



The Woodturners Association of Western Australia (Inc)

Life Membership

Ivor Bridges – 4

Ivor Bridges was one of those attending the inaugural meeting of this Association at Eneabba in September 1985. He was elected to the Committee at that meeting and continued to serve on the Committee for 6 years.

Ivor took on the task of Newsletter Editor shortly after the Association was formed and was responsible for the production of Newsletters from December 1985 through to September 1990. For the following 2 years he continued to support the Association as the Assistant Editor.

In his first Editorial Ivor wrote- "what about making the Newsletter OUR NEWSLETTER, not just the narrow writing of a few etc. etc. Most people joined the association because they wanted contact with other turners, well, the Newsletter is the only way to do this".

Although not always successful with this aim, it was something he always encouraged, and strived for.

Ivor was also very involved in the creation of the Association Logo, and to further promote the Association, he constructed a full-size working Treadle Lathe (as in the Logo) which has been displayed and demonstrated at a number of venues.

Through his employment, Ivor was able to assist the Association in many ways in improving equipment and techniques as well as involvement with training workshops etc.

In presenting Ivor with Life Membership we say thank you to him for his valued support and contribution to the success and growth of the Association.



Jon Craft
President 1993

Presented by

1993

PROFILE OF A TURNER.....(extract from Newsletter 68 April/May 1997)

Ivor Bridges was born in one of the Welsh mining villages. His father was a coal miner who died at age 48. His experience as a miner caused him to dissuade Ivor from ever becoming a miner. In those days, the majority in the Welsh valleys either left primary school and went into the mines or took further education and became school teachers.

Ivor decided to become an engineer and entered a five-year apprenticeship with the National Coal Board in their engineering division. At the conclusion of his apprenticeship, he did two years of National Service in the Royal Artillery. He was put into the Artillery because his father had previously served in the Artillery.

After army days, he worked in London as a tool maker. It was while working in London he met and married his wife Sherry. They returned to work in Wales. It was while they were back in Wales that the tragedy occurred of the slag heaps sliding down the mountain and engulfing ABERFAN in the adjoining valley. Climbing the mountain that afternoon, they were able to see the desolation caused by that dreadful event.



One very wet, cold and windy New Year's Day, Ivor said to the family "How do you fancy going to Australia? The up-shot of this was that six months later they arrived in Perth. At first, they lived at Lake Leschenaultia near Chidlows. Ivor then started work at Tough Tool Makers and Founders. The company produced tools, gearboxes and many other engineered products and of course the Tough lathe, loved by so many wood turners.

Many wood turners came to the company and suggested that there were some features which could be improved. At first the company tended to ignore these suggestions, feeling that as engineers, they knew better than these amateurs. The well-known persistence of wood turners eventually caused the company to decide one of them should learn something about wood turning. This is how Ivor came to start turning. As a result of his experience, many improvements were made to the lathe to better suit the wood turners' requirements. Ivor worked for 23 years at Tough until eventually the company went out of business.

When Keith McQueen initiated the idea of an Association for the promotion and improvement of wood turning, Ivor was the recipient of one of 80 invitations sent to known wood turners to attend a meeting at McQueen's Caravan Park in Eneabba. Seventeen went to the first meeting and Ivor is member number 4 of WAWA.

As a member of the early committee, he was elected editor of our Newsletter at the third meeting. Ivor performed this function for six years and set the standard for all future Newsletters. Ivor won the competition to design a logo for the Association. This was drawn by John Lathwell who also designed the heading for the Newsletter. Ivor spent about eight years on the Committee and his dedicated service to the Association was recognised by the award of Life Membership, an honour which he cherishes.

Ivor's chief interest is in spindle turning and in particular making small challenging items. The first competition piece he entered was for a pair of lace bobbins and his entry was a "cow and a calf", that is one fitted inside the other.

Ivor belongs to a number of other organisations including vintage car clubs etc, but feels that the Wood Turners Association is one of the most helpful and cooperative groups of the many with which he has been involved. He feels very strongly that WAWA is serving a very useful social purpose. Besides encouraging the craft of turning amongst all ages, it has helped tremendously in giving retired people and their spouses a focus for their activities. The comradeship and social interaction of the groups, as well as the Association, should not be underestimated.

Besides his wood turning, Ivor has vintage motor cycles, an auto cycle and two cars that he intends restoring. But in ten years, wood turning has played such a prominent part in his life that there is still much to do in his restoration work.