



## Chair's Chatter

Is it really June already? Whatever happened to April and May? They seemed to go in a blink!

It's one of life's great mysteries. As you get older and are forced to slow down and take life at a more leisurely pace, then time appears to disappear more quickly. With that in mind, I seem to be spending more and more days chasing my own tail and even less woodturning. One of our club debates is whether to continue with the monthly competitions as few people seem to enter these days. Maybe I have hit on the reason why. Maybe it is just a sad reality that most of us only get the luxury of spending time in the workshop for a few days a year? It would be interesting to know your situation.

Onto more important matters. It appears that the club has been given a stay of execution at the last minute, with very many thanks to those who responded to my recent appeal. Phil Williams has stepped up to the challenge and is taking over the Treasurers role from Vance, so at least we now have a quorate committee. Tony Tripp has also volunteered to be Vice Treasurer and assist Phil wherever possible. Others have also volunteered to look after club equipment such as the lathe and cameras and manage the monthly tea and coffee arrangements. Thank you to everyone who has put their names forward and offered their full support. It really does mean a lot to me to hear that you want the club to keep going and that you are willing to help wherever you can.

We do still have two vacancies though. Primarily that of Events Secretary to oversee the booking of demonstrators. This is still a key role that really does need to be filled. However, we held a committee meeting on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June, where we agreed to try and juggle the role between us for a few weeks to see how we get on, as none of us want to see the club fold. We will endeavour to keep you regularly updated and keep appealing for assistance.

The other vacancy is someone to manage the club sales table. This does not have to be a committee role. We just need someone to sit at the back during tea break to sell any items that are for sale and to co-ordinate the Abranet supplies. I am happy to order items, but just need someone to let me know when stocks are running low. No doubt I will be badgering you all to volunteer over the next few months! Maybe you could all take it in turns like the old tea rota?

Well its back to time again! Time to get back in the workshop that is. July is going to be a very busy woodturning month for me. I have two demonstrations to give and two competitions to enter. On July 7<sup>th</sup> I am demonstrating for yourselves, then on the 11<sup>th</sup> I am presenting at Wolverhampton. So if you miss me on the Friday, you can always play catch-up on the following Tuesday night. The club then has a show stand at the Kings Bromley Show on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July and we are all invited to enter their annual woodturning competitions. Of course we also have our own club competition, so I need to get making a Plant Stand for my entry. Maybe I could even incorporate some basket weaving? Now there is a challenge.

So see you all again on July 7<sup>th</sup> and happy turning in the meantime!

Dawn xxx



## Editors Scribblings

My wife and I spent a week and a bit in Somerset last month and I was thinking it would be a change to be taking some photographs that didn't feature a woodturning lathe or turned items - I was to be proved wrong! We decided to extend our stay by a couple of days which enabled us, just before our departure, to visit a small craft



fair in Dulverton Town Hall that we had seen advertised. We were surprised to find that of the four stall holders, two were woodturners! Chris Carter and his wife Sally had a huge number of items on display so it came as a surprise to learn that Chris had only taken up woodturning about a year ago. He had access to a range of native wood which he shared with his fellow stall holders Mick and Marie Power, both of whom turn wood. We all know that woodturners are generally friendly people who are happy to share ideas and experience and Chris and Sally, and Mick and Marie were no exception. Their nearest club is North Devon Woodturners ([northdevonwoodturners.org.uk](http://northdevonwoodturners.org.uk)) which is a 1½ hour drive away making attending meetings a very long evening. I have long realised how fortunate we are having so many clubs in the Midlands area which enables a number of us to be members of several of them.

Chris and Sally (left)



Mike and Marie (right)



It was a pleasant end to our holiday.

I've not done any woodturning for a while, and didn't get the experimental pieces completed that I had intended to bring to the June meeting. As it happened there were plenty of display items from Vance, Ted and Simon. I'll endeavour to bring them next month, although I do need to prioritise making a plant stand for the Challenge.

