneety Co Limerick and Peter Sweetman of Naas, Co Kildare.

1990 R.D.S. Crafts Competition

Congratulations were offered to Ciaran Forbes who won the top awards, the Californian Gold Medal and the Crafts Council of Ireland Award with an outstanding bowl in monkey puzzle showing very imaginative use of the regular knot pattern of the material.

Liam Flynn was also an award winner and Wayne Mernagh and John Kemp both had work exhibited.

1991 Annual Exhibition, Bank of Ireland, Baggot Street, Dublin

The Guild's Annual Exhibition this year took a different form. The promotional piece in the Craft Review said:- The Guild's annual exhibition takes a different turn this year. Taking an historical perspective, the woodturners show us the background to the craft from Egyptians to modern times. There will be working models of the ancient pole lathe and the treadle lathe which was used from the 17th century. Insurance conditions allowing, demonstrations will be given during the show. It is also hoped to fill out the historical picture with photographs from the National Museum.

The annual exhibition was opened by Terri Kelly Chief Executive of the Crafts Council of Ireland before an audience of over 150 people. Sales exceeded £1,000 with the majority of sales on the opening night. The Committee of the Guild were disappointed at the level of response from members.

Willie Stedmond and Michael Murphy brought up a treadle lathe and a pole lathe to go on show both of which were a huge hit with those attending the exhibition.

1992 Contemporary Crafts Exhibition, Skibbereen

This exhibition had been held the previous year but it had concentrated on ceramics, textiles and paper. For their second exhibition the theme was wood and Liam O'Neill was given the task of selecting the exhibitors. At Liam's suggestion the Irish Patchwork Society joined the woodturners

Those exhibiting in wood were; Michael Bourke from Limerick; David Comerford, Brian Dunlop and his father Tom, Liam Flynn, Ciaran Forbes, Garth May, Liam O'Neill himself, John Shiel and Peter Sweetman

1992 Wood Ireland at Belfield

This exhibition was held in University College Dublin at the Belfield Campus from 18-20 September. It followed on from a very successful exhibition in 1989 by the Society of Irish Foresters. This exhibition improved and expanded on its predecessor and again was organised by the Foresters. The Guild had a stand at the exhibition but there is no mention of woodturning in the official booklet of the event. However many Guild demonstrators were present and there was an exhibition and sale of members' work. The stand was completely jammed with interested visitors enquiring about courses and joining the Guild. This event was a very important venue for the promotion of woodturning as a craft and a hobby.

1992 Annual Exhibition in the Irish Life Exhibition Hall

from 14-28 November

Following President Mary Robinson's visit to Somalia the woodturners responded to the distress of the people of that country. To help, they came up with an idea which required the help and generosity of the Guild members.

Members were invited to donate one piece of work for sale at the exhibition with the proceeds going entirely to the Somalia relief fund; members could if they wished donate more than one piece. These donated pieces were laid out separately to the main exhibition. The normal guild commission was also donated. It was agreed to donate the proceeds to the charity Goal, which had a relief team working in the area. The official opening was by John O'Shea, Chairman of Goal.

This exhibition was a great success with gross sales exceeding £3,727. A cheque for £2,623 was given to Goal to help them with their relief programme in Somalia. Following the success the following were singled out for mention: Michael Healy, Charlie Caffrey, David Sweeney, Garth May, Kevin O'Byrne and Joe O'Neill.

1993 Sligo Model Arts Centre Exhibition

The holding of an exhibition in Sligo was the idea of Danny McGeever. This exhibition was held from 7 -30 May. In the advertisement for exhibits it was stated that there had also been a similar event the previous year. The call was for quality work, functional or non-functional, miniature or XXL. Determining the best shape, form and design can be largely subjective and pieces may rest quietly awaiting the tailor-made client but poor craftsmanship screams attention to itself – the wrong kind. Pre-selection was at local chapter level and participants were invited to submit any number of pieces within reason, along with promotional literature, artist/craftsman profile etc.

