

# TurningTalk

Turning Tomorrow's Treasures

Issue No 187

Newsletter of the South Auckland Woodturners

May 2010

## Royal Easter Show Art Awards

Congratulations **Terry Scott**, winner and place getter of a multitude of class awards at this years Easter Show Art Awards and **"Overall Wood Turner"** Award. Not content with that, he was also winner of the **"Supreme Exhibit in Show"** award. A great result for Terry, for SAWG and for increasing awareness, recognition and acknowledgement of Woodturning as an art form in New Zealand. Take a bow Terry, well deserved!

As Dick Veitch explains, there were entrants other than Terry from SAWG and many were recipients of awards. Congratulations to all winners and we look forward to more, better and even greater achievements in the future.



**"Supreme Exhibit in Show"**  
winner Terry Scott  
**"At the Beach"**

## Woodcraft at the Royal Easter Show

*Reported by Dick Veitch*

Each year I see more entrants, more entries, better design and finish, and improved embellishment – the great winner this year.

This year, prizes went to 20 of the 30 people who entered 118 competition entries. Eleven of these people were newcomers to the Royal Easter Show and they went home with their fair share of prizes.

Each year, we have two judges – a woodturner and a non-woodturner – and we see their likes and dislikes showing in different ways in many of the winners. As always, though, good form comes first and this year we saw good texture and colour also to the fore.

Sadly, the "Pictures in Wood" class, created some years ago to attract marquetry, intarsia, and scrollsaw work, was again not well patronised. It will be replaced next year with a class called "Natural" to cater for those turners and non-turners who don't texture and colour but do like a bit of bark, rot, or chainsaw cuts in the wood. The "Pictures in Wood" aspirants can still enter their work as "Ornamental".

### The Winners:

#### Small Bowls

First: Mantaray 6, Terry Scott  
Second: Spotty Bowl, Stephen Petterson  
Third: Small Decorated Bowl, Pepi Waite  
Merit: Small Burlwood, Dick Veitch

#### Large Bowls

First: Trio, Terry Scott  
Second: Summer, Phil Quinn  
Third: Tree & Sea, Peter Williams  
Merit: Plain Leaves, Terry Scott

#### Plain Bowls

First: Black Maire Bowl, Graeme McIntyre  
Second: Rocky Bowl, Terry Scott  
Third: Plain Jane, Peter Williams  
Merit: Rimu Bowl, Ken Thomas  
Merit: Untitled, George Cross

#### Plates/Platters

First: Kauri & Vertigris, Terry Scott  
Second: Gecko, Terry Scott  
Third: Swamp Kauri Offset, Joe Hosken  
Merit: Off Course, Mike Lewis  
Merit: Red Cedar Leaves, Terry Scott

#### Hollow Forms/Vases

First: Looped, Terry Scott  
Second: Magnolia Leaves, Terry Scott  
Third: Wildflower Pot, Dick Veitch  
Merit: Tear Drop, Keith Hastings  
Merit: Fern Urn, Terry Scott



**Mantaray-  
Terry Scott**



**Small Burlwood-  
Dick Veitch**



**Pepi Waite**



**Trio- Terry Scott**



**Summer- Phil Quinn**



**Kauri & Verdigris  
Terry Scott**



**Off Course  
Mike Lewis**



**Black Maire Bowl  
Graeme McIntyre**

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### Club Meetings:

Wed nights - 7.00 pm  
(Doors open - 5.00 pm)

### Club Rooms:

Papatoetoe Community Centre,  
Tavern Lane, Papatoetoe,  
South Auckland, NZ

### Contact us:

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Graeme Mackay  
Terry Scott  
Phread Thurston  
Dick Veitch  
John Whitmore



The South Auckland Woodturners  
Guild  
*is a member of the*  
National Association of  
Woodworkers NZ Inc  
*and the*  
American Association of  
Woodturners



## Coming Up...

All the activities listed here are in our clubrooms in the Papatoetoe Stadium Community Centre, Tavern Lane, Papatoetoe (see [www.sawg.org.nz](http://www.sawg.org.nz) for directions). On our regular Wednesday evening meetings, the official meeting starts at 7.00pm and is followed by a "Show-&-Tell" session where members can show and discuss their work.

For those wishing to make use of the machinery, do some shopping, check out our library, get some advice, or just socialise, the doors open at 5pm.

