

The Woodturners Association of Western Australia (Inc)

Life Membership

Gordon Ward - 409

Gordon Ward, the Association of Woodturners of Western Australia honours you and confers upon you Life Membership, in recognition of the outstanding contribution you have made to the Association.

Gordon's formative years must have been as interesting as they were diversified - born in China, educated in the UK, China, Hong Kong and completed his secondary schooling in Kingswood School, Bath. Gordon's skills have been developed in similar manner and include:

An apprenticeship at De Havilland Aircraft Co. in production and mechanical engineering (UK). Dynamic structural testing of guided missiles (UK). Field instructor Simca Motor Co. (France)
Mitsubishi Motors - Service Manager (Australia).
Manual Arts Instructor (WA)

Having accumulated such a range of skills, one of Gordon's objectives is to ensure that those members who so wish be given opportunities to enhance their skills, and Gordon's efforts on the Committee of Management have been directed to that end.

At the same time, Gordon's personal goal appears to have been set to attain the highest level of technical, practical and artistic skill in his works, many of which have been successfully exhibited at state and national level.

Gordon applies himself to his work with vigour, and he has associated himself with distinction in kindred woodworking organisations like the Woodcarvers, the Fine Wood Association and the Goldfields Timber Group.

Gordon is a staunch supporter of the Kenwick group, and is ever ready to demonstrate at a group or association workshop, using to advantage his teaching skills and simultaneously explaining his methods and exchanging repartee with the audience.

Gordon's skills are in demand at the Dwellingup Timber Industry Centre where he teaches and encourages woodturning at various levels.

Gordon Ward, the personification of advancing the skills of wood working and wood turning, we honour you as a Life Member of the Association. Presented 1998

PROFILE OF A TURNER

(extract from newsletter number 74 February/March 1998)

Gordon Ward born in China, educated in the UK, China and Hong Kong, worked in England and France and finally settled in Western Australia - Gordon Word has had a very wide education in every sense of the word.

Gordon's father was with the British Red Cross and his mother was a Methodist missionary with the China Inland Mission, serving in Northern China near the Manchurian border when he appeared on the scene: on a raft on the river. He lived there with his parents until 1939 when all the women and children were sent to the UK because of the Japan-China war.

At first Gordon was at school in Edinburgh and then at the Leith Academy in Bournemouth. In 1947 they returned to China where he attended the Shanghai British School until Mao came to power when he was sent to Hong Kong and attended the George V School there. (Gerald Young co-incidentally also had attended that school). Gordon was awarded a scholarship to attend the Kingswood school in Bath England where he completed his secondary schooling.

He then completed a 5-year apprenticeship with De Havilland Aircraft Company in production and mechanical engineering. The next 2 years were spent with De Havilland on structural testing before transferring to Hawker Siddley in dynamic structural testing of guided missiles.

From there he joined Simca in France as a field instructor, finally rising to technical and warranty manager for Chrysler imports. After 9 years he left to come to Australia for Mitsubishi but on arrival his plans changed and he joined a succession of motor dealers as service manager. It was suggested that he undertake teacher training in Manual Arts, so he did a 3-year course at Nedlands Secondary Teachers College where he studied under that other WAWA stalwart, Ron Goodson, who was in charge of the woodwork section. This re-introduced Gordon to wood turning and wood carving.

After graduation, Gordon taught at Kelmscott Senior High School where he developed a "free form" programme as well as teaching Applied Technology (mainly design) and all and every aspect of manual arts. After Kelmscott, Gordon went to Brookton SHS and while visiting the Royal Show from there, met Keith McQueen who was demonstrating on a Tough lathe at the show. Keith recruited him into WAWA, but he was not active until he returned to Perth from country teaching.

It was then that his interest in wood came to the fore. He always liked to combine carving with turning and most members have seen numerous examples of his ability to combine skills in design, turning and carving to produce what are essentially works of art.

He has demonstrated extensively at shopping centres and served as a committee member in two stints. After a minor heart attack in, 1994, Gordon has decided to become a full-time artist in wood, selling from a shop in Gosnells. He is now involved more in the aesthetic than the useful, designing and producing museum pieces, particularly exploiting the beauty of WA timbers.

Gordon greatly appreciates the camaraderie of WAWA and has freely contributed his considerable teaching skills for the benefit of members, particularly at Weekend Workshops. He considers WAWA to be outstanding in that everyone is keen to exchange ideas and pass on their experience and skills.

VALE

GORDON WARD

12TH January 1937 – 27th January 2012

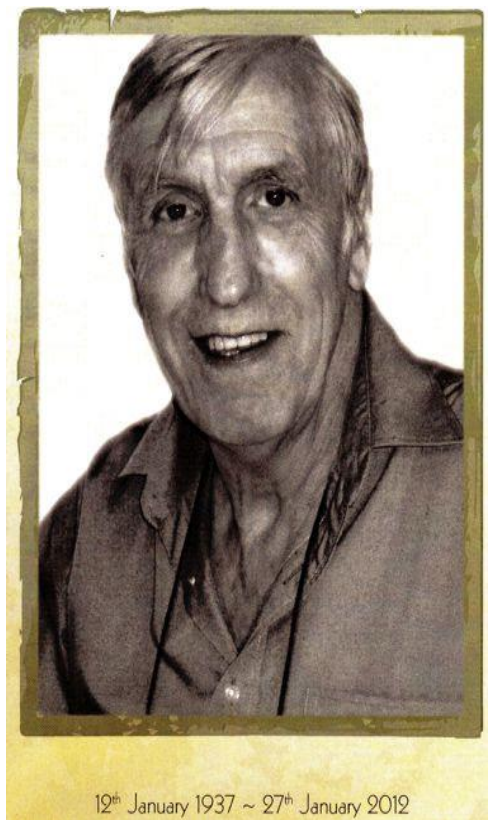
It is with considerable sadness that we note the passing of Gordon Ward, on 27th January 2012.

Gordon was a long-standing member of our Association, who served on the Committee of Management for a number of terms, was always a very willing demonstrator at Groups and workshops, and a skilful instructor for many of our members through classes, and his involvement with the Dwellingup Forest Heritage Centre. He was awarded Life Membership of WAWA in 1998, as “an outstanding contributor, who had raised the technical, practical and artistic levels of the Association to new levels”.



Gordon was always a colourful and worldly character, probably due to being born in China, and then educated in that country as well as Hong Kong and the UK. His professions included being a mechanical and production engineer for De Havilland Aircraft Company, a field instructor for the Simca Motor Company, a service manager for Mitsubishi Motors, and a manual arts

teacher at a number of colleges in Western Australia.



Gordon's fascination in wood was not only limited to his involvement with WAWA, but also as a wood carver, membership of the Goldfields Speciality Timber Industry Group, and the Fine Woodwork Association of WA.

There isn't a member of these groups who will not miss Gordon's unusual sense of humour, his very quick wit, the numerous “accidents waiting to happen”, but most importantly, his absolutely outstanding ability to manipulate a piece of wood in to a magnificent work of art, which was often touched off with some beautiful and imaginative colourings.