1993 Crann Seminar and Exhibition Mount St Josephs Abbey, Roscrea

This seminar was presented by Crann, Coilte Teo, and the Irish Forest Service. The growing and utilisation of broadleaved trees was the subject. The Minister for Forestry and Rural Development Mr Liam Hyland opened the seminar on the 16 November. Over the three days of the seminar there were six sessions dealing with every aspect relating to trees and their development. The Guild was well represented even though the notice was short. John Ryan of the Limerick Chapter was able to rally the support of Galway and South East Chapter members Joe Stephens, Gordon Rose, Tom Dunlop to mention but a few. On the Thursday there was an exhibition of furniture by The Furniture College, Letterfrack. The Guild put on a very fine display of woodturning from spindle, box and bowl made of home grown woods. All this took place on a huge unused sawmill on the estate. There was also a practical demonstration of woodturning by Joe O'Neill, Guild P.R.O. who kept the interest of the delegates until he finished his goblet, spinning top and bowl each in rapid succession. There was also a demonstration of a portable band mill making boards from a large log of yew. The seminar was closed by Mr Michael Smith, Minister for the Environment.

Television Appearances

This year saw two guild members featured on RTE 1: Ed Farrell showed the Late Late Show how to be resourceful with a piece of wood and Liam O'Neill demonstrated woodturning on Live At Three.

1994 RDS Crafts Competition

David Comerford won the Crafts Council Award. Martin Francis won the Woodturning category award, the Country Markets Medal for the best craft item on display and was one of the nominees for the Murial Gahan Award. Liam Flynn won a woodturning category award

1994 Powerscourt Townhouse

This was organised by the Crafts Council of Ireland and included many crafts including turning. The exhibition was reported in the Irish Times of 17 September:-
"The exhibition was a preview of an exhibition of Irish Craft work, to be held in Philadelphia. Earlier that year the Philadelphia Art Alliance, one of the city's oldest Institutions, came to Ireland to survey the crafts scene. So enthusiastic were the visiting Americans about the quality of what they saw that a decision was taken to mount an exhibition in collaboration with the Crafts Council of Ireland. Altogether 75 pieces from 29 craftspeople were included. David Comerford's turned vessels in burr oak and elm are textured in various interesting ways, giving them a vaguely medieval air. In contrast, the timeless wooden bowls made by Ciaran Forbes are pure forms, so smooth to the touch that you want to stroke them forever. Also exhibiting was Liam O'Neill. The exhibition ran in Philadelphia up to November 6.

1994 National Exhibition at the Exhibition Hall Arnotts, Henry St., Dublin

This exhibition which ran from 2 -13 November was organised by Charlie Caffrey, Mick Healy, Tom Hayes and Philip Murray.

This was advertised in the Journal as a juried exhibition and members were asked to submit their best pieces. Items not selected for exhibition but which reached a suitable standard were offered for sale. Pricing to allow for a 25% commission on all sales. After payment of all expenses the balance to be donated to the Hospice Movement.

A report by Charlie Caffrey said that the Exhibition was a great success for all those who took part and a lost opportunity for those who did not. The absence of many professionals for whom the exhibition was specifically mounted was noticeable. The Dublin Chapter played a trojan role in running and manning the show and without their help it would not have been possible.

A target of 80 items of exhibition quality was not achieved, and items placed in reserve had to be included. This was due to the lack of support from the many very talented turners capable of producing quality work.

The demonstrations, which took place daily, attracted a great deal of positive comment. Arnotts received many favourable comments from customers and follow up enquiries were anticipated. Many constructive suggestions were received during the display which would help improve future exhibitions.

Sligo Exhibition

Danny McGeever reported another successful exhibition at the Sligo Model Arts Centre run in conjunction with a Batik and Photographic Exhibition. The Guild exhibits ranged from boxes to large platters but the main talking point was a nest of three bowls in laburnum by Martin Francis. The largest of these was 520mm diameter by 220mm deep with the others turned from the core!

1996 Creative Woodturning Exhibition by Dublin Chapter

Held at South Dublin Co. Council Headquarters in Tallagh this exhibition ran from 29 April to 10 May. It was opened by Ms Breda Cass, Chairperson, who expressed her appreciation and congratulations to the Chapter. A burr elm bowl by Henry East was presented to her. Arts officer for the Co Council said that this was the best exhibition ever held at the venue and had aroused more interest and favourable comment than any other event. Following this event the chapter was overwhelmed with requests which included giving demonstrations at Community Family days at various venues and participation in the "Arts in Action" weekends in the Tallagh Library. They were also asked by the Manager of the Square Shopping Centre to hold an exhibition and Craft Fair at the Square

1998 National Tree Week

This was launched on 7 March at Newcastle West, Co Limerick. The local Chapter had a stand displaying a beautiful collection of members' work at the associated exhibition. This stand was very well patronised and attracted the attention of the President, Mary MacAleese during her official visit.