We have a Table Prize for each term. This is members work on display - lessons learned (half-finished, flawed, or failed) to the best you can do that has been brought to the "Show-&-Tell" table during the term.

## SAWG TERM 2 2010

5 May	<b>Pot Pourri</b> with Bob Yandell
8 May	<b>Working Bee</b> at SAWG
12 May	<b>Annual General Meeting</b> followed by carving demo from <b>Jane Allnatt</b>
19 May	<b>Finishing Options</b> with Rex Haslip
26 May	<b>Term Project</b> - Colour on Texture
2 June	<b>Pyrography</b> TBC
9 June	<b>The Dremell</b> with Terry Scott
16 June	<b>Egg and Egg Cup</b> with Bruce Wood
23 June	<b>Pate Dish</b>
30 June	<b>Judging of Term Project</b> and <b>Life Members Award</b>

## Coming Events

1-3 May	<b>"You Turn"</b> Horsham (Victoria, Australia)
16-18 June	<b>Manawatu Roundup</b>
14-18 July	<b>2010 Australian Woodturning Symposium</b> , Brisbane
24-26 Sept	<b>SAWG Participation</b> Camp Adair, Hunua Ranges
29-31 Oct	<b>Spin Around Waitaki</b> , Oamaru (Guest turner Guilio Marcolongo)

Regularly Updated Calendars of Events can always be viewed at  
[www.sawg.org.nz](http://www.sawg.org.nz) and [www.naw.org.nz](http://www.naw.org.nz) (including entry forms)

## Macs Maxim of the Month

"The future belongs to the person whose mind is open"



## Shavings

### Fishys Open Day

Ian Fish tells me that he has had great feedback from attendees at his annual Open Day and he was impressed that the wallets and moths were lured into exposure to daylight!

Great demos from **Peter Oliver** (off centre and off axis) and **John MacKinven** (lured from retirement to demonstrate some artistic turning and embellishment) attracted a large turnout of members along with a number of visitors also making the pilgrimage to SAWG.

A tried and true format, the Open Day has become a tradition and an enjoyable time was had by all with silent auction, raffle, gallery (won by **Bryden Thorpe**), as well as plenty of toys for sale and a great selection of wood from Treeworkx.

Ian says "thanks" to all for making it a success and especially to Dick and Mac for their assistance in setting up.



**"I wish Peter Oliver would hurry up & finish his demo- I have barely sold enough to pay for the petrol to get me back across the bridge"**  
**Ian Fish deep in thought**

### A Visitor from Hawkes Bay...

**Peter Hewitt** (Woodcut Tools) was in attendance at the Open Day and enjoyed meeting a lot of his customers as well as catching with some mates.



While here, Peter used Terry Scott's "clean" workshop and lathe to turn a large burl.

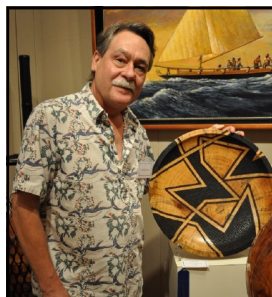
### Small Lathe and Tools Needed

**Doug Tanner** has a friend in a retirement village who would like to buy a small wood lathe for use by the residents in the village workshop. Doug says that it would be great if the lathe came with some tools but these can be acquired separately if necessary. If you can help, please call Doug on 09 278 3533.

### From last months Turning Talk:

#### Chainsaws

The report on the demo by Jason from the Botany Stihl shop prompted this response from **Kelly Dunn** of Hawaii (photo shows Kelly with his first place getter in a recent local competition). Kelly is known for his unique turnings and recently featured on the cover of "Woodturning".



Kelly says: "The guy talking about not adjusting the mix screw on a chain saw- My main saw is a huskey 61 I got in 87. It still runs great. Why? Cause I mess with it when things are not right. Wrong color on the spark plug, poor vroom vroom when you hit the trigger. Being at 7 thousand feet up versus sea level, but you need to know a bit of what you are doing.

I say make sure your exhaust screen is clean. Or ditch it if it does not bother you to do so. A clogged screen will stop that machine dead in its tracks. And many folks never bother. I brush off my air filter with each tank refill during the day. I take the time to lube the sprocket tip also. After a day of work I may set the saw away. But before I use it again it gets cleaned up. Really cleaned up. It may look like hell with all the sap and stuff on it but runs and cuts great.

