

# BUNBURY WOODTURNERS

The Bunbury Woodturning group's origin can be traced back to the early 1980s when a number of wood turners used to gather at each others' home workshops to turn wood. These founding members were John Shinnick, Keith McQueen, Ivor Bridges, Mike Kenny, Mick Johnson and Pat O'Connor. *(More information on these members can be found on the Western Australian Woodturners Website under Life and Merit Award Members).*

The group needed to find a place to set up a workshop and were fortunate to firstly operate in a small cottage in Zoe Street in Bunbury. Then the members moved to a place called Cross Electrics in Bunbury. This facility was provided by the owner of Cross Electrics, one Brian Cross. Then through the efforts of Jim Cunniffe, then a Manual Arts Teacher at the Cathedral College (and still a club member today) began to operate from the College Manual Arts Workshop.

At this time in 1988 the group formed with the appointment of John Shinnick as the Convenor (Group President) and Michele James as Secretary/Treasurer. The group stayed at the Grammar School until around 2011.

In 2009 when Kevan Hunt retired from work he with Stan Zieba and Mick Johnson decided it was time for the group to access a suitable building for wood turning. This was because the continued use of the Cathedral Grammar School was only expected to last a couple more years. Kevan assisted by Barry Laidler and Lyn Poli wrote many letters to the Bunbury Shire. An approach to South Bunbury Rotary and to Royalties for Regions was not successful.

Finally, a meeting with the Bunbury Council was held. The process of finding a suitable venue went on for two years when in 2011 the group was offered a share of the building it currently occupies with the Bunbury Apex Group. The building is situated at the intersection of Hislop and Thomas Streets, Bunbury and is provided by the Bunbury Shire Council.



The Bunbury Woodturning group is part of the Western Australian Woodturners Association and currently (2023) has 53 members who all share a passion for the art of woodturning. Several of our members have been involved in wood turning for over forty years.



Photograph shows Mick Johnson on the left, now a Life Member of the Association, seen presenting Life Membership to John Shinnick (deceased) in 1995.

John was a founding member of the Bunbury Group.

The John Shinnick Memorial was established by the Bunbury group that John loved so much to perpetuate his memory and to ensure that the tenets and skills he so ably displayed would be passed on to future members. Every year the group presents the “John Shinnick Memorial Trophy” to the most outstanding wood turner in the group for that year.

The Bunbury group meets regularly (*meeting days and times can be found under Bunbury Group on the Western Australian Woodturners Website*). The group contributes to many community activities both in Bunbury and the surrounding area and towns.

*Written by Don Wilson, WAWA Member Number 3025 in Jan 2023*

Don wrote:

I was recently asked by a Fine Woodworking Association Member about the history and timeline of the Bunbury Group. I could not answer the query, so decided to research this information from some older members.

It would appear that the recorded history and timelines could not be ascertained. I endeavoured to correct this by talking to older members and assembling a collection of printed articles, photos and memorabilia.

In doing this, I would like to express sincere thanks to Mick Johnson, Kevan Hunt, Les Beaglehole and Brian Cross who went out of their way to assist in supplying Newspaper cuttings, documents, and photos to fill in the gaps enabling me to attempt to record the history of the Bunbury Group.

Many thanks to my two involved convenors i.e., Tony Mellar and Glenn Donovan for allowing me access to the club's assortment of memorabilia.