2000 Fusion Limerick

Fusion, a Limerick craft group now disbanded, organised an exhibition which was held in the Autumn. The theme was "Natural Form". The exhibition was open only to craft workers in the Limerick city and county area. The work of several Guild members was on show including Evan Petty, Dick Ross, John Ryan and Clive Killick.

2002 Splanc Exhibition of Contemporary Irish Woodturning

Held from the 7 November to 1 December this was an exhibition of contemporary Irish woodturning. Splanc is the Irish word meaning 'Spirit'. Since 1930 woodturning has seen a progression from functional turning relying on technique into a study of form and natural beauty of the material. This has meant a redefinition of woodturning which has allowed turned wood art to develop. The exhibition featured the progression of turning on both an individual and Guild basis. One of the leading lights in the field of contemporary turning, David Ellsworth from the USA, was appointed chairman of the judging panel to pick out pieces for the exhibition.

To gain entry it was necessary to enter a piece at the National Seminar and if selected it would form part of a high quality exhibition.



Two pieces by Seamus Cassidy and
a Platter by Pat Carroll



2004 Fine Forms ,Carlow

On 13 June 2004 an exhibition entitled "Fine Forms" was a joint exhibition between Glenn Lucas, Roger Bennett and Liam Flynn and was opened by another eminent Irish woodturner Ciaran Forbes.

2005 RDS National Crafts Competition.

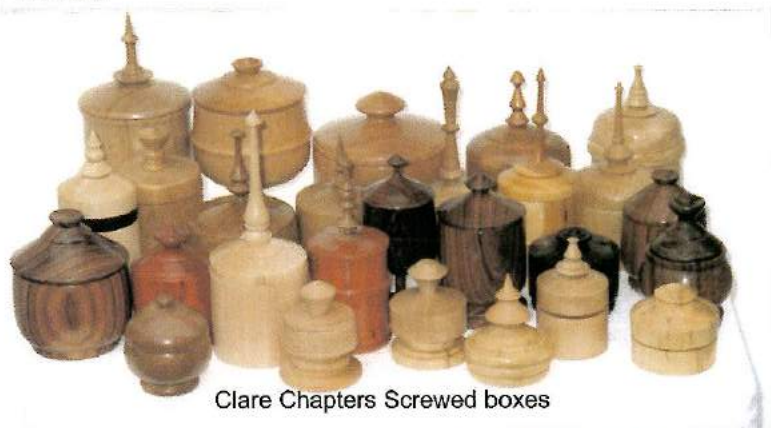
The woodturning section was won by Roger Bennett with a conical shaped bowl dyed black and inlaid with silver. Other pieces were submitted by Emmett Kane, Guild President, and Robert O'Connor, Gorey.

2006 Tracing the Line

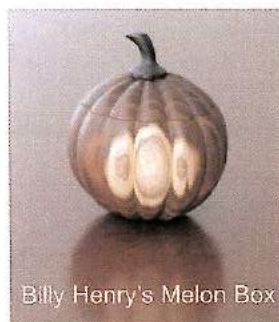
National Craft Gallery, 2 April-28 May. This event focussed on the work of seven renowned woodturners two being Irish viz Liam O'Neill and Ciaran Forbes. The others were David Ellsworth (USA), Richard Raffan (Australia), Ray Key and Jim Partridge (UK) and Maria van Kesteren (Netherlands). The curator was another well known member of the Guild, Liam Flynn.

2006 Boxmania

This was a photographic exhibition printed in our Journal in 2006 (Issue 38). It mainly showed the skill and imagination of our members but also included a few examples by demonstrators at our seminars, especially by Cindy Drozda "the Queen of finial boxes" (see Issues 37 and 38).



Clare Chapters Screwed boxes



Billy Henry's Melon Box



Ballina Boxes 2007

From “ Newsletter” and “Magazine” to “The Journal”



Soon after the founding of the Guild it became clear to those on the Committee that they needed to keep in touch with woodturners around the country. As yet local groups were not formally set up so there was no way in which woodturners could interact with one another. The Newsletter came into being under the editorship of Joe O'Neill of the Dublin Chapter. This Newsletter from the beginning addressed the needs of the woodturners by covering items of interest to all. It started out as a single leaf sometimes covering one page and sometimes covering both sides. Occasionally it increased in page numbers and also contained book reviews, reports of seminars and flyers from manufacturers and retailers. The newsletter was issued monthly with the occasional month missed. However it was important in that it kept the Guild and its members in contact and brought welcome news to those far removed from suppliers. Given that few hardware shops in the country stocked woodturning lathes or tools this was of great benefit, especially to those outside the main cities.