A lot of time the last few weeks has been spent working on my metal working lathe. It's quite old, in fact rather older than I had originally thought; research shows that it must have been built between 1921 and 1924 - not 1937 as I had previously thought. It has had some updates since but I am now in process of making some major

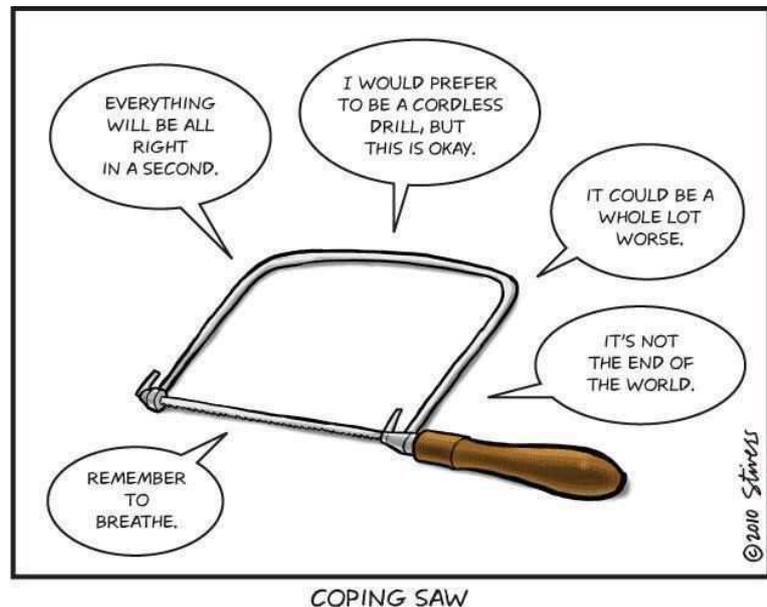


changes, based on details published in two issues of The Model Engineer from 1943 which, along with some of the parts, I had inherited with the lathe over 50 years ago but not done anything about. Those who know me well will not be surprised - I do take a while to get round to finishing things at times!

This is a large issue of the Newsletter again, I hope you enjoy reading it. I have written before about feedback; but I really would appreciate your comments. I do get satisfaction from producing it, and the comments I have received have been favourable (albeit small in number), but it's only worthwhile if the majority of members read, and enjoy it. So, an email, or verbal comment would be welcome! Also, don't forget that there are sections for hints & tips and items for sale.

Happy turning!

**Hugh Field**



*Two engineers were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking at its top. A woman walked by and asked what they were doing.*

*"We're supposed to find the height of this flagpole," said one, "but we don't have a ladder."*

*The woman took a spanner from her handbag, loosened a couple of bolts, and laid the pole down on the ground. Then she took a tape measure from her bag, took a measurement, and announced, "Twenty one feet, six inches," and walked away.*

*One engineer shook his head and laughed, "A lot of good that does us. We ask for the height and she gives us the length!"*

*Both engineers have since quit their engineering jobs and are currently serving as MPs. It's understodd that they have offered to help with the Brexit negotiations.....*



## June Competition

This month's competition was for the Novices, the subject being a miniature bird house. There were two entries, one from Richard Green who is not yet a member, the other from John Meers. John was the winner (photo below left).



## June display table



A nice selection of display items this month. Vance Lupton has obviously been busy while convalescing! His pieces are to the left of Simon King's two bowls in the photograph. Ted Gill's contributions are to the right. Sadly, Simon is leaving the club having accepted a new job in Surrey; his two bowls in sycamore were inspired by Nick Agar, using spirit stains along with texturing and silver gilt cream.



Ken Allen brought in an interesting 4 legged “platter” made from branch slices that had been embedded in polyester resin and turned and finished to a very high sheen. It was displayed on a mirror.

## June demonstration - Mark Sanger



This was Mark’s first visit to MSWA. He lives in Gillingham in Dorset and had spent over 4 hours travelling to be with us.



Mark’s speciality is hollow forms and some of you may be familiar with his book, unsurprisingly titled “Turning Hollow Forms”. This provides excellent reading for anyone interested in attempting these largely purely aesthetic turnings, or indeed for those who of us who have tried and struggled.



