

A Letter from your Vice-Chairman

Did you miss our March meeting? If you did, you missed a cracker! I'm writing this instead of Dan, our chairman, because he was unable to attend himself.

The demonstrator was Les Thorne who came up from Hampshire to be with us. When I asked him what he wanted me to say in my introduction, he said, "Nothing". OK, what are you going to demonstrate? He looked me straight in the eye, and with a grin on his face, answered, "Woodturning!". And he continued with that down to earth good humour for the whole evening.



He showed us how to make a small, three-part vase in sycamore, oak and sycamore, demonstrating a variety of skills at each stage. He began with the main body of the vase, the oak part, showing us first how to hollow it out and then how to shape the outside profile; what tools to use and how to hold and move them. He had some large models of the cutting edge of the tools which enabled him to show us clearly, both on the work itself and on the CCTV screen, the angle to put them to the wood and the way to rotate the tool and move it, as the cut progressed.



After that he made the base, in sycamore, and finally the lid. The lid was reversible so that you could have either a long, pointed finial or a short, stubby one. So he not only demonstrated the best way to achieve the cuts, he also discussed the aesthetic appearance of the finished vase. And at the same time he not only told us what to do and how to do it, he encouraged our participation.



We had two newcomers, who participated in the chat and banter as if they were long standing members of the club. We all hoped they would come again next month. As a club we really need to work on getting more new members. In the tea break we were treated to a very nice cake made by Anita, that she brought along with a fine rocking bowl she had made (this month's challenge)! And on the subject of this month's challenge, also during the break, Les gave us a helpful appraisal of every one of the entries, giving expert and skilled advice on the construction, the faults and ideas for improvement of each individual rocking bowl.



Finally I have to end on a slightly peevish note. I'm sorry. Les ran over time for his demonstration but only by a few minutes. Most members then picked up the chair they'd been sitting on, put it away on the rack, and made a bee-line for the door. There's much more to do than that! All the equipment has to be put away, including the lathe(s). The floor has to be swept and everything we used in the kitchen has to be washed up and put away. Five minutes after the end of the meeting, (apart from Les, who had his own stuff to clear up) only three members were left to do everything. Twenty minutes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "John Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive style.

after that, it was just Ace and me. That really isn't good enough.