Small adverts appeared with some Irish woodturners now diversifying into supplying timber

blanks, tuition, and the sale of lathes as their owners traded up to more sophisticated machines

Articles on timber also appeared and occasionally plans for pieces were given. The number of members was also recorded and by 1988 this had reached 105. Concern was being expressed at the difficulty in retaining members.

Videos of the seminars also became available to members from fairly early on. Joe O'Neill also made a Video on historical aspects of Irish Woodturning.

The first Newsletter was published in 1983 and contains a good account of proceedings. It also offered advice on the choice of lathe and covered other topics despite its limited space. By the early 1990s the newsletter was to all intents a journal. By now it contained several pages reproduced on a computer. In 1984 Michael Dickson, having previously been Assistant Secretary, was elected as Secretary (following the resignation of Liam O'Neill (to become a full time woodturner).

It was Michael who developed it as a means of communicating with the whole membership.

In 1993 the Dublin Chapter decided that they wanted more frequent and dependable news and the spring of 1993 saw the publication of the first Dublin Chapter Journal. This was produced by Garth May and was followed by seven more issues.

In 1994 under the editorship of David Sweeney, it appeared in a new magazine format, although still called a newsletter it was a far cry from the first issue ten years previously. This first issue also used the now familiar logo of the Guild. Issue two told us that the logo was designed by Adam May, son of Garth. The logo first appeared on the invitation cards for the 1992 Annual Exhibition in the Irish Life Exhibition Hall. The design both modern and original represents the artistic as well as the craft elements of woodturning and it received much praise from a broad spectrum of craftworkers.

In 1995 the Dublin Chapter undertook to produce the Journal for the Guild on a quarterly basis. The editor, not identified by name but under the initials GM (which might stand for Garth May?) wrote; "Firstly a Journal needs a range of information and items of interest and, bearing in mind that this is a quarterly publication, it should be possible to get all we need from our membership. I think we should also think of regular features. I shall jump in at the deep end and start a shopping list of editorial needs and see whether arrangements can be made for the Chapters to produce something each quarter.

The regular features I have in mind are:-

- 1 A turning project. An illustrated description of making a particular item or employing a particular technique.
- 2 A report on an item of equipment. The Dublin Journal ran a series called "Lathe Choice" to inform the membership of the merits or otherwise of various lathes. These are personal views and we all have our own preference.
- 3 A series on trees and the quality of the timber for turning.
- 4 A personal profile of a Guild member, their background and woodturning experience.
- 5 A review of an exhibition, craft fair, book or video.

That gives us five features, which together with Guild and Chapter news, will go some way towards filling the pages.

Last but not least tips, hints and advertisements and also let us have a letter or two"

The foregoing was a very ambitious plan and an excellent template for a good woodturning Journal. No doubt these views represented thinking within the Guild and were subsequently taken on board.

Garth May remained Editor for the first three issues. The journal continued until 1996 when it ceased for a number of months. However the Guild decided to resurrect the journal and persuaded Peter Mulvaney to act as editor. Peter Mulvaney continued with the job for 3 years until Fran Morrin expressed an interest in taking over.

Fran continued to improve the Journal and remained on as Editor until issue 28 when he handed over to Hanspeter Bodmer. Under his editorship the Journal really took off and expanded to over eighty pages, many in full colour. Hanspeter included small occasional items, not related to woodturning but of general interest which reflected his personality. The Journal is now considered to be the best such journal on woodturning in the world.

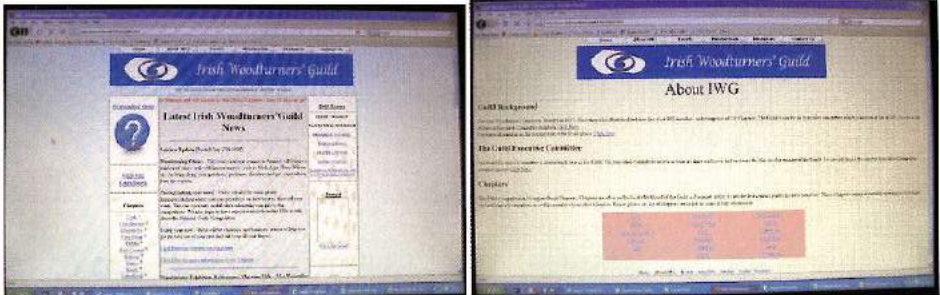
Peter Lyons replaced Hanspeter after his 4 year stint and, by now, has shown his ability to continue as Editor in his own style. Peter has continued to build on the good work done by HPB. The Journal is now 68 pages in full colour, with about half of it reporting on the work of the Chapters including demos and competitions. Peter expects to maintain this format for the duration of his editorship.