For this demonstration Mark focussed on lidded cross grain vessels, using seasoned timber of about 6” diameter and 4” thick. Larger items dictate the use of wet timber and may be rather daunting for first attempts, but the same principles still apply. The majority of his vessels are turned from wet wood, necessitating either rough turning, seasoning, then finish turning; or turning to a thin consistent thickness at one session in order to avoid excessive distortion or cracking. Mark has a preference for two shapes of vessel in this size as illustrated above. He chose to make one similar to the one he is holding, in beech, and to add a carved finial lid in his signature “S” shape. After giving his



Health and Safety advice of always wearing a safety mask and using adequate dust extraction he began turning. The blank was mounted on a 10mm screw chuck in the scroll chuck and with support from the tailstock revolving centre. Next, he marked out the correct diameter for a chucking spigot to suit the Supernova jaws using a simply





made device, as shown, consisting of a strip of wood, a pencil, and a screw. Rough shaping of the piece came next; Mark uses a long grind bowl gouge for the majority of the shaping, this versatile tool is capable of 5 specific cuts - push cut, pull cut, scraping cut, finishing cut and shear scraping - by presenting the tool at different angles to the timber. This is too involved to describe further here, hopefully those who were at the meeting were able to understand Mark's demonstration of the correct tool presentation angles. Although torn grain is often difficult to avoid when cross grain turning, Mark's opinion is that blunt tools or incorrect tool presentation is a more likely cause, particularly if the problem manifests itself on both sides of the piece. Torn grain on just one side may be due to specific grain problems in that part of the blank. The chucking spigot was produced solely with the bowl gouge. After finalising the shape, Mark used a round bar shear scraper to achieve a very fine finish on the work. The round bar is preferable to a square one as it allows better control of the contact angle. The piece was then reversed and mounted in the scroll chuck, checking that it was running true.

From an aesthetic point of view Mark favours the rule of thirds, so he aims for the shoulder for the lid to be approximately  $\frac{1}{3}^{\text{rd}}$  of the overall diameter (the hole will, of course, be slightly smaller). After facing off the piece, Mark transferred the required diameter to the piece using a digital calliper and using small cuts produced a slight dome shape with a shoulder for the lid.

Next, a 25mm hole was bored using a Forstner bit. Quality of these bits is related to price - Mark favours those made by Colt which work out at about £1.25 per mm of diameter, but they do cut extremely cleanly and with minimal heat build up. This hole was bored to about 10mm less than the required internal depth of the form, with the lathe speed reduced, and withdrawing the drill frequently to clear the chips.

There are many types of hollowing tool but basically they are all either scrapers, or hook tools and their derivatives (ring types, with or without shields). Scrapers work best with cross grain, dry timber; otherwise a shielded hook or ring tool is appropriate. Mark favours a small cutting tip with a long handle in order to achieve best control. The tool needs to be articulated to achieve access to the undercut areas (although the cutting point should be kept on the centreline of the tool when possible for stability). Used in trailing mode, the tool is rotated clockwise until the cut is felt; this way control of



access to the undercut areas (although the cutting point should be kept on the centreline of the tool when possible for stability). Used in trailing mode, the tool is rotated clockwise until the cut is felt; this way control of



the cut can be safely controlled and maintained without catches. The trick is to work slowly and methodically, and to stop regularly to check.

The first stage of hollowing was to open up the aperture to the desired size using push-pull cuts with the lathe running at about 1200 rpm and the tool tip set straight. The tool was then articulated to allow the rim to be undercut. It is very important not to articulate the tool tip excessively as considerable twisting forces can result. Start with the tool trailing and rotate clockwise until it starts to cut. Control of the tool is achieved by using the little finger as a pivot point, so the tool tip moves in an arc. In this way, and by articulating the tool tip as required, the hollowing is progressively deepened. It is important to regularly clear the chips from inside the piece (Mark uses a small diameter adapter on his workshop vacuum cleaner). Mark advises always stopping the lathe before withdrawing the hollowing tool. The thickness of the piece needs to be checked regularly using fingers and callipers.

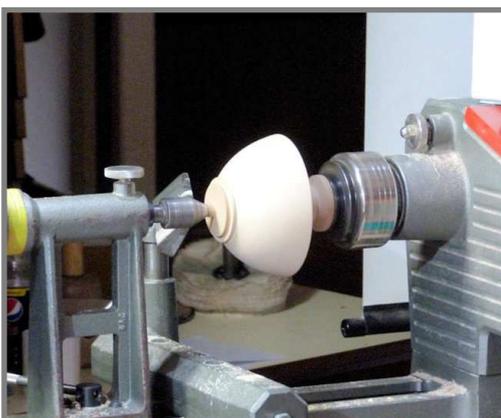


Rather than complete the hollowing, Mark used a previously hollowed piece to demonstrate how he sands the inside. If it can be reached with fingers, or is visible, it needs to be well finished. Some parts can be power sanded using a sanding pad on an extension arbour, other parts can be reached with a tool made from wire (coat



hangers are ideal) bent to shape and with a Velcro pad attached with duct tape.

