

PROFILE OF A TURNER

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 schoolteachers.

Ivor decided to become an engineer and worked with the National Coal Board in their engineering division for 15 years. 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 upshot of this was that six months later they arrived in Perth. At first, they lived at Lake Leschenaultia near Chidlow. 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 motorcycles, 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.

WHAT IS IT?



Ivor Bridges sent this photo of an item he had made for the last newsletter. The item is a kite reel of a style used throughout the Middle East and India for kite-fighting competitions. The reel can hold up to 3000m of special twine used for this sport. The first section of twine, attached to the kite, is waxed and has ground glass embedded. When the duelling kites come together, the reel is pulled from side to side in a sawing motion with the intention of the glassed section sawing the other's twine. The competitor who saws through and releases the other kite is the winner.

Extract from WAWA Newsletter issue 115 dated December 2004/January 2005

Where did the Logo come from?

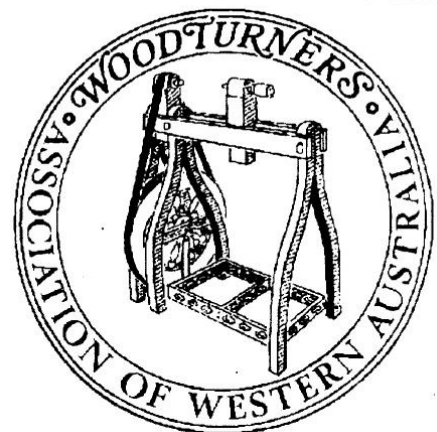
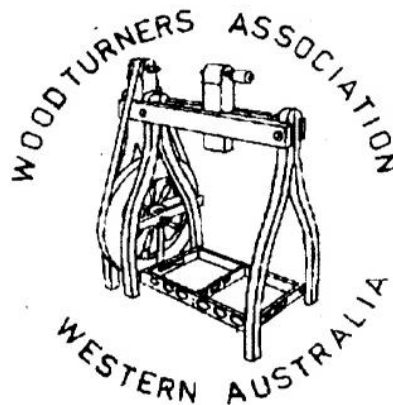
As with many things, the more we become familiar them, they are just taken for granted and the origin or their development becomes obscure.

Early in the development of WAWA it was realised the need for a suitable Logo.

The general idea of a competition was mooted, but the response was to say the least, poor.

Ivor Bridges who put together the first 41 Newsletters for the fledging Association, played around with a few ideas, one based on a Treadle Lathe, which in part was developed from a Heinrich Scholl's Texas-German lathe built in 1870, described in the Fine Woodworking publication – 'Techniques 3'.

Ivor being the perfectionist that he is, actually made the lathe, in time to be **the 'Image' for the 1st. Exhibition of Excellence, September 1988**, full size, in order to get the feel for the piece before he sketched it and attempted to develop it into a logo.



At this stage Ivor was not as confident with the layout of the wording, so he handed it over to John Lathwell, who had a Graphic Arts background.

Now this is not quite the present Logo that we use!!

Can you pick the difference? To Ivor Bridges and John Lathwell, we congratulate and thank you for an image that has lasted the distance.