In Memoriam

The newsletters also regularly recorded the deaths of members. Given the age profile of members and that many were woodturners of long standing when the Guild was set up, it is to be expected that members would pass on in due course. To write obituaries or even just to list everyone would hardly be possible; there would inevitably be many names missed out and their friends would be justifiably insensed. Similarly, some would have been strong and active supporters of the Guild and perhaps deserve more space than others. It would be very subjective as to where to draw the line, so it has been agreed to make an all-encompassing word of gratitude to all those members who, during their lives, showed their love of woodturning and of friends left behind.

“.....We shall remember them.”

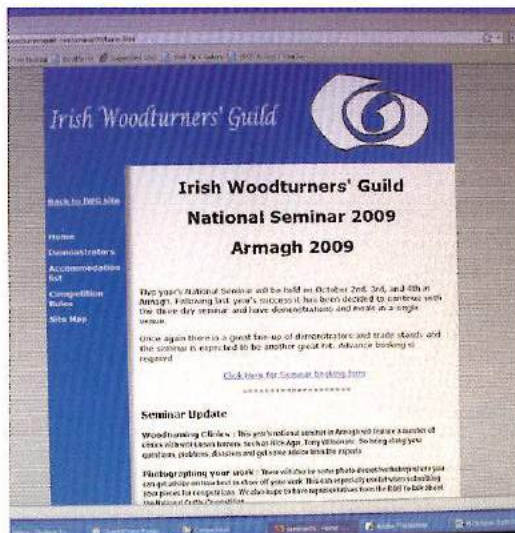
IWG website



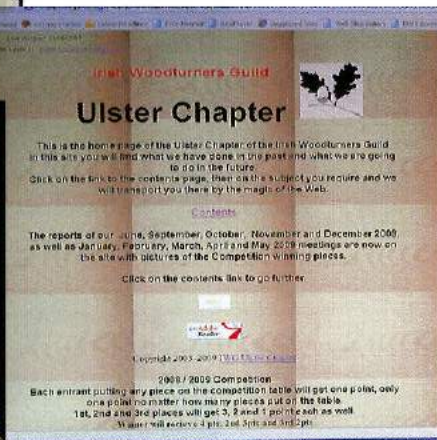
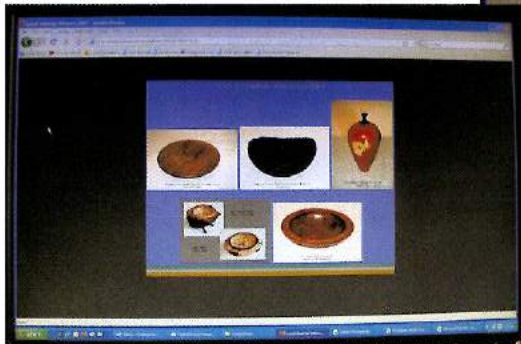
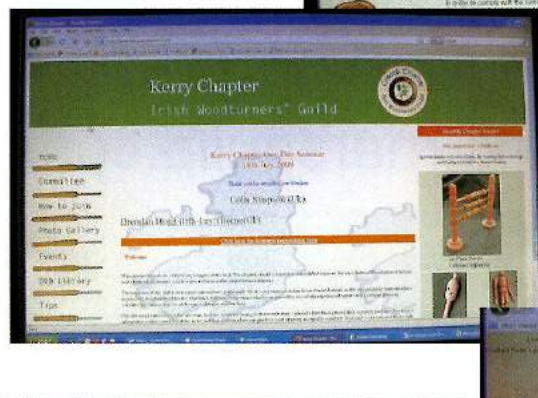
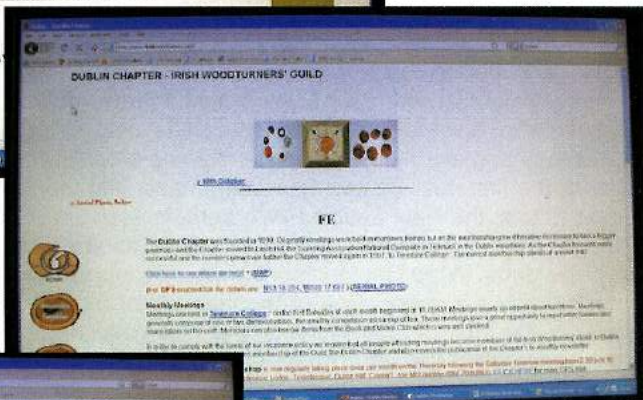
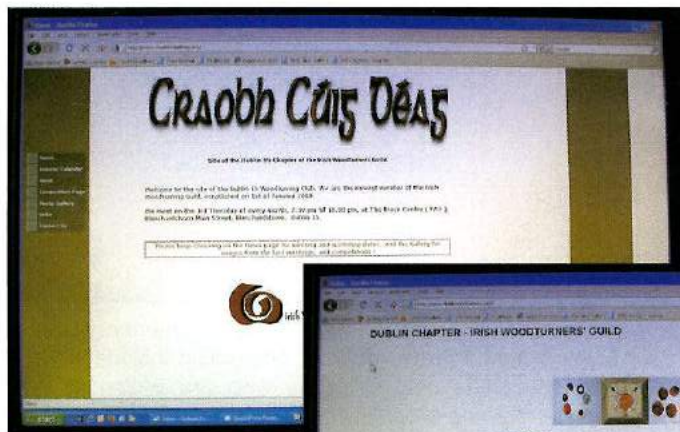
In January 2000 the Irish Woodturners Guild launched a website for members and to act as a point of contact for fellow woodturners overseas. This could include holiday makers who are visiting Ireland, overseas demonstrators who are willing to give workshops and any members of woodturning organisations from around the world. By May of the first year contact had been made with the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain, the New Zealand Woodturners Association, the American Association of Woodturners, Australian Woodturners, Canadian Woodturners and individuals from all over the globe. In the first four months since its launch the site was getting between 150 and 200 hits per week. One of the features of the site was the number of galleries showing the best of Irish Woodturning. The galleries proved to be very popular with those who visited the site. The galleries were open to any member to exhibit work, and good quality photographs from recent exhibitions were welcomed.

