

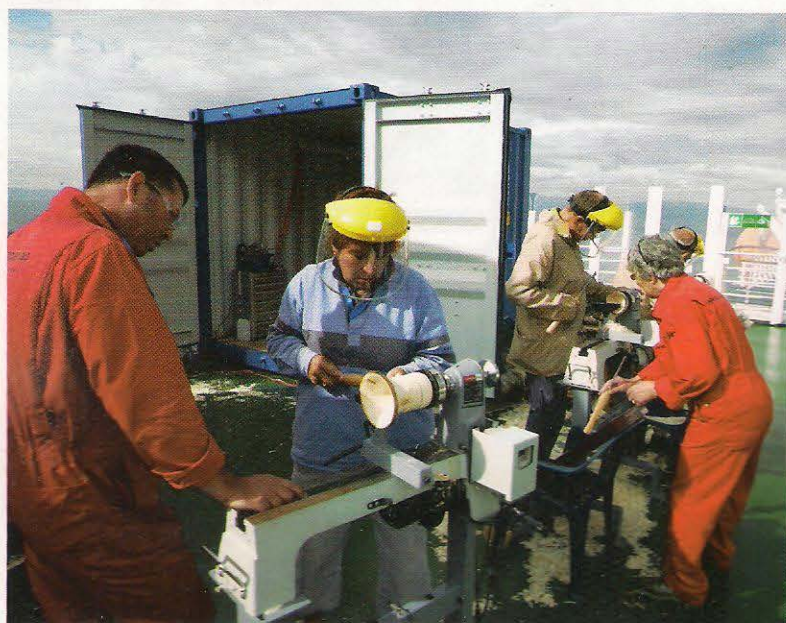
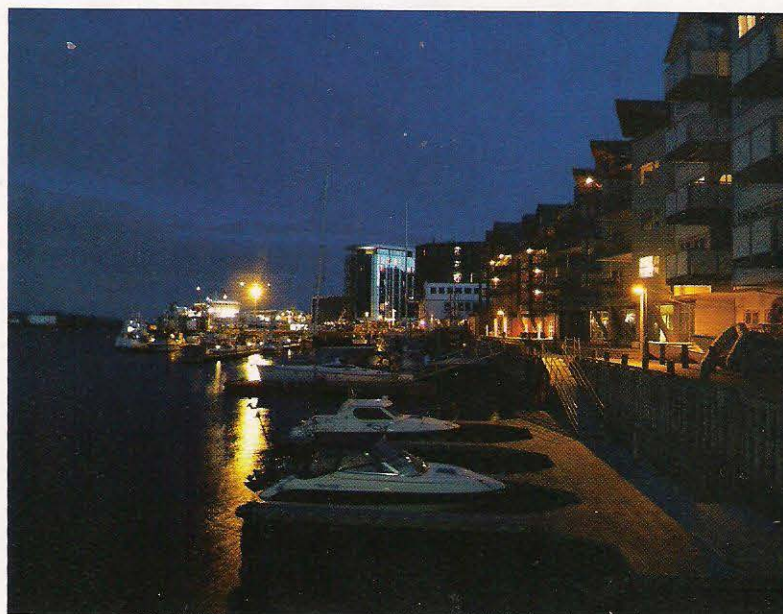
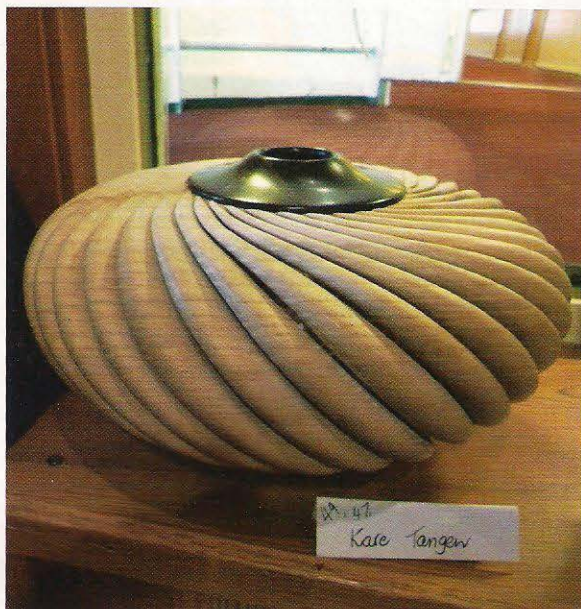
Norwegian Woodturning Cruise 2014