To remove the chucking spigot and refine the foot a location spigot was turned on a spare piece of wood, and using a pad of kitchen roll the piece was remounted using the tailstock centre and taking light cuts to establish a shallow foot (such that the curve appears to intersect with the surface on which the piece stands) and leaving a small spigot. After slowing the lathe this spigot was reduced in size as far as was safe, final cuts being made with a skew to produce a weak point such that the spigot could be broken off, prior to carving it off and finishing using a small sanding pad



mounted in the lathe, and hand sanding.





For finishing, Mark favours using a buffing system but skipping the initial Tripoli stage, instead starting with either white diamond or "Hyfin" (available from Axminster) on a canvas wheel after sealing. For the final finish he uses Renaissance wax, applied with a cloth and buffed at a low speed using a soft cotton wheel. This is repeated several times to produce a fine durable finish.

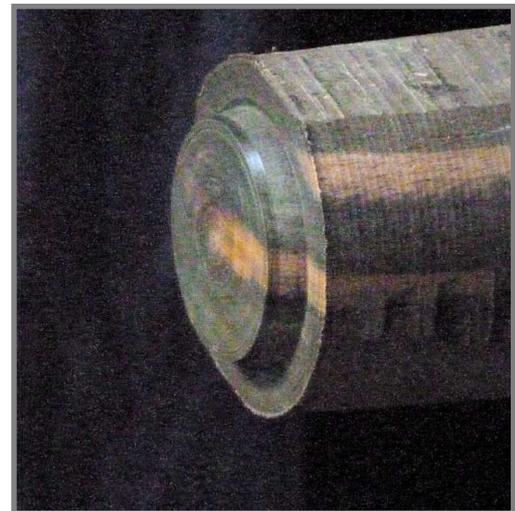
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Next came the lid and finial. A piece of end grain ebony was used. This provides a nice contrast with the lighter wood used for the vessel. The diameter of the aperture was transferred to the end of the trued up blank and a spigot turned. This was turned with a taper and the vessel offered up and the lathe spindle turned by hand. This resulted in a visible burnish mark. The spigot was reduced in diameter, using the burnish mark as a guide, until a fairly tight fit was achieved. The final shape of the spigot was a shallow barrel shape. The fit should be tight at this stage as the wood will be slightly warm - the hole can be "eased" later using a piece of rolled up 400 grit if required.



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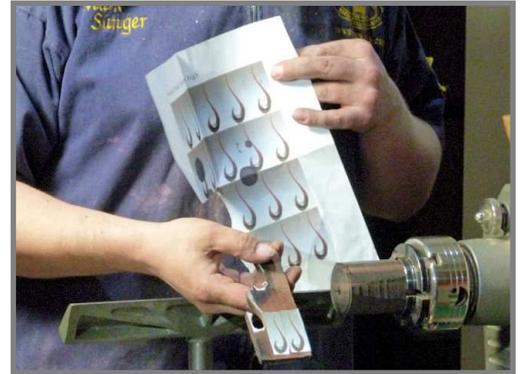


Using the burr on the side of a parting tool, the underside of the lid was finished. The "S" shaped finial was to be attached with a woodscrew so a recess and countersink was created using the parting tool. A 3mm hole was then drilled using a hand held twist drill.



Using a narrow parting tool the top of the lid was next turned, creating a domed shape. The burr on the side of the tool produced a fine finish on the ebony as the shape was carefully created. It was necessary to remove waste wood to the left of the tool to allow clearance and finishing prior to finally parting off. If necessary the lid can be attached to the remains of the material for finishing.

To produce the finial a design needs to be initially sketched on to paper and this is transferred to a piece of flat wood so that the shape can be cut out using a



scroll saw. This is then carved and sanded to shape. The height of the finial will appear to be too small if the  $\frac{1}{3}$ <sup>rd</sup> rule is applied ( $\frac{1}{2}$  the height of the vessel) and Mark has found that  $\frac{3}{4}$  the vessel height works better. Mark produces many of these vessels and creates multiple images on paper using Microsoft Word to scale the image to standard sizes. The paper is glued to the wood so the shape can be cut out on the scroll saw.



