

PROFILE OF A TURNER

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.

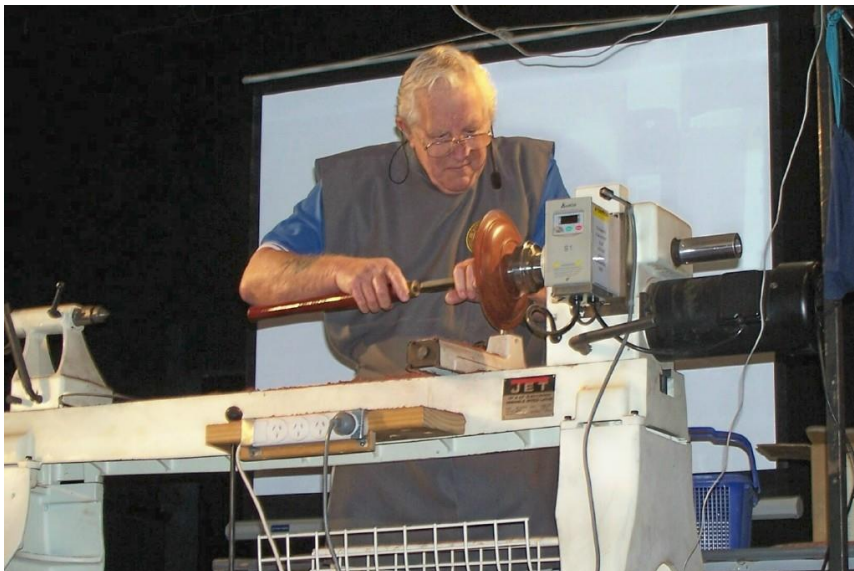


Eric and Betty's first of two daughters were born during military service.

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

Extract from WAWA Newsletter issue 161 dated July 2012

Observations Joondalup/Wanneroo WEWS June 2012

Jim Clark and **Eric Walker** were next to demonstrate. A hollowing tool with that little bit extra. Jim first explained the types of bits; HSS for scraping and tungsten carbide for cutting.

Then Jim recited a poem by Viv Paust on how not to use a skew chisel as a scraper, followed by a another in reply to Viv.

Wearing a cap with long red hair protruding, Eric deep hollowed some Jacaranda with a TC cutter in the tool, followed by some wet Grapefruit wood, to show a comparison with HSS.

The demonstration concluded with more poems from Jim.



Extract from WAWA Newsletter issue 157 dated November 2011

Observations Swan WEWS October 2011

Eric Walker demonstrated off-centre embellishment.

Eric had prepared a chipboard circle with five holes drilled in it in a circular pattern, which was fastened to the base of a bowl using hot melt glue. The plate was then mounted on a screw chuck using spacers to obtain the correct depth. After hollowing the bowl, but leaving a raised centre, he marked the centre, then remounted the bowl on the first off centre hole and cut the embellishment. He repeated this procedure on the next three holes. Returning to the centre position, he removed the edge of the raised boss, before passing the bowl around.

Eric then used the same basic method with a fresh blank instead of a bowl but cut and coloured a face on the blank. He then remounted the first bowl, cut some additional offset embellishment and tidied up his work.

Extract from WAWA Newsletter issue 144 dated October/November 2009

Observations Swan WEWS 2009

Eric Walker took the stage to demonstrate the turning of a jug or pitcher.

Eric explained that the items can be made with or without a handle; he showed how contrasting woods can be used to make an angled insert and the top of the vase. He passed around a prepared item using paper joints and photographs to explain the sequence. Using another pre-prepared blank Eric showed how he used registration marks to align the insert with the body. Mounting the base on the lathe he then drilled and hollowed it out and sanded off the paper seal. After hollowing the neck, he shaped the pourer and assembled the vessel. The samples Eric displayed were testimony to the thought, planning and skills that he exhibited.

VALE

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