Another way to put it is my wife says in her next life she wants to come back as one of my chainsaws. Thats sweet. But she would be dirty and in the dark most of the time and cleaned and fondled only after having been rode really hard. She may have a point".

Kelly recently tackled some kiwi kauri sent to him by Alby Hall. He characterised it "... a more nasty bit of wood to turn, I think I would be hard pressed to find".



**"Ancient Kauri Box"**  
**By Kelly Dunn**

While he struggled with it, the effort was well worth it and his wife immediately laid claim to it for her own box collection.

**Resins:** a number of readers have responded and commented on how valuable this article from **Jim Lowe** was- good to know that this was of use to readers. Thanks Jim for sharing and permitting reproduction of it.

### Participation 2010

Details for this years Participation have been finalised and a registration form can be found on page 12 of this Turning Talk.

Note that the venue is Camp Adair in the Hunua ranges and attendees will be delighted to know that all meals and accommodation are included in the cost of \$130 for the weekend- a very reasonable cost for a great weekend.

Registrations are limited to 90 and space is filling fast!





(Continued from page 1)

### Domestic Ware

First: Untitled, Bruce Hannah  
 Second: Rubbish, Dick Veitch  
 Third: Salad Bowl, Terry Scott  
 Merit: Grandchild's Rimu Chair, Norm Jenner  
 Merit: Puriri Walking Stick, Graeme McIntyre



Terry Scott



Dick Veitch



Keith Hastings

### Lidded Boxes

First: Nested Boxes, Terry Scott  
 Second: Aged Ebony Leaves, Terry Scott  
 Third: Lidded Box, Luke Crowsen  
 Merit: Black Maire Pedestal Box, Graeme McIntyre  
 Merit: Queen Box, Terry Scott



Bruce Hannah



Moana, Robyn Harper

### Ornamental

First: At the Beach, Terry Scott  
 Second: Storm Rider, Terry Scott  
 Third: Fern Bowl, Luke Crowsen  
 Merit: Rust, Terry Scott  
 Merit: Peppery Trio, Dick Veitch  
 Merit: Japanese Maple Vessel, Graeme McIntyre



Japanese Maple Vessel



Norm Jenner

### Woodcarving

First: Moana (The Ocean), Robyn Harper  
 Second: Fern Wrap, Jane Allnatt  
 Third: Spiral Pourer, Jane Allnatt  
 Merit: Hou Ora (New Life), Robyn Harper  
 Merit: Kea, Robyn Harper  
 Merit: Old Rope, Jane Allnatt

### Pictures in Wood

Merit: Kauri Sashes With Fish, Jacque Hastings

### Best Item by a First Time Entrant

Antique Lever Lock, Ray King

### The Auckland Prize

Black Walnut Bowl, Carole Knowles

### Youth Award

Luke Crowsen

### Best Overall Woodcrafter

Terry Scott

### Supreme Exhibit in Show

At the Beach, Terry Scott



Spotty Bowl  
Stephen Petterson



Spiral Pourer  
Jane Allnatt



At the Beach- Terry Scott



Best Item by a First Time Entrant  
Antique Lever Lock, Ray King



Nested Boxes- Terry Scott

# Form within Form: A Jacques Vesery Demonstration

By Graeme Mackay



The opening comments set the tone for the demonstration: "texturing and colouring is my way of expressing my voice".

Woodturning is the beginning of the process with the goal of "creating an illusion of reality"

Form is a dominant theme for Jacques Vesery: "design drives the form and that the form needs to reflect the objective".

Jacques Vesery draws inspiration from John Jordan's work. Design flow is critical and that it must be in place before enhancements such as texturing and colouring can be applied. As a consequence there is a need to consider the full design pathway before starting a work or a new series. All aspects from the wood choice, block size, shaping, refer-

ence points, production, and enhancement process, must be taken into account at the initial point of design. If a piece of wood does not come up to the requirements then it is put aside and a replacement piece found to complete the work.

There should be an end goal with a particular shape, form and size. The woodturning process is used to get to the primary shape as quickly as possible. Planning for the design is a critical part of the Jacques Vesery process. The final concept is always in view. All stages of the shaping are designed to assist the completion of the work. Reference points should be planned in order to speed the finishing process.

"Form within a form, the textures, carving, colour, and shapes are part of the overall illusion".

The trademark feathers are the "form within the form" that complements the overall view. All textures, colours or enhancements must complement the overall form. The scale of the textures should be designed rather than accidental. The feathers on the blue pear provide an excellent example within the form: they add a tactile component to the overall view of the work.