Mark Baker attended this year's Norwegian Woodturning Cruise. Here, he shares his experiences with us

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK BAKER

Michael Hosaluk demonstrating how he makes boats

Norway – the ancient land of the Vikings – is without doubt a land of contrasts. Its rugged mountain ranges, amazing fjords and waterways, towns, cities and communities that nestle in among them that are a wonderful mixture of ancient and new – oh, and I haven't even started on the breathtaking mix of wildlife yet! All in all, this is a country that has a lot to offer both visually and culturally. Couple that with the inventive idea by Odd Erik Thjomoe – the owner of WWW VERKTOY AS – that this wonderful country has much to offer and there might be the opportunity to combine a cruise that visits various towns, cities, fjords and other wonderful locations of beauty with woodturning, and you now have the gist of how the now world famous and unique experience that is the Woodturning Cruise came about. The cruise this year was the sixth such one – the first one started in 1998. This year, there were passengers from 16 different countries.



Much to see & do

The 11-day cruise itself is primarily about turning, but there are courses available to take – for a charge – concerning carving, knifemaking, pyrography and felt making. The turning instruction is free, but if you want to make something from a special wood, then that is something you have to buy. There are also plenty of opportunities to sign up for various time slots throughout the day so you can go ashore when docked, on excursions and still – if you want to – have some lessons.

Effectively the rear half of Deck B and also part of the lower deck were set aside for stores and displays, which was well stocked and there were lots of manufacturer representatives there to help people,

TOP LEFT: A piece of work by Kare Tangen

TOP RIGHT: A short stop in Svolveær at 11pm was a real treat

ABOVE LEFT: Colwin Way and Margaret Garrard teaching on the sun deck, weather permitting

ABOVE RIGHT: For those crossing the Arctic Circle there was a little ceremony – if they chose. Brent English and many others took part and a lot of fun was had. Neptune's helper was not always kind and some got more than just a spray of water!

show them how to use the products and also demonstration and the turning teaching areas. The other courses were situated in various locations on the boat.

Wonderful scenery

At each stop along the 11-day journey, the ship docked and people came on board to see the sales areas; the demonstrators and the passengers often went ashore to explore and go on excursions. The teaching continued for those who wanted to stay on board and do that if they chose, but likewise, some people just sat, enjoyed the view and relaxed.

You can imagine how busy it got at times when in dock with people coming on board to see what is new and learn and have the opportunity to

buy. There was also a lot of interaction where people shared what they were making. Woodworking is alive and well in Norway and is still very much part of their culture.

Aside from the wondrous landscape and scenery, the highlights for me were the opportunity to meet and talk to people and to learn from each. I liked being part of the teaching team and as with all teaching environments, I learned things too.

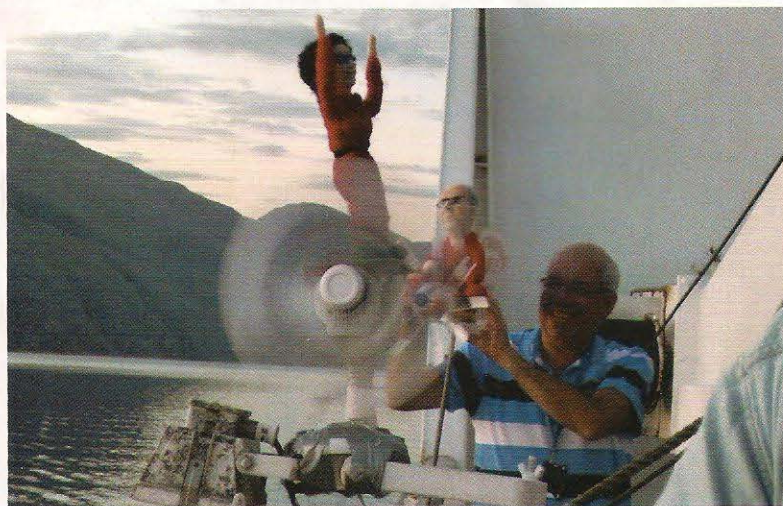
The trip is unique and unlike anything else you are likely to experience. The combination of all the different things will appeal if you want to do something different, and rest assured, the cruise will certainly offer you that. Odd Erik is looking to organise another cruise for 2017. Watch this space.