The website address is:-

www.irishwoodturnersguild.com



Several Chapters have also set up their own websites



The next twenty five years

The Irish Woodturners Guild has built a lasting foundation to launch into the future when there will undoubtedly be changes in structure, technology and the art and craft of woodturning. In view of our age profile, many of our present members will have "shuffled off this mortal coil" by the year 2033 but let's hope the memories of us and our works will continue to please and inspire those that are left.

The next 25 years have, in fact, already started with the birth of a new chapter at the end of 2008. This is called Croabh Cuig Deag which is the Irish for Branch Fifteen (denoting the Dublin Postal District). This chapter was spearheaded by Joe Laird who is appropriately in charge of Development on the Executive Committee. He will be in his sixties in 2033 but has promised to promote the Story of the First Fifty Years!

In the meantime KEEP ON TURNING.



Above David O'Neill, Chairman of the Ulster Chapter, Right shows young Robert O'Connor sitting in at the Gorey Workshop



Andrew Jordan being coached by grandfather Terry Cruise



APPENDIX 1

Growth of IWG membership



Appendix 2
 Details of officers throughout the 25 years

Year	Chairman	Secretary	Treasurer
1983/4	Liam O'Neill		
1984/5	Niall Fitzduff	Liam O'Neill	Bill Scott
1985/6	Niall Fitzduff	M Dickson	Bill Scott
1986/7	Bill Scott	Garth May	Tom Dunlop
1987/8	Cecil Brown	Garth May	Tom Dunlop
1988/9	Cecil Brown	Danny McGeever	Joe O'Neill
1989/90	Liam O'Neill	John Shiel	Joe O'Neill
1990/1	Liam O'Neill	Kevin Lee	Joe O'Neill
1991/2	Liam O'Neill	Kevin Lee	Joe O'Neill
1992/3	Liam O'Neill	Kevin Lee	Gordon Rose
1993/4	David Sweeney	Kevin Lee	Gordon Rose
1994/5	David Sweeney	Charlie Caffrey	Gordon Rose
1995/6	Nick Chapman	Charlie Caffrey	Gordon Rose
1996/7	Nick Chapman	Felix McCoy	Paddy Ryan
1997/8	Emmet Kane	Felix McCoy	Paddy Ryan
1998/9	Emmet Kane	Felix McCoy	Paddy Ryan
1999/ 2000	Emmet Kane	Ambrose O'Halloran	Brian McAdoo
2000/01	Seamus Quinlan	Ambrose O'Halloran	Brian McAdoo
2001/2	Felix McCoy	Ambrose O'Halloran	Brian McAdoo
2002/3	Felix McCoy	Owen Furniss	Sean O'Neill
2004/5	Felix McCoy	Owen Furniss	Sean O'Neill
2005/6	Felix McCoy	Owen Furniss	Sean O'Neill
2006/7	Chris Hayes	Niall Cahill	Margaret Creighton
2007/8	Chris Hayes	Eugene Grimley	Margaret Creighton
2008/9	Willie Creighton	Eugene Grimley	James Gallagher