The choice of wood type is directed at production speed, ease of use and suitability for texturing, carving, and colouring. Clean wood grain is essential for this type of finishing. Jacques prefers a local cherry wood that is available, has known characteristics and is easy to work. The wooden blocks and blanks are chosen to fit the design form. The size and type of wood should not drive the form.

"The target is the finished work, ..  
the finished form over the wood type used.  
I am selling an artwork rather than a wood work"

Jacques small tidy, and spotless workshop reflects these goals. Turning is used to prepare several pieces or canvases ready for a texturing, carving, and colouring. As a wood craft professional, Jacques acknowledges that production speed is important. Workspace, machines, lathes, and tools are part of the preparation process. Throughout the demonstration, Jacques commented that methods need to be refined to reduce preparation time and allow for a longer period of finishing.

A workshop should be set up to assist and maintain production speed. The workshop, or studio as the customers call it, should reflect the primary functions. The lathes: Stubby 1000 and General 160, are tooled up for specific production tasks. The tidy and clean surfaces reflect the products used in the texturing and colouring. Gold leaf application is difficult in a dusty environment.

A well-defined process is used for attribution and ownership of any work. Jacques prefers to sign and date each work.



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# Quills and Feathers- Jacques Vesery

By Graeme Mackay

The work is held tightly and firmly against the body, being worked with a reciprocating carver forming the signature quills and feathers wood art of the Maine (USA) artist Jacques Vesery. The image is formed through carving, burning, painting and surface texturing. A tidy planned approach to work seen in the delivery of the demonstration and the compact travel woodworking equipment and accessories.

The process is ordered and the constant of form and design remains throughout the discussion of the work process. The texture is not accidental. It is part of the design and needs to be appropriate to the form, move with the shape, and be able to create the desired illusion. Application is a closely held activity. Jacques prefers to hold all work close to his body in a comfortable and economic position.

All texturing and colouring is planned for maximum production efficiency. Patterns are applied in a coordinated manner. There is a stress on production process, getting it organised, and ensuring that each step is part of a flow. Each tool has a particular place in the workspace which is designated by the part of the process, and to streamline production.

The carving process is systematic. The design is analyzed and the start points pre-planned. The central quill of a feather frequently carries the external form and flow of the piece. The quill lines are carved out and left proud, later to be highlighted by burning and colouring. Definition of negative spaces is introduced early into the carving, often occurring in advance of the refining, shading and colouring.

The micro-detail of the design process is a key to the final form. Jacques notes that the quill ridges are difficult to replace. Loss of the ridge or quill can mean that the view of the form is distorted. He uses the quill lines to carry the illusion of the outer full form before texturing or colouring. The Vesery style demands a uniformity of application to accentuate the flow and drive the illusion.

Jacques is adamant that major mistakes mean that the work is put aside and a new piece started. The style of operation demands that other similar blocks or blanks are ready for action. Time is not spent on redeeming a mistake. He is insistent that with the initial planning in place a new block can be started to finish the desired piece.

The carving itself is directed at the final texturing or colour application. Wood-burning onto the carved areas is used to refine or highlight particular features. Fine line burning is frequently used to accentuate negative spaces. The needle point burners are designed for each step and he has a simple burner cleaning apparatus. A short-hair bronze wire brush attached by a Velcro band to his wrist provides instant burner tip cleaning. Also, a small piece of 400 grit sanding paper glued to the end of the brush provides a ready sharpening pad. There is no need to move from the work position to clean the burner.

There is regular use of reciprocating and rotary carvers. Preference is for pen grip rotary carvers for their ease of use. The choice of unit coming down to production benefits: easy to use collets, vibration and noise, and how they hold in the hand. The overall rotary unit size is critical as much of the work is up close. The work held on the chest rather than in a vice or on the bench.

Tools need to be simple and that a person should be willing to modify and adapt. Utility grinds are key to the production process. The grind adapted for a particular task. An example of simplicity is seen in the car aerial modified for use as a depth gauge.

The maintenance of fine burning tips is seen in the signing of works. Jacques Vesery places importance on signing and dating. The signature is part of the overall design: Font size, shape, and colour are part of the overall pattern. The permanence of the signature is part of the provenance. Care and attention is needed. Plan for the signature, consider the style of application i.e. wood-burning, placed on the work and the effect of later colours or burnishes. While a wood-burnt signature is permanent, the application of it must fit into the texturing and colouring process. It is not something that happens at the end. A work can be significantly affected by incorrect application. A wood burning signature is applied at the correct part of the process.

