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PROFILE OF A TURNER

Stephen Hughes

Western Australian turners have been fortunate over the last three weeks in having Stephen Hughes, one of Australia's leading turners and teachers of craft conducting workshops and demonstrating. Stephen was born in Melbourne in 1958 and grew up there having been educated at St Joseph's Primary and St Kevin's Secondary schools in Toorak. In 1980, he completed a four-year Bachelor of Education at Melbourne State College. He majored in Woodcraft under the tuition of Vic Wood.

Stephen is a full-time teacher, having started at Lavers Hill and presently at Karingal Secondary College in Frankston, Victoria. Despite his full-time teaching commitments, he has found time to promote not only his own wood turning skills, but to assist in advancing the craft of woodturning in Australia and in the United States.

His first exhibition was as part of a group in his final university year and his first solo exhibition was held in 1985 and was called, "Decorative Woodware" and presented at the Craft Centre in Toorak. Stephen is known worldwide for his use of huon pine together with a combination of timbers such as jarrah, blackboy and sheoak. He also uses such other materials as beads, amber, stained glass, semiprecious stones, turquoise, jade etc.

Latterly, Stephen has tended to concentrate on carving to enhance turned pieces in some of his major works. Ninety five percent of his production is one of pieces of art varying in price from \$200 to \$30000. Fifteen major works have been sold in the USA and eight in Japan. This gives some indication of his reputation as a quality turner.

Other activities in his busy life include editor of the turning section of "Wood Review", judging at shows and demonstrating as he did at the World Turning Conference in Wilmington, Delaware, USA. While there, he also attended a symposium at Bucks Country and another at Brigham Young University, Salt Lake City, Utah which was organised by Dale Nash.

He has been invited back to the United States to demonstrate at their Annual Conference this year. This is Stephen's third trip to WA, and he has conducted workshops at Midland, Denmark, Albany and Bunbury and also judging at the Denmark competition. For those fortunate enough to participate in these workshops the experience is invaluable.

Stephen is married to Mary, and they have a daughter Ruby aged 11 months. They live on a 3/4-acre block in Mordiallac where Stephen has an excellent workshop attached and an adjoining shed to house an extensive collection of timbers including substantial quantities of his beloved huon pine.

All West Australian turners thank Stephen for the time spent here, for his enthusiasm and great teaching ability. They also wish him well in his future endeavours.

Written by Robin Halbert