Presidents of the IWG



2004 - 2006 Emmet Kane



2006 - 2008 Peter Mulvaney



2008 - present Evan Petty

Appendix 3

List of Prizewinners at the Seminars

There do not appear to have been any competitions run in the early seminars

Over the years the seminar competitions rules have changed, this is to be expected.

1986 Letterfrack Co Galway

Best Bowl	1st Niall Fitzduff 2nd Ray Cornu 3rd John Osborne
Best Box	1st John Kelly 2nd Willie Stedmond 3rd John Osborne
Best Spindle Turning	1st Michael Dickson 2nd John Kelly 3rd Barney Heron

1987 Riverchapel Gorey Co.Wexford

1988 Riverchapel, Gorey, Co Wexford

Best Piece at Seminar	Gerry Roche
Best Previous Award	Gerry Roche
Winners	John Kemp Joseph McAteer Gordon Rose John Ryan Mick Regan Jim Holloway Sean Burke Brian Dunlop

1989 Sligo

1990 Sligo

Best Overall Piece	David Comerford
Best Functional Piece	1st Willie Stedmond 2nd Brian Dunlop
Best Non Functional	1st Liam Flynn 2nd Noel Badrian
Best Box	Liam Flynn
Best Between Centre	Gerard Fox
Best Beginner	Andrew Stuart
Best Funny piece	John Shiel

1991 Dublin City University

Overall Winner	Willie Stedmond
Best Bowl	David Comerford
Best Box	Danny McGeever
Best Functional	Tom Dunlop
Best Non-functional	Dermot Chapman
Best Spindle	Jim Dunlop
Best Beginner	J McCarthy
Best Funny Piece	T P McGill
Best Wood Identification	Peter Sweetman
Special Novice Prize	Brian Dunlop
Best Special Spindle Turning	David Sweeney

1992 Dublin City University

Overall winner	David Comerford	Ebonised Burr Elm Bowl
Runner-up	Maurice Mullins	
Runner-up	Gerard Fox	
Best Functional	John Kemp	
Best non-functional	Liam Flynn	
Best Spindle	T.P. McGill	Pair of inside-out lamps on a 12 piece Offset base
Best Box	Steven Cooper	
Under 19	Andrew Stewart.	Copper inlaid bowl
Under 19	Glenn Lucas	
Under 13	Brian Dunlop	

1993 Kilkenny

Best Overall	Kate Walsh
Functional	John Kemp
Non Functional	Emmet Kane
Box	Jim Dunlop
Spindle	T P McGill
Most Innovative Technique	John Ambrose
Junior	Nigel Linden

1994 Kilkenny

1995 Kilkenny

1996 Monaghan

1997 Monaghan

Overall	Mark Hanvey
Under 19	1st Karl Harrer
	2nd Trevor Cook
	3rd Michelle Lund
Advanced	1st William Henry
	2nd Seamus Kerr
	3rd Archie McVeigh

1998 Gorey Co Wexford

1999 Gorey Co Wexford

Under 19	1st Alan Doyle 2nd Kieran Doyle 3rd Alan Byrne
Beginners	1st Patrick McMahon 2nd Alan Donegan 3rd Jim Cogley
Spindle	1st Eric Turner 2nd Des O'Halloran 3rd William Holmes
Open	1st Robert O'Connor 2nd Les Jameson (UK) 3rd Arthur McGuician
Overall	Billy Ferris

2000 Jordanstown Belfast

(145 entries)

Under 19	Winner Charlie Watts Commended Mark McDermott
Beginners	1st Gerard Hennessy 2nd Martin Gleeson 3rd Nora O'Bhaoill
Spindle	1st Michael Dickson 2nd Peter Parker 3rd Anthony Witham
Open	1st Billy Henry 2nd Tom McCosh 3rd Leonard Ingram

2001 Gort Co Galway

(150 entries)

Under 19	Winner Charlie Watts (aged 10)
Beginners	Winner Roy Cochrane
Spindle	Winner Robert Bell
Open	Winner Billy Henry

