

## **PROFILE OF A TURNER**

### **Len Nicholls**

Apart from his family, Len has three interests, his church, woodturning and traveling. To each of them he gives his wholehearted support, usually quietly behind the scenes, neither desiring nor looking for recognition. Len was born in Victoria and grew up in the suburbs of Melbourne. He attended primary school in Camberwell and Merlynston and high school at Coburg High School, Boxhill.

After 5th year, Len left school to take a job with the Central Wool Commission which was the body that acquired all the wool grown during the war years. They had to appraise and store all the wool bought. After 18 months, Len left to join a French wool company. His father who was a railway man thought it very imprudent to leave the safety of what was then a part of the Public Service to join a "fly by night" French company.

Twenty-one years later, Len came from the Victorian office to open the administration finance and shipping departments in the WA branch. Another 21 years was then spent with CIL in WA during which time the company expanded from wool buying and shipping to scouring works and wool dumping.

Len's first association with timber was in building his own home in Melbourne using Baltic pine and Tasmanian hard wood framing. As this was just after World War 2 materials were very difficult to obtain. Fortunately, he had by this time met and married Joan who worked for a timber company. Len continued to add to and improve the home over the next 15 years.

After 42 years in the "fly by night" French firm, Len retired and in appreciation of his loyal and fruitful service over that period he was given a wood lathe. Through his good friend and fellow turner, Keith Johnson, Len joined WAWA in 1988. Largely through Keith's tuition and demanding standards, Len soon became a very proficient turner. A keen competitor in the monthly weekend workshops, he has won many prizes including the overall aggregate in one year.

Len was on the WAWA committee for 2 years including one year as Vice President, but most of his activities in promoting wood turning have been in the Shopping Centre demonstrations and craft displays and sales. He has also contributed by teaching at Melville and through demonstrating at weekend workshops. Len was also WAWA librarian for some time.

Len, ably supported by Joan, has given many hours of time to promoting woodturning, always ready and willing and never seeking the limelight. They both enjoy the fellowship and easy camaraderie of WAWA.

Extract from newsletter issue 150 dated June/July 2010

### **Observations Wandi WEWS July 2010**

I watched Len Nicholls turn a honey pot using a cup chuck and a wood face plate. Len explained that he does not like to waste wood and if you start with a 100x100 you can cut off the four corners and from this make four pens. The resultant blank is shaped to a honey pot. After the lid is parted off the bottom is drilled out and hollowed. After hollowing the lid fit it together and using a beading tool Len cut the beads for the honey pot. He sanded and finished the pot.