Colour is not an instant process. The range of colours chosen are according to design and form requirements. Layers planned and applied according to colour primaries and theory. The individual layers complimenting each other and combining to form the desired view. Each application moves through the tones working off a primary base col-



# JACQUES VESERY (Continued)

*(Continued from page 5)*

The date process allows for identification of chronologically of the work and provides a basis for provenance and proof of copyright. Nomination of wood type is not essential for authentication. Further, Jacques wants the buyer to make their own view and opinion of the work away from direction by wood type. The view was carried on to series naming. While accepting that there is a need to identify a body of work such as the Pleides series, the personal preference is for each work to stand on its own.

The travel through the design, production and finishing processes was stimulating and thought-provoking.



*(Continued from page 6)*

our. Each layer being a slight change from the previous. The transition of the colour palette providing the required finish.

“The process should be designed to allow for several pieces or canvasses”

Experimentation happens before the work is started. Trials are completed on similar wood and texture surfaces. The required final colour scheme is worked up in layers. Jacques has a preference for a multi-layer dry brush application. A labour intensive manual process. Application is normally with a fine art brush or throwaway sponge or foam pad. The trials should include reviewing the size of the cutting blade or rotary drill bit. The follow-on is how the work position is decided. Hours are spent on the finishing, promoting the need for suitable seat position: A good chair is needed with supporting light. Jacques has a preference for natural light where possible. Photos of his studio show an abundance of natural light sources. All part of the process of creating a wood art piece.

“ form, colours and textures create an illusion of reality”





## Show & Tell



Robert Smith



Alan Day



George Lewis



Terry Scott with Mallee Burl



Bruce Wood

## Photos from Open Day



Peter Oliver (L), John MacKinven (R) with their work product (below)



Peter Oliver adopts an unusual stance at the lathe

## Mini Lathes- FREE Loans

The Club has mini lathes available for use by members, at no cost, in their home workshops, club events or in the clubrooms. They come ready to go (just plug & play) complete with a Nova chuck and a set of tools. Usually they are available for two weeks, but depending on demand, extra time can be arranged. Turning blanks and a variety of finishing materials are available for purchase at the club shop.

Enquiries to  
Mac Duane, Tom Pearson  
or a Committee member.





# Tailstock Support Innovation

**John Whitmore** has been doing some lateral thinking and reports on his latest development:

From time to time, turners have the need to support a workpiece by bringing up the tailstock. Often the live centre itself will suffice but sometimes a customised, soft-faced support is made to cover the rotating part of the live centre when the contact surface is an already finished or otherwise fragile workpiece. Some live centres are easier than others to custom fit to a tailstock support; the best by far being the larger live centres (to give a bigger bearing surface and greater flexibility of design) or the live centre systems which come with various useful accessory parts (like Teknatool's own Nova Live Centre System).

Here is an idea for utilising as a tailstock support a product designed and marketed for sale as the tip for a walking stick - and intended to give greater stability to a wobbly user via a broad tripod base. The brand name is "Cubro", it's called a "Contourfoot walking stick tip" and was purchased in Auckland for \$12 from Disability Resource Centre, 14 Erson Ave, Royal Oak (near the 5 road intersection at Royal Oak roundabout); phone 625 8069. Opening hours Mon - Fri 8.30 - 5; Sat 9-1. Surprisingly, I couldn't find this product listed on their website.

The unit is well-made from rubber with a convenient hollow shaft and a foot comprising 3 flexible rubber arms. There are 3 sizes to fit standard diameter walking sticks, the 25mm being preferable for our purposes (the smaller sizes having 19mm or 22mm hollow shafts).

I have made an adaptor to fit my new tailstock support to a Teknatool Nova Live Centre System (mainly because I happened to have one already). The Nova system comes with a steel tapered fitting that fits into the business end of the live centre. This tapered fitting is already drilled and tapped internally. Another fitting supplied with the set is a 2" x 5/16" bolt that screws into the tapered fitting. I have turned an adaptor from hardwood of 25mm diameter (to fit the hollow shaft of the Contourfoot) x 30mm long (to fit the internal length of the Contourfoot while allowing for the depth of the bolt head and a flat washer at each end) and with a 5/16" clearance hole for the bolt drilled full length down the middle. Component parts and final assembly are shown in the photos.