2002 Gort Co Galway

Overall	David Comerford
Open Section	1st. Tom McCosh 2nd Billy Henry 3rd Emmet Kane
Spindle Section	1st Billy Henry 2nd Neill O'Sullivan
Beginner Section	1st Hanspeter Bodmer 2nd Graham Brislane 3rd Ken Maye
Under 19's	1st Charlie Watt 2nd P.J. Murphy 3rd Sean McGann

2003 Maynooth, Co. Kildare

2004 Maynooth, Co Kildare

Spindle Section

1st	Eric Turner	Ulster
2nd	Paul Howard	AWGB
3rd	Tony Witham	AWGB

Beginners Section

1st	Joe Laird	Dublin
2nd	Joe Laird	Dublin
3rd	Richard Murphy	Dublin

Under 19 Section

1st	Sean McGann	Galway
2nd	Thomas Doherty	Galway
3rd	Damian Walsh	Galway

Open Section

1st	Henry East	Dublin
2nd	Billy Henry	Ulster
3rd	Billy Ferris	Ulster

Overall Winner Sam Ferris Ulster

2005 Cork

Beginners

1st	Pierce Boland	Natural edged Bowl, Burr of Beech	Kerry
2nd	Richard Murphy	Hollow Vase, Spalted Sycamore	Dublin
3rd	Pierce Boland	Bowl, Burr of Elm	Kerry

Under 19

1st	Sean McGann	Textured Bowl, Elm	Galway
2nd	Sean McGann	Bowl, Olive Ash	Galway
3rd	P J Murphy	Segmented Vessel, Yew and Walnut	Galway

Spindle

1st	Archie McVeigh	Lidded Chalice, Ebony	Ulster
2nd	Des O'Halloran	Set of Scoops, Beech	Galway
3rd	Brendan Collins	Just in Time	Limerick

Open

1st	Robert O'Connor	Hollow Form	Gorey
2nd	Emmet Kane	Wire and Colour, Oak	Midland
3rd	Michael Fay	Bowl, Elm	Ulster

Overall Winner

Billy Henry Ulster

2006

Ballina 2007

Beginners

1st	Anne Murphy	Spalted Beech Bowl	Gorey
2nd	Martin Wilson	Segmented Platter	Craobh Eo
3rd	Michael Flynn	Elm Bowl	Ulster

Under 19

1st	Andrew O'Neill	Sweet Chestnut Bowl	Ulster
2nd	Andrew O'Neil	French Oak Gavel	Ulster
3rd	Seanie McGann	Burr Oak Bowl	Galway

Open

1st	Tom McCosh	Segmented Platter	Ulster
2nd	Tom McCosh	Ebonised Ash Vase	Ulster
3rd	Dermot O'Brien	Spalted Beech Bowl	Gorey

Spindle

1st	Eric Turner	Egg Cup Set	Ulster
2n	Eric Turner	Pair of Candlesticks	Ulster
3rd	David O'Neill	French Oak Gavel	Ulster

Presidents Prize

Andrew O'Neill	Long Stem Goblet	Ulster
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Overall Winner

Robert O'Connor	Natural Edged Bowl	Gorey
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Pat Carroll

**2008 Enniscrone, Co Sligo
(25th Anniversary Seminar)**

Beginners

1st	Johnny Harkness	Hollow Form	Ulster
2nd	Colm Doyle	Lamp & Segmented Bowl	Dolmen
3rd	Colm Doyle	Segmented Bowl	Dolmen

Under 19

1st	Brian McDonnell	Tall Stool	Craobh Eo
2nd	Simon Wilson	Clock & Pedestal Table	Craobh Eo
3rd	Simon Wilson	Watch	Craobh Eo

Open

1st	Seamus Cassidy.	Tall Form	N.E
2nd	Brendan Hogg	Sculptural Forms	S.E
3rd	Pat Carroll	Bubinga Platter	Gorey

Segmented

1st.	Bill Robinson		
2nd & 3rd	Bill Robinson		AWGB
Spindle			AWGB

1st	Seamus O'Reilly	Yew Candlesticks	
2nd	Pat Foudy	Pair Candlesticks	Dublin
3rd	Roger Busfield	Tall Spindle	Limerick AWGB

Merit Award	Andreas Dach	Small Box	Visitor
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Best in Competition	Glen Lucas	Large Walnut Bowl	S.E.
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President's Prize	Simon Wilson	Pedestal Table	Craobh Eo
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Chapter Challenge		Fitting Boxes	S.E.
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THE END
- Until 2033



Paddy Murphy



2008 Executive
Committee