To drill the pilot hole for the attachment screw he uses a 1mm piercing burr mounted in a Jacobs chuck in the lathe spindle, running at 3000 rpm. This works better than a twist drill as the side cutting action can be utilised to correct the alignment of the hole, and to allow a slightly oversized hole to be created if the finial wood is hard.

To make the lid more interesting, Mark usually inserts a bead between the finial and the lid. This can be turned from wood, or a glass or metal one used. In this case he chose a sterling silver one. Finally the screw is fixed to the finial and lid with medium viscosity CA glue. To conceal the screw head a plug was turned in light wood to fit the previously turned recess.

As an alternative, the recess in the bottom of the lid could have been made such that an appropriate coin could be used instead of the wooden plug.

To complete his evening with us Mark turned a simple cylindrical box.





I'm not sure where Mark gets his energy, but he still had a 3 hour plus drive back home. The audience applause was well deserved!

## ***Hugh Field***

### **Open weekend at The Toolpost - Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**

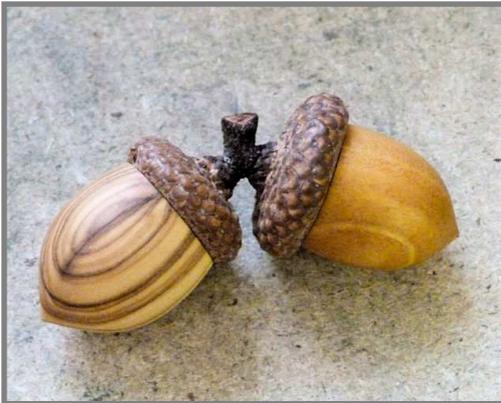
Featuring two turners from the Netherlands, Jan Hovens and Ronald Kanne, along with Les Thorne (representing Brimarc and demonstrating the new Nova Comet lathe), Bert Butterfield (pyrography) and Simon Clements (wood carving and sculpture).



Jan demonstrated his expertise in thread chasing, "I'm from Holland and glue is expensive, so I thread everything!" he commented. Always useful to pick up tips on this subject, Jan favours the use of the arm rest when chasing the internal threads as it gives him excellent control of the process. He also uses thistle oil to aid the production of a good thread. Apparently in Holland they produce oil from thistle seeds for culinary purposes and Jan has found it to be also ideal as a food safe finish.



When chasing the external thread, after establishing the initial spiral form, he has found it advantageous to then drop the handle of the chaser so it is not actually cutting as he picks up the cut for subsequent passes (a bit like picking up the cut with a spindle gouge as you raise the tool handle). This reduces the risk of cutting a multi-start thread.



Boxes are one of Jan's specialities and he makes these in all sizes including acorn size where he glues tiny threaded rings into real acorn cups and then makes threaded turned acorns to fit! He commented that all his boxes have three threads, one for the lid, one for the box, and one he makes so he can hold the box for finishing the bottom!



He also had a box which incorporated part of the husk of the Kenyan "Thika" nut (left). The outside surface of these husks is a shiny, rich brown, sculptured surface which apparently is extremely durable and Jan has one which is now several years old and still retains the original shine. Within the sleeve husk is a wooden box, threaded for a retaining ring and the lid.

Something that Jan was using was a home made scraper burnishing tool (right). This was made from a needle bearing centre race, mounted on a wooden base. The scraper was layed on the wooden

base and the edge of the scraper was simply dragged across the hard metal (using his thumb as a pivot point) to raise a fine, but sharp, burr. Jan intends to refine this design by adding a fulcrum pin).



Les Thorne was bowl turning (using the new Nova Comet lathe) and one of the things he demonstrated was how to undercut the inside of a bowl working in reverse. This provides easier tool presentation but necessitates the chuck being locked to the spindle.

He commented that the build up of shavings makes visibility difficult, but it is a useful tip.

Ronald works with big pieces of wet timber and was demonstrating the use of the ONEWAY bowl saver (right).





Berkshire based production turner/tutor Steve Giles had a comprehensive stand of his work on display (left).

If you haven't been to one of Toolposts open days then I do recommend that you give on a go. They hold them two weekends a year and always have several interesting demonstrators. It is quite a long way down to Didcott but it's free entry and refreshments are available for the cost of a donation to charity. I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

*Hugh Field*

## Forthcoming events

### Club Meetings

**7<sup>th</sup> July**

**Dawn Hopley**

Weaving and woodturning

**1<sup>st</sup> August**

**Hugh Field / Philip Watts**

Downloaded video evening - hopefully some things you've not seen before!

### Club Competitions

**July - Challenge**

A plant stand

**August - Novice**

A table or stool leg

### Other events

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July**

**UK & Ireland Woodturning Symposium**

Hilton Hotel, Coventry CV2 2ST

This is a large, friendly event centred solely around woodturning. The 2016 was very successful and this year promises to be even better. There will be at least 5 public demonstrators and Masterclasses from professional demonstrators. Many trade stands will be there. This is an advance booking event, go to <http://www.ukiws.co.uk/> for more information and booking.

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July**

**Kings Bromley Show**

MSWA is planning to have a stand again this year. Further details to follow.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September**

**European Woodworking Show**

Cressing Temple Barns, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8PD

Over 100 exhibitors representing a diverse range of woodworking disciplines. A long way to travel but well worth it, and the location is wonderful.

Go to <http://www.ews2017.com/> for more information.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

**Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition**

Warwickshire Exhibition Centre

Fosse Way, Nr Leamington Spa, CV31 1XN

No woodturning, but plenty of tools and things that are useful in our hobby!

<http://www.midlandsmodeleengineering.co.uk/>



## Hints and tips

This section is for any tips or advice you would like to pass on to other members. If you have discovered something you found useful that you think may benefit others, please pass it on.

## Members sales items

This section is for listing any turning or woodworking tools or related items you have for sale.

Any submissions to [editor@mswa.co.uk](mailto:editor@mswa.co.uk), please.

## DVDs

The club has a selection of Woodturning DVD's for use by registered club members use only. You can borrow them for just £2 per month (some are free)! If any members have DVDs which are not on the list, but which they would like to donate to the Club, they would be most welcome.

We need a volunteer to take over the responsibility for these items, and the sale of abrasives, etc.

## Abrasives and other items

### Mirka Abranet 70 x 125mm Sheets:

5 x Mixed Grit Pack (120, 180, 240, 400 and 500) = £2.00 per pack

### Mirka Abranet 50mm Sanding Discs:

7 x Mixed Grit pack (80, 120, 180, 240, 320, 400, 600) = £1.50 per pack

### Rhinogrip 50mm Sanding Discs:

7 x Mixed Grit pack (80, 120, 180, 240, 320, 400, 600) = £0.90 per pack

### Flexipad Sanding Pads (for above discs):

50mm Velcro Conical Spindle Pad with 6mm shaft = £8.82 each

### J-Flex Sanding Paper:

5 x 1m lengths mixed grits 120, 180, 240, 320 & 400 = £9.50 per pack



## Club information

Your club committee for 2017 is:-

**Chairman – Dawn Hopley** [chairman@mswa.co.uk](mailto:chairman@mswa.co.uk)  
Tel: 07860 501 379

**Secretary – John McElroy** [secretary@mswa.co.uk](mailto:secretary@mswa.co.uk)

**Treasurer – Phil Williams** [treasurer@mswa.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@mswa.co.uk)

**Assistant Treasurer - Tony Tripp**

**Events Secretary – Vacant** [events@mswa.co.uk](mailto:events@mswa.co.uk)

**Newsletter editor – Hugh Field** [editor@mswa.co.uk](mailto:editor@mswa.co.uk)  
Tel: 0121 329 2911

**Webmanager – Philip Watts** [webman@mswa.co.uk](mailto:webman@mswa.co.uk)

**Health and Safety Advisor**  
**Hugh Field** [health.safety@mswa.co.uk](mailto:health.safety@mswa.co.uk)

*Please use phone numbers only if absolutely necessary.*

### **Other important people responsible for:-**

**Refreshments:** *David Neal, David Dawes & Ron Dixon*

**Equipment:** *Mark Pickering & John Meers*

**Cameras:** *John Meers, Ted Gill, Vance Lupton & Dawn Hopley*

**Club shop:** *Vacant*