*John is keen to hear any improvements members may suggest and invites comments as well as variations that make this suitable for use on other live centre configurations.*



**Left to right:**  
Teknatool Nova Live Centre parts used in Johns adaptation, rubber walking stick tip, fabricated hardwood adaptor and washers



**Adapted live centre mounted on tailstock ready for use**



**Another view of modified live centre**

### Wednesday 21 April Colours on Wood- Demonstration by Gordon Pembridge

**N**ow I played rugby when I went to school and the others went to art class. I should have gone to art class. Gordon introduced me to colour, texture, mixing, quality of paints and I was captivated. I looked up at the clock and it was nine o'clock and the presentation was over. Oh boy do I want more.



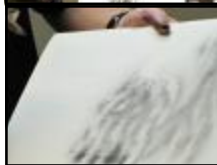
This article just can't cover the way Gordon held the audience together on Wednesday April 21. Nor is it to be a textbook or DIY course for the subject is massive and we only scratched the surface.

Gordon issued a challenge "so beware" he said and this referred to mixing colours. We thought we knew the outcome of yellow and blue or red and blue but how wrong we were. Again it was not a lecture on how to do colour mixing rather it was to "be aware" of what we are doing. He said that most importantly, experiment, have fun and check the primary colour chart.



It was then a session on application. Don't you just slap it on? How wrong I was in my thinking. It's not only how you apply the paint or lacquer, it's about what goes on top of what. His demonstration started with gold dabbed onto the timber by sponge, followed by copper then a contrasting colour. Every time the piece in question changed its appearance. The purchase of quality paints was emphasised as well as checking the timber on which the paint will be applied. And then came the airbrush. Now this is something else. The transformation of the colours on the timber especially on textured timber was amazing. Again Gordon talked about purchasing a quality airbrush if you want to go down this path and remember cleanliness of the airbrush is second only to Godliness.

In the short time that was available



the topic of masking was covered and I did not know about masking fluids. This was getting down to the tricky bits but then it wasn't really if you took your time about it. Then an interesting time was devoted to air brush exercises a sort of airbrush gymnastics. Not able to detail it here so you will need to check with Gordon on this point. The masking technique is also possible using everyday things like a small fern and airbrushing over it leaving a silhouette. Yep I was hooked and the time was up. We need another session on Colours on Wood – thank you Gordon.

### Report from Phread Thurston

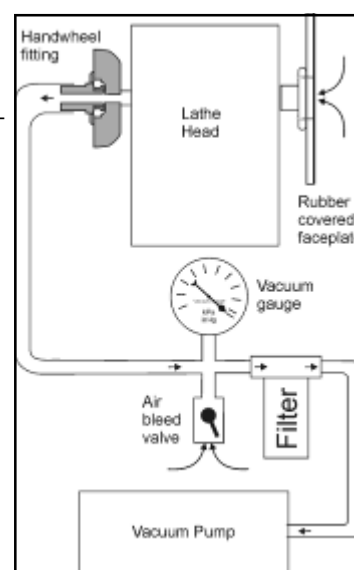
### Wednesday 17th March The Vacuum Chuck

**V**acuum chucking systems have been made with old vacuum cleaners, milking machine pumps, air conditioning pumps, refrigerator motors, real vacuum pumps, and probably more. The origins of the sucking device are immaterial provided it sucks and hold the work to the lathe so that the woodturner can make the desired cuts.

If the vacuum chuck is to be a really useful and well-used device then it is best to have it permanently there, attached to the lathe, ready to go. This may be a vacuum pump below the lathe bed or a vacuum cleaner hanging from the rafters. There will always be some time needed to fit the faceplate and prepare to do the chucking, but if all the components are away in a cupboard it is often easier to user a closer, but less appropriate, holding device.

So, lets start at the engine end and work our way to the faceplate and the wood.

The vacuum pump, which may be any of the devices listed above, needs to move air quickly, and continue to do that for some time. I think a pump that moves 9 cubic metres per hour is fine. There are two good reasons for moving this quantity of air: 1. There will be leaks in the system and; 2. You want the pump to take the air from



(Continued on page 11)



## Club Night Action (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 10)

the inside of your turning fairly soon after you hold it to the faceplate.

