

## **PROFILE OF A TURNER**

### **Dr HENRY WALKER**

Henry was born in London, almost in a taxi on London Bridge. As it happened his mother did make it to the hospital. His father was a medical officer in the British regular army and consequently Henry spent most of his first ten years of life in various postings in the Far East.

The family returned to the UK in 1936 and as his father was being moved in his postings so often his mother moved house 25-30 times during their marriage. Henry only remembers swimming and playing and nothing of school while in the Far East but attended preparatory school in Lee-on-Solent and then moved to a school in Cranbrook, Kent at the start of the war.

Because of fear of invasion, they were transferred to Kelly College in Tavistock, Devon. He says that he always had great difficulty with Latin as a subject, but it was necessary if one wanted to study medicine. When he matriculated, he attended Bristol University doing first year medicine.

After his first year, he joined the RAF as an "erk" (Aircraftman 2).

He trained at Skegness, Lincs where they had to drill in full kit in freezing temperatures. From there he did a six-month radar course becoming a radar mechanic.

In 1944 he was posted to Dum Dum, outside Calcutta in India where they were billeted in Clive of India's house. Incidentally, Dum Dum is where the name for the dum dum bullet originated. After the war ended, almost all of the RAF personnel stationed there went on strike because they had not been sent home, but Henry did not believe it was the right thing to do. Consequently, he was "sent to Coventry!" by his colleagues. To rub salt into their wounds, because he had done a year at university, he was sent home to complete his medical degree - paid for by the RAF.

On graduation, Henry completed his internship at Bristol and then undertook a GP training course. Strange as it may seem, there was at that time a surplus of doctors and after applying for something like 20 positions all over the world, he was offered a job in Three Springs in WA. He started there in 1955 and stayed until 1964.

In 1964 he returned to the UK for nine months doing various postgraduate courses before returning in 1965 to join a large group practice in Midland. He stayed there for 18 years and found it a most satisfying career. After leaving Midland, he practised Occupational Medicine on a part time basis working for many of the largest firms in Perth. In 1987 he retired fully.

Henry became interested in wood turning by watching exhibitions at various shopping centres. While visiting the UK once again, he participated in a wood turning course there. When making enquiries about equipment, he had the opportunity to buy a Tough lathe together with some tools. On another visit to the UK, he did a five-day course with particular emphasis on working on hollow forms.

Henry is always a keen participant at the weekend workshops and always has good contributions to make in both questioning demonstrators and in taking part in show and tell. His particular interest is finding an irregular piece of wood, preferably full of holes and seeing what thing of beauty can be produced from it. Despite this particular bent, he still has all his fingers.

Henry's other great interest is sailing and boats. He was a keen sailor from 1965 to 1986 building his own boat in 1979.

He is a keen supporter of the "Leeuwin" sail training ship and is also a maintenance helper on the "Endeavour". His interests in wood and boats have given him great satisfaction.