



The Woodturners Association of Western Australia (Inc)

Life Membership

Bob Malacari – 83

Bob Malacari is nominated by Wandu Woodturners Monday group.

Bob joined WAWA at its third meeting in March 1986. His first demonstration, a lace bobbin, was at that meeting in line with the then practice that everyone was expected to do some sort of turning on the lathe no matter what the skill level. His brother Arthur joined the next meeting. This was the start of the brothers loading up the lathe and travelling to various country locations including Collie, Mullewa, York, Beverley, Northam, Greenough and Stoneville to a mixture of meetings, shows, fairs and fetes, with wives usually in tow and conducting craft workshops at the towns they visited.

Bob was a foundation member of the Melville group where he was a regular demonstrator, basing his demonstrations on “back to basics”, a practice he continues through to the present. During this period, Bob assisted at a Sunday morning class in wood turning at his children’s school where Gordon Ward was the manual arts teacher.

Although he had been involved in committee tasks before this, Bob joined the Association Management Committee formally in April 1988, coincidentally with Gordon Ward, as replacement for two committee members who had resigned. Their appointments were confirmed at the AGM in September of that year. That was also the year of the Exhibition of Excellence to which Bob contributed two standard lamps.

A series of family illnesses forced Bob to withdraw from most Association activities until, now living at Waikiki and encouraged by his cousin Graham Lewis, he transferred from Melville to Wandu where he continued to demonstrate, particularly those processes not dependent upon expensive equipment.

Four years ago, when Wandu’s Monday group became too large for one supervisor, Bob accepted the invitation from Graham Lewis to join him. Bob then became a regular at Monday hands-on sessions sharing the instruction, including weekend programs, with Graham and taking over during Graham’s absences until back troubles forced him to curtail his activities.



Presented September 2019

PROFILE OF A TURNER

(extract from newsletter number 98 February/March 2002)

BOB MALACARI

Bob was born in Fremantle in 1931, as his family owned a market garden in Spearwood. He went to school in Spearwood, Mt Barker and Fremantle.

Bob served his apprenticeship as a Carpenter and Joiner from 1947 to 1952. He worked on housing and maintenance also on office and hotel structures, where he often worked with his younger brothers who were carpenters as well.

In 1957 he decided that life as construction worker had limitations and he was lucky to be accepted as a trainee Civil Construction Supervisor with the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Authority. After training in Cooma, N.S.W., he was posted to Cabramurra, working on the Tumut 2 Hydro Power Station, dam and tunnels.

He married Patricia in 1956 and with (at that time) two children, she joined him in Cabramurra. There, living in extreme conditions with neighbours who came from all over the world was a unique experience.

At the end of 1961 the call of home (once a West Aussie, always a West Aussie) was too great and they returned to W.A.

Shortly after returning to WA, he joined G. Maunsell & Partners, a London based Civil Engineering Company, and for the next 7 years was employed in the supervision of the Standard Rail Project between Kalgoorlie and Kwinana including stations and finally as Clerk of Works Civil on the WAGR rail office in East Perth.

Patricia and Bob now had a family of 3 girls and 3 boys and lived in Attadale.

Bob worked for 30 years for G. Maunsell & Partners, but had a break of four and a half years working with the Water Board on the construction of Wungong Dam, roofing of reservoirs and the construction of high-level water tanks.

After returning to Maunsell & Partners, he was involved in work on the reconstruction of Tasman Bridge, where a large ship had demolished a section. He also worked offshore at Karratha and on the overland Gas Pipeline from Karratha to Bunbury.

Bob joined WAWA at a meeting at the home of John Shinnick, as he had procured a lathe about 3 years previously to be used mainly to do spindle work for furniture hobby work.

At the next meeting at John Shinnick's a year later he was elected to the Management Committee where he served for two periods with members such as Keith McQueen, Milton Rundle, John Lathwell, Cyril Jones and many others who have supported WAWA so well over the years.

Bob's involvement was interrupted by working on projects all over the state, but has attended meetings as much as he was able and spent long periods on John Lathwell's sub-committee organising monthly weekend workshops.

Health problems caused Bob to retire in 1995 but he still attends as many meetings as he is able and is a member of the Wandi Group.

Bob and Pat now have 18 grandchildren and they reside all over the Australian Continent, which creates a good reason for caravan visits to places such as Darwin, Brisbane and Adelaide. As a result, he was met and become good friends with several active woodturners in other states.

With the pastimes of gardening, woodwork, fishing and family, adding to the fact that the body now moves much more slowly, there are not enough days in the week! With all of this activity he gets the most satisfaction in helping beginners and those whose skills are being improved, and seeing the delight on their faces as they successfully master a new level of experience with their woodturning.