A vacuum cleaner moves this quantity of air with ease – just be sure that there is sufficient air passing through the machine to cool the motor. Typically a vacuum cleaner is connected directly to the lathe handwheel and you should create an air-in valve at that point to be sure that cooling air is passing through the vacuum cleaner.

Some oil-bath pumps are not really intended to continuously move a lot of air and they expel a little of their oil – check the oil level frequently.

That oil, and the insides of many pumps, needs to be kept clean so a dust filter immediately before the pump is absolutely necessary. A five micron filter from a compressed air parts supplier is fine. Just drop a bit of CA glue into the little valve in the bottom of the sight glass to stop air going in that way. Attach this filter in a position where you can easily remove the sight glass for emptying.

The fittings to join all these vacuum parts together are usually available at a compressed air parts supplier.

Next in the line is a four-way junction. Connect the line to the filter and pump to one side. A tap on the downwards facing side – this will be used to bleed air in to reduce the vacuum at the faceplate. Fit a vacuum gauge where you can see it – it is very desirable to know how much suck is being used. The hose from the handwheel comes to the fourth side of the four-way junction.

Garden hose is fine to join the four-way junction to the handwheel.

The junction between the hose and handwheel does not have to be fancy. The lathe will not be running faster than about 500rpm. For a vacuum cleaner the connection to the handwheel can be simply a straight end on the lathe to fit loosely inside, and rotate in, the end of a bit of drainpipe which is then connected to the vacuum cleaner pipe – the vacuum will hold it all together. A ballbearing fitting with

the hose securely attached can make the operation easier and reduce air leaks. This type of fitting may be provided by the lathe manufacturer or you can make one as shown in “Make a Vacuum Chuck” in the Projects section of [www.sawg.org.nz](http://www.sawg.org.nz).

So to the working side of the lathe head. Here a large diameter, rubber-covered faceplate is the most useful fitting. Screw a thick piece of mdf or ply permanently to a regular faceplate – to reduce leakage it can be helpful to run a bead of sealant around the faceplate surface before putting the two parts together. With this spinning on the lathe drill a hole in the centre and cut the wood perfectly round and flat. Keep it as large as possible. Seal the edge of the plate with a generous coat of paint and inside the centre hole with CA glue or there will be air leakage.

Glue on a sheet of rubber of your choice. My recommendation is 3mm closed-cell foam. If it is not closed-cell there will be air leakage. If it is thicker than 3mm the wood may wiggle and bounce when you cut it.

Ready to go.

You will soon find that a vacuum driven system has enough suck to split a platter but not enough to hold a lidded box. Or, if you have built a system with a vacuum gauge, that the needle is barely off zero to hold a platter yet needs to be a long way further round to hold a small bowl or box. Why is this?

Turn your mind around to understand that it is not the suck on the inside that is holding the wood to the faceplate, but the air pressure on the outside. Thus an item with a larger surface area will hold better than a small item. For example if you are using a vacuum cleaner which is sucking a vacuum of 5inHg then a 300mm platter, area 707cm<sup>2</sup>, will have 122kg of force holding it on while a 50mm diameter box with an area of 20cm<sup>2</sup> will have just three kilograms holding it. It may be difficult with a weak sucker, like a vacuum cleaner, to get small items to stay on a faceplate.

You can improve the versatility and holding ability of your vacuum system by building a few more “faceplates”, that are nothing like plates. Make some “faceplates” cup-shaped and fit closed-cell foam right over the rim so that woodturning can fit both inside and outside the cup. If you want to turn thin and have the light show through to gauge thickness then make a cup-shape with clear plastic tube.

Want a different shape, make it, suck the wood on, turn it.

**Report from Dick Veitch**

### Illustrations (top to bottom):

Vacuum cleaners, Bruce Hannahs pump based on car air-con pump (itself donated by Jim Downs and including pineapple tin air filter), Ian Fishs Mason & Porter converted milking machine pump, Terry Scotts purpose built commercial vacuum pump





At YMCA Camp Adair 24-26 September

# PARTICIPATION 2010

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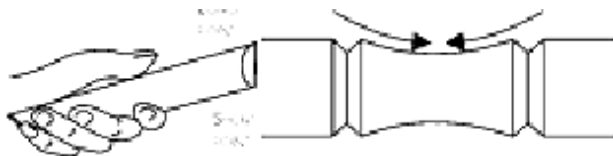
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