Just some of the pieces on display in the gallery. There was certainly a variety and a real visual treat to see



Mike Gibson was one of the team of demonstrators



Odd Erik had a wind operated automaton created on the last trip. This year, it was Mette's turn to have one created by Jim Sterling. When the blades turned the effigy gyrated its hips, as though it was disco dancing

COMMENTS FROM OTHER PASSENGERS

"The best of both worlds"

When I stepped on board *M V Gann* in Stavanger on 11 August, I was not sure what to expect. I had booked on the Woodturning Cruise for the first time. We were going to cruise up to the North Cape and back to Stavanger over the next 12 days and I was quite excited. On board were some of the best turners in the world, including the likes of Richard Raffan, Nick Agar, Rolly Munro and Mark Baker, along with about two dozen others, perhaps not as well known, but equally talented.

I was not disappointed. I was on a lathe four or five times getting instruction, hints and tips and when not actually turning, I was watching some great turners and learning all the time. When not involved in the woodturning, I went ashore at some lovely locations and went on some fantastic excursions. Norway really does have stunning scenery. This trip really was the best of both worlds and I thoroughly recommend it.

Ian Ballance



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER HILLS

There are lots of other activities for non-woodturning partners, such as felting

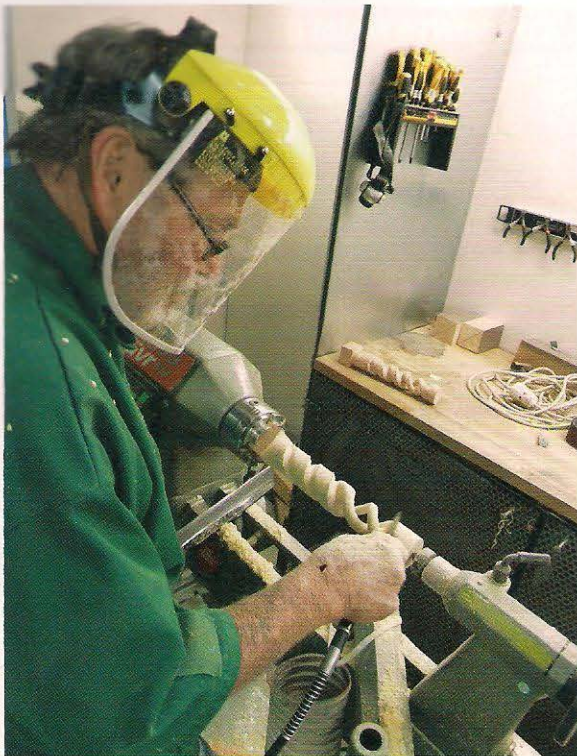
"A wonderful experience"

My wife and I have recently returned from a wonderful experience on the Woodturning Cruise 2014. We met experts in many fields and made new friends from all over the world. One of the side benefits was the range of activities for non-woodturning partners. I'm not sure how long it will take me to forgive my wife for making a felt troll that looks like me!

We had opportunities to learn from hands-on time with real experts – in my case Stuart Mortimer, Mark Baker and Terry Martin. I have some strange, thin wet-birch (*Betula pendula*) products slowly drying out at home.

We enjoyed seeing Norway in summer – even if not 'bright summer' – as a contrast to winter cruising. Unfortunately the North Cape was mainly grey and misty, but some of the land excursions were fantastic. The coastal towns like Alesund and Bergen were delightful. However, for me the Trollstigen – The Troll's Steps or Troll's Footpath, as it is otherwise known – scenic route was truly awesome. Would we go again? Yes, almost certainly. We've already contacted Odd Erik Thjømøe who organises the cruises. Hopefully, the next one will be in 2017.

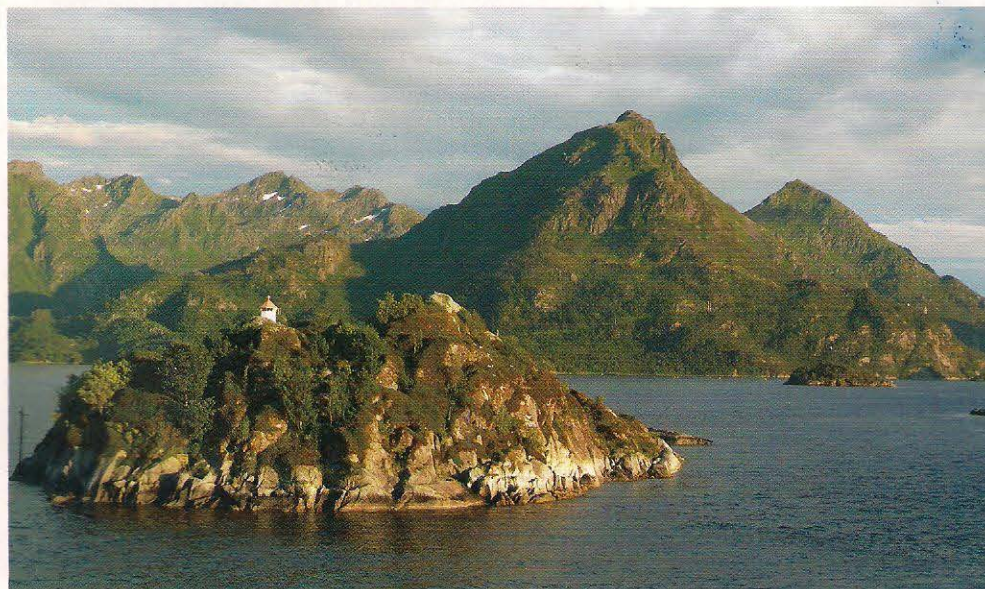
Peter Hills



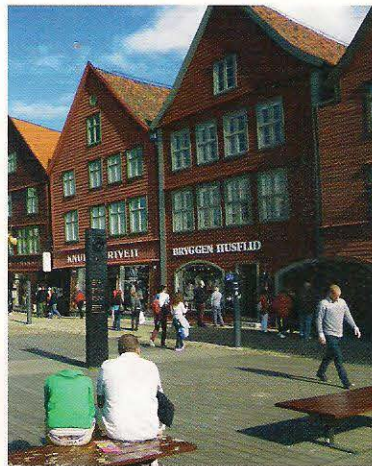
Passengers could try their hand and learn various techniques in teaching areas. Creating spirals with Stuart Mortimer was one option



Tromsø overlooking the central waterway and bridge towards the ice/arctic cathedral



The scenery is simply stunning with rugged landscapes and islands aplenty



Picturesque Bergen had lots for people to talk about and see



People also had the chance to go fishing. While only a few were caught, I believe Colwin caught the largest; the catch of the day went to Bob Neill



The Trollfjord was a prime example of rugged and snow-capped mountains

CONTACT

This year's on-board auction raised over £9,000 for Cancer Research. For more information, see www.woodturningcruise.com; for more photos and stories, see: www.facebook.com/woodturningcruise

DEMONSTRATORS

- Asmund Vignes** – woodturning
- Bob Neill** – pyrography
- Colwin Way** – woodturning
- Cynthia & Michael Gibson** – woodturning & pyrography
- Hans Holmen** – woodturning
- Inge Hagensen** – knifemaking
- James Barry** – Trend diamond sharpening
- Jan Tore Solberg** – woodturning
- Jim Stirling** – scrollsaw
- Jostein Tvedt** – woodcarving
- Knut Sandvik** – woodworking
- Lars Tveit** – knifemaking
- Magne Grude** – woodturning
- Margaret Garrard** – woodturning
- Mark Baker** – woodturning
- Michael Hosaluk** – woodturning
- Nick Agar** – woodturning
- Richard Raffan** – woodturning
- Rolly Munro** – woodturning
- Stuart Mortimer** – woodturning
- Terry Martin** – woodturning
- Theo Haralampou** – woodturning
- Tone Tvedt** – felting

TRADE STANDS

- DMT Sharpening
- Kirjes Sanding System
- King Arthur's Tools
- Record Power
- Robert Sorby
- Tormek
- Trend
- Veritas – Knut Lunde
- Woodcut Tools

COURSES AVAILABLE

- Belt weaving
- Fairies or angels in wool
- Felting
- Hat making
- Knifemaking
- Make a handwarmer
- Pyro-engraving
- Routing
- Woodcarving
- Wool and silk scarves

The next Woodturning Cruise will be held in 2017 – check the website for further information ●