



The Woodturners Association of Western Australia (Inc)

Life Membership

Eric Walker - 897

I am writing to support the recommendation put to me that Eric Walker, number 897 of Swan Group be made a Life Member.

Eric has been a member of the Woodturners Association for approximately 25 years. During this time Eric has been an extremely active member of the organisation and continues to be so. My first contact with Eric was when I did a woodturning course at Colin Kleinig's Woodturning Centre where Swan Group (then Midvale) used to meet. Eric was the person who ran all the training for Swan and did so until about 18 months ago.

Eric was instrumental in initiating and running Swan Group's "Demonstrators Course". This is a two-day course designed to give Woodturners the skills and techniques to demonstrate competently.

Eric has been a prolific demonstrator himself both at weekend workshops and group level and is a role model for many aspiring demonstrators.

Eric was convenor of Swan Group (then Midvale) 2000/2001 and was WAWA weekend workshop competition co-ordinator for a number of years.

Eric was also instrumental in introducing the videoing and camera/TV set up to woodturning demonstrations that all groups now use.

This application was initiated by two life members, Viv Paust 319 and Jim Clarke 132 and is fully supported by me, Ian Moss (Swan Convenor). Presented by Ted Stewart-Wynne 2014



PROFILE OF A TURNER

(extract from newsletter number 84 October/November 1999)

Eric Walker was born in 1933 and grew up in Yorkshire, UK. Upon leaving Henry's Grammar School in Otley at the age of fifteen, he worked for eight months making starter switches for fluorescent lamps. He then went to work for Silver Cross (Wilson) as a "carpenter" making the internals of the "Rolls Royce of Baby Carriages". After two years a recession occurred making Eric redundant. This led him to take up Psychiatric Nursing in 1951. Eric qualified as staff nurse after three years training, during which time he met Betty, a farmer's daughter at the local village dancing club. Eric won a raffle prize of a large bag of logs donated by Betty's father. Looking back on this event he feels that fate might have been trying to tell him something! He married Betty in 1954 and a year later joined the Army (RAMC) for two three-year terms instead of doing "Nasho's" (National Service). Whilst in the Army he qualified in General Nursing.

Eric and Betty's first of two daughters were born during military service.

On leaving the Army Eric returned to Psychiatric Nursing and following several promotions, eventually took charge of the Admission and Treatment Unit of a major psychiatric hospital. Due to poor wages a second job was always necessary, these included gardening, farming, window cleaning and carpentry.

A long-time love of woodwork and financial necessity led Eric to take up carpentry full time, being more lucrative than nursing - you can't spend dedication in shops! So, ended seventeen years of devoted nursing!

In 1969 Eric emigrated with wife Betty and daughters Shirley and Wendy, arriving in Fremantle in July 1969 on MV Castel Felice. Three days later he started work as a fixing carpenter on houses and offices. The housing boom collapse two years later led to a wages

job as a cabinet maker for the next thirteen years. Among the many things he made were billiard and pool tables and video game cabinets. In 1984 Eric started a business as a caravan repairer, which he ran until he retired in 1994.

Eric took up woodturning in 1983 without much success until he joined WAWA in 1990 and started learning and is happy to say he still is!

Since joining the Association Eric has been a regular and successful entrant in competitions. This experience, together with his service as competition organiser for two years has led him to conclude that participation in competitions in an unbeatable "rapid learning" ground, which develops skills and techniques that may otherwise not be acquired. Eric much appreciates the benefit he



has gained from watching the many and varied demonstrations offered at Association and Group meetings and from talking to the demonstrators. Eric has demonstrated on a number of occasions in recent years and currently teaches new turners the basic skills of our craft. He is a member of the co-operative woodcraft shop at Whiteman park and is looking forward to passing on his love of woodcraft to his five grandchildren. 1999

VALE

Sadly, Eric passed away soon after receiving his Life Membership in 2014.