

# TOSSING AND TURNING IN THE FJORDS AUGUST 2008

by **Bob Neill**

This was the 4th Norwegian Woodturning Cruise. The first took place 10 years ago in 1998. The idea of chartering a ship, filling it with tools and machinery and traveling along the western coastline of this beautiful country was the idea of Odd Erik Thjomoe, the Managing Director of a Woodturning Centre in Stavanger. This year, there were nearly 200 passengers including over 20 demonstrators from 15 different countries on this 2 week unusual trip. Every day, the ship docked at a different port, where locals could come on board to watch demonstrations by some of the best wood workers in the World.

Richard Raffan (Australia) made many small bowls and boxes; Mark Baker (UK) produced a variety of large bowls; Jimmy Clewes (UK + USA) demonstrated big platters and goblets; Dick Sing (USA) made very small bird houses and ornaments; Asmund Vignes (Norway) produced small hollow forms; Johannes Rieber (Norway) made his canteen bottles; Stuart Mortimer (UK) demonstrated spirals and hollow forms; Nick Agar (UK) showed the production of his decorative and colourful 'Art' Pieces; Wayne Barton (USA) was seen working on his chip carved work; Jostein Tvedt (Norway) did his relief carving; Erik Lauritsen (Norway) created some amazing puzzles with a scroll saw; Kjell Musland (Norway), Rune Hjelen (Norway) and Arthur Aveling (USA) produced large wooden spoons with the power carving tools; Peter Bowman (Sweden) demonstrated the Swedish

Kirjes Sanding System; Tor-gnyJansson (Sweden) used the Tormek

Sharpening tools; Clive Brooks (UK) was there on behalf of Robert Sorby Turning Tools; Gavin Phillips and Clare Bannister worked at their pole lathe; Richard Reimers (USA) demonstrated his Flexicut Carving Tools; Bob Neill (UK) ran a 'hands-on' pyrography workshop and demonstrations; Unni Marie Lien (Norway) had a display and ran workshops of traditional Norwegian Rosemaling painting; Mark Raby (UK) demonstrated the Chestnut finishing and coloring products; Karianne Kay (Norway) was in charge of the DMT Sharpening Tools; Miles Davis and Dave Morris (UK) and Helge Ovedal (Norway) used the Trend Routing machinery and Chris Christensen (Norway) was in charge of selling the Tekna-tool lathes and chucks. The Workshop was organized and supervised by Knut Andreas Lien (Norway) and David Muckle (UK). The shop was run by Odd Erik Thjomoe, Mette Fjermestad, Judith Thjomoe, Lena Steine, Ingunn and Victor Pettersen and Sveinung Steine.

During the 13 day voyage, from Stavanger to the North Cape and back, the demonstrators entertained the passengers with a master class or gave tuition on an individual basis, sometimes well into the night! The ship docked at a different port every day. The MS GANN then became a floating shop with many local enthusiasts coming on board to watch these woodworking experts and then make their purchases. Many had a go in the various workshops or tried their hand at the pole lathe turning on the quayside.

The occasional visit out on deck to view the spectacular scenery was very refreshing. At each port, the ship's purser had organized visits to places of interest--Museums, Cathedrals, Art Exhibitions, etc. One of the highlights was entering the dramatic Geirangerfjord, dropping anchor and allowing some of the passengers to set ashore and take a fantastic bus ride over the mountains, meeting up with the ship later at Molde. In Tromso, the capital of Northern Norway, some people visited the very modern Cathedral and the famous Lapp Exhibition. Others took the gondola to the top of the mountain to get a wonderful view over the city.

Other special memories included meeting King Neptune as we crossed the Arctic Circle, "a visit to North Cape, the most northerly location before reaching the North Pole, wondering around the fish market in Bergen and a trip down the very narrow Trollfjorden where you can nearly touch the sides of the mountains.

This newer ship proved to be much more spacious and comfortable than the old MS GANN, with better cabins and more amenities on board. The Workshop area was considerably larger allowing people

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better views of the demonstrators. There were plenty of areas to relax and the crew were very efficient and friendly. Meals were