

Bill Evans: Profile Of a Woodturner.....and Silversmith.....



Bill has had a very eventful life. He was born in Smethwick; in north Birmingham in the October of 1934. His family moved to Acock's Green near Solihull from Quinton in 1938; from where because of intense bombing he was evacuated in 1941. Whilst he was having his tonsils out, the hospital he was staying in was bombed. His evacuation; with his maternal grandmother, was to Stretton on Fosse in the Cotswolds, where he lived for 18 months. On his return home he was bed-ridden; recovering from pneumonia, when he saw the whole night sky lit up as Coventry burned. To help him recuperate; his mother took him by train to St Mawes in Cornwall a journey of 13 hours. There they stayed at the home of an uncle whose house overlooked the beach. It was on this

beach while playing with a boy from Belgium; that they were strafed by a low flying Messerschmitt. Bill was privately educated and from age 7 to 17, he attended Wellsbourne School. He had shown; an early interest in farming machinery and so a friend of his father arranged him an interview with the MD of Ransom, Simms and Jeffries. This secured him the offer of a 5 year student apprenticeship to work in every department of the company. From there he gained The National Certificate and The Higher National Cert in Mechanical Engineering and also membership of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. At just over 21 he was involved in an accident on his motor bike; he was travelling to visit his parents who had moved north to Bramhope, when he was forced off the road by a lorry breaking his right leg in 5 places. He was hospitalised in Doncaster; then transferred to the LGI, the remaining 3 years of recuperation was spent at his

parents home. Thus was ended his plan and ambition to serve his national service by taking a commission in the Royal Navy. During this time of enforced idleness; he kept busy, by renovating an old Wolsley Hornet. Eventually he took employment with E.Green&Son Wakefield working on heat exchangers for industry and power stations. He spent 6 years with them one of these was in New York State. He then spent some time with John Brown Foster Wheeler, where he designed the 600mw boilers for Longannet Power Station. Bill changed tack at 37 by transferring into sales; dealing in industrial gas cleaning systems, retiring from this after 20 years. At the Cow and Calf Hotel whilst at a 21st birthday party; Bill and Angela met they married when he was 27 she 25. They have two sons one a doctor with Unilever and the other a director with a Mental Hospital Group. Bill has served the community as a magistrate; he sat on the Huddersfield Bench

for over 6 years. He used to sail yachts both big and small, but his main hobbies now are turning wood and making exquisite objects in silver. Thus the need for not one but two workshops. The first a snug partitioned area at the rear of his garage; set up with a lathe originally owned by Peter Wilbraham and with an adequate supply of tools. The 2nd custom built by Bill; is a well designed, fully equipped workshop. It has everything to hand that a dedicated talented silversmith might need. Bill let me see some examples of his work; all lovingly crafted, I saw photographs of a set of candlesticks; he was commissioned to make for the Melton Mowbray Parish Church, lovely elegant pieces. Apart from turning jigs and moulds for his silver work Bill likes turning bowls, he is handy with a gauge but does confess to loving his scrapers. He likes oak but finds it difficult to work. He recommends making sure all work is secure and that tools are kept sharp.

News in Brief.....

Tony Wilson is to hold wood-working 'Clinics' on the third Sunday of each month; these will be held at his home, from 10am until 2pm. Admittance is £2; this includes a raffle ticket and free tea and coffee. Details are Cedar Cottage, 7 Queen St, Thorn Doncaster 01405818130.

For those of you who are lovers of a Fish & Chip lunch; I highly recommend the award winning 'The Cove' fish restaurant on Bridge Street Otley. The access is round the corner to the rear where there is ample parking. Pricing is OAP friendly, the fish and chips of the highest quality.

Saturday following our AGM; 5th April is hands-on day at Lawnswood. If you've never been then you are missing out; it is a splendid day. There is no charge for entry, Fred Barnes organises a buffet lunch; if you wish to pay and partake contact Fred to book on 01132260867.



Some light relief.....

A man asked his wife what would she like for her birthday. 'I'd love to be eight again' she replied. On the morning of her birthday, he got up early and made her a bowl of Coco Pops and jammy soldiers. Then he took her to Alton Towers and they both went on every ride. After five hours they staggered out reeling feeling a little bit queasy. He then drove to a McDonalds where he ordered her a Happy Meal with extra

fries & a chocolate milk shake. Then it was off to the cinema; to see the latest Harry Potter with popcorn, Coke & M&Ms. What a fabulous day; arriving home, she collapsed onto the bed exhausted. He leaned over and asked 'Well, what was it like being eight again?' Total realization dawned 'I meant my dress size, you silly man!' The moral of this story; even when a man listens carefully, he'll never understand his wife.

Reason to drink beer.

When asked why he drank beer a chap gave the following explanation. Well you see; it's like this. A herd of gazelle can only move as fast as the slowest gazelle. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and the weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is very good for the herd as a whole, because the speed and health of the group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members.

In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cell. Now; as we know, excessive consumption of alcohol beverages kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That is why you'll always feel smarter after a few beers. Wire Wheel: useful in removing rust from nuts and bolts and throwing them across the shed also removes finger prints.