October 2016 - Bryan Milham

Bryan's theme for the evening was children's toys and the audience appeared to enjoy the trip down memory lane as well as the challenge of solving the mystery of the snapper stick. The whole evening enabled Bryan to demonstrate his skills using the skew and hopefully will have encouraged many of us to experiment with this much maligned tool.

Bryan helpfully provided detailed drawings for the 3 items that he demonstrated namely, a snake, a knitting dolly and the Snapper or Bang stick and therefore this review consists mainly of "Top Tips" filtered from the myriad of useful hints, tips, workarounds, home made tools, products etc revealed by Byan during the evening. All the items were turned in beech wood reclaimed from offcuts of kitchen wooden worktops.

Top Tip 1 - when using the skew, mark a line down the middle of the skew and then always cut below the centre line.
Top Tip 2 - when turning a spindle less than the diameter of the chuck jaws, make a relief cut near the chuck jaws to prevent the shavings spiraling around.
Top Tip 3 - to save time and improve consistency, create actual size storyboards/ templates for frequently turned items
Top Tip 4 - when drilling from the tailstock, clear the drill flutes regularly to ensure the drill doesn't wander off centre.
Top Tip 5 - when spindle turning don't worry too much about slight ripples as these can easily be sanded out whereas tearouts etc can't.

If anybody is still uncertain as to how the Snapper Stick works then Shirley will be happy to demonstrate!

Finally, to complete the evening, Bryan quickly demonstrated the creation of a couple of Christmas ornaments - a Christmas tree and a snowman …

(Apologies to Bryan for photographing the side of the Christmas tree where the skew caught - it happens even to the experts when distracted!)

As next month's monthly challenge is a Christmas decoration there's no excuses now for members not to enter.

Thanks to Bryan for an enjoyable and very informative evening.

David Langan