



## Newsletter of the Blue Mountains Woodturners Inc.

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

EDITION 300

FEBRUARY 2026

### **Club Meeting and Demo: Homemade tools - Possibilities and approaches**

Our demonstration at the clubhouse on March 7 will be Roman Goik.

Roman will be showing some homemade tools he uses regularly and discussing some approaches you might not have thought of. He will also be demonstrating silver brazing where two dissimilar metals can be very strongly and permanently bonded.

He asks anyone attending to bring in one or two of your most prized homemade tools so we can have a show and tell about how members approach making their own tools for woodturning/ woodworking.



### **Blue Mountains Woodturners Upcoming Community Events.**

April 18 and 19 at Portland "Iron Fest" event.

It is for the weekend, but our display is held indoors, no need for dismantling and re assembly. Full details will be provided by Steve Ward once finalised. Keep the date in mind if you are thinking of a weekend away, we need maybe a minimum of 3 but preferably 6 members at our display handing out our information on Woodturning and the community service we provide. It is a chance to sell some of your creations, cull your surplus or display your skills or just join in the fellowship.

May 2nd and 3rd of May.. Leura Festival.

We have been invited to attend the festival with our usual community tent and display of timber artwork our members create. It is a way of making our community aware of our services in teaching and, also, community participation. The event will be instead of our usual monthly club event and as usual we can sell our members surplus creations and of course and primarily let the public know of our existence and the community services we provide.

Think about the dates and maybe organise a weekend away.



## Hat Trick by John Gallo

Recently Roman brought in some “green” timber, and Ernie suggested that the three learners present have a go making toy hats. None of us ever thought we could turn a hat, let alone turn a “hat trick”, however, with Ernie’s enthusiasm and encouragement, we all “threw our hats into the ring” (and threw caution to the wind).

The timber was tulip wood, which none of us had heard of, let alone turned before. It comes from the tulipwood tree from the East Coast of North America, where it is also called yellow poplar, although it is not related to the poplars. The wood is light but strong, and is a pale colour, with some light brown pigmentation in the sapwood. It was good for turning, although we needed more than a hat to protect us from the liquid sap spraying from the fresh timber.

Ernie explained that the critical aspect of this exercise is to create a thin-walled hat of uniform wall thickness. The thin wall allows the crown to be compressed in a special jig to create an oval shape. The uniform thickness prevents uneven drying leading to cracks. First the outer shape of the crown and brim are formed, then the brim is thinned to a thickness of 1.5-2mm. It is important to work slowly from the outer edge of the brim towards the center, checking its thickness frequently with small calipers.

There is a critical point where the brim meets the crown, and one must negotiate this transition point carefully, working close to the inner surface of the hat before moving the gouge centrally to remove timber. A larger caliper allows the wall thickness to be measured deeper into the hat. Since this is a light timber, similar to radiata pine, one can get an impression of how thin the wall is by shining a light through the wall (a technique called transillumination, which is also taught to medical students when examining various lumps and bumps).

One of the most challenging parts of the project is judging the wall thickness of the top of the hat, since one doesn’t have the same caliper access to it. The hat is parted off at the apex and placed in a jig with sufficient pressure to squeeze it into shape without cracking it (this takes some nerve!).

From the above, you can see that this project has multiple challenges. SO...we have to take our hats off not only to Ernie but also to John Mulquin, who is a multiple Sydney Easter Show prizewinner for turning full-sized hats. We have a better idea now of the skill involved in those achievements!

Having taught Tony Brewster, Roman Gock and me to turn hats, and including the one he whipped up as a demo, Ernie’s turning school has now deservedly been awarded its 4 hats status.

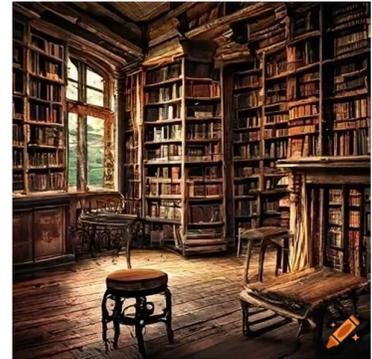
Sometime soon we will hold a mad hatters tea party there.

Note: due to editorial issues – my computer died and I am doing this edition on my phone, I cannot access the photos John (and Roman) sent me. I will do a special picture spectacular in next month’s Turning Chatter.

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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.



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### Clubs Event Diary 2026

March 7: Roman Goik: **Homemade tools - Possibilities and approaches**

April 4: TBC as it is also Easter Saturday

April 17 & 18: Iron Fest in Portland

May 2 & 3 : Leura Festival No Demo day. Come to the festival instead!

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](mailto:turningchatter@gmail.com)

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## Blue Mountains Wood Turners Presidents Report February 2026

Greetings one and all,

A new year has arrived. Are we ready? What is our goal for this new year. Peace, love and compassion in a very crazy world.

We are so blessed to live in this great land. Some will complain, then they will pull their heads out of the sand and see what beauty and peace we have in this land. We are a truly the Lucky Country. We look at the TV news to see what amazing people we have to serve us. Seeing our emergency services giving it all to protect people and property.

Thank you all, our sisters and brothers for your love and commitment to us.

Had my rave, how are we going to serve the people in this great land?

We have the gift of making things to help people carry out tasks, we can make toys, for example, to comfort children in need, and there are plenty of them who find life hard, if we can make something to make a child smile, we are doing ok.

A few things we need to do:

keep building relationships with the Men's shed. Build our timber storage racks. Keep our toy making going. Prepare objects to be sold at the Springwood, Leura and now, in a new opening, the Iron Fest at Portland. Be positive about selling our club and how it can help them.

We have two main events coming up, Leura in April and a whole new challenge at Portland the Iron Fest in April. This should a great experience for all, it is over two days and it would be great if we can stay up their overnight. If we so stay overnight, we will have to book very soon. So please get stuck into making good art to sell.

I managed to get a job to make finials for a historic house, I put a high quote in to make them 3 for \$750. My health is not best at the moment, so John Cosey came to the rescue. The club will get half.

Next Thursday, come along, share, teach others, be Hand and Eye we build each other up.

Your President

John H

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If any member has a story to share or a tale to tell, please send it to [turningchatter@gmail.com](mailto: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 20<sup>th</sup> 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