

Newsletter of the Blue Mountains Woodturners Inc.

Mission Statement: "Promote woodturning as a creating skill for all ages"

EDITION 303

MAY 2026

Club Demo June 6

John Cossey will be demonstrating how to make a lidded box on 2 centres at our club meeting on June 6.

John is a very accomplished wood turner who has completed the 5-year course run by Ernie Newman. John has participated in high level collaborative art events. It will be a very interesting demonstration.



LEURA HARVEST FESTIVAL, MAY 2, 2026

Words by Tom Fox. Pictures by Tom Fox and Andy Georgiou



The Club had a good day at the Leura Harvest Festival on Saturday, 2nd May 2026.



The weather was mostly pleasant, a considerable number of members attended, the public turned out in force (as usual), sales were fairly brisk and several people enquired about the Club or availability of lessons.





Nevertheless, it was a long and tiring day. Thanks are due to all who attended particularly to John Turner – who towed the trailer – and to Clive, both of whom were on the job from sun-up to sundown.





The Jan Pennell Woodturning Award

As some members will know, Jan Pennell, - a former president of this Club – devoted some of her estate to endow an award for outstanding woodturning. The award sits within the ‘Maker of the Year’ competition which is conducted by ‘Australian Wood Review’(AWR). The December 2025 issue of AWR (# 129) details the winners of the 2025 Maker of the Year competition with the Jan Pennell Woodturning Award going to a woodturner from Germany. (The inaugural award in 2024 was won by Simon Begg).

I understand that ‘Maker of the Year 2026’ opened for entries on 1st March 2026 and closes on 30 August 2026. I don’t think I would ever have been a contender for an award like this and - with declining eyesight – I certainly won’t be entering. Nevertheless, maybe some of our more talented members might give it a go this year? It would be very fitting indeed if the next winner of the Jan Pennell Award was a member of the Club that Jan put so much effort into.

Tom Fox
26 May 2026



An apple resurrected by John Gallo



This story has a sad beginning: while turning my second apple, which was made from fig vine, it broke into pieces when the two parts were given a tap to join them securely with a layer of fine paper. (When the base and lid parts are separated and a rebate and tongue turned, respectively, they need to be attached again securely to allow the outer shape to be smoothed). I gathered the pieces from the workshop floor and took them home to mourn over.

This story also has several biblical references that we can learn from. (Those of you who know Ernie, which must be most if not all of you, would know that he is well versed in the bible and teaches not just woodturning technique but shares his wide knowledge and experience).

So, firstly, the fig vine: fig leaves have been used for male modesty, and I seem to recall that Adam was the first to use the same. When Eve was created from Adam’s rib, they lived happily, but not ever after, in the garden of Eden, until the snake tempted them to eat from forbidden fruit. It is not universally agreed, however, generally accepted, that this fruit was an apple. So, although an apple a day keeps the doctor away, it wasn’t so good for Adam and Eve, who lost the virtue of innocence for themselves and all of us to follow.

So far, this story doesn't have much happiness to share. But this is where the story took a different turn (or turning: haha, I can't resist a pun). When I got home, I thought that I would try to put the pieces together, just to see if I had collected them all. And they fitted together pretty well, definitely a recognizable apple. So, I glued them together with wood glue and took it back to show Ernie.



This is when Ernie had a religious experience, proclaiming “it has been resurrected!” I have a very basic understanding of that term, but Ernie is much more knowledgeable about it, and I am sure that he will be happy to enlighten you should you ask him.

The moral of this story is, just as “oils ain’t oils”, neither are all woods the same, and they need to be treated differently. More importantly, though, stuff-ups happen, but they sometimes have a happy ending, and can be the source of learning, including about the bible.



Our club has a significant and growing library of woodturning and woodworking books, magazines and articles that are available to be borrowed for up to two weeks at a time. You can also feel free to scan or copy any article or pages for your future reference as you undertake any of the projects you find. If you need to extend your book loan, just check in with our librarian Clive.

Our library collection is an excellent resource for you to take advantage of. So please feel free to browse through or borrow from the library when you visit the club house.



Clubs Event Diary 2026

June 6: John Cossey demonstrates how to turn a lidded box on 2 centres.

July 4: Something demonstrable will occur.

August 1: Learning will happen. Of what will be revealed closer to the date.

September: Saturday: Springwood Festival TBA

October 2/3: Saturday only. Leura Spring festival. Labour Day weekend

Nov 11th : Remembrance Day; Whitton Park 11.00 am. Gateway international, Salvation Army & St Martians Purse.

Please let us know if you are interested in taking part in these events. Or if there is another even not listed here you think the Club should be involved with. Email: turningchatter@gmail.com

A sequence of images that illustrate the stages of turning a natural edge sphere.

By Ernie Newman.



Stage 1 – We Begin



Stage 2 – The shape emerges



Stage 3 – Flexible Sanding



Stage 4- Single Sphere



Stage 5 – A Cluster of Spheres



If any member has a story to share or a tale to tell, please send it to turningchatter@gmail.com.

Remember: Articles are more likely to be included if they are in Word format and photo's (not embedded in documents) as Jpegs. The cutoff for publication is the 20th of each month. Please try to get your article in by then to ensure it is included. Thank you for your help with this. It will make life a little easier.

Until next time, keep those wood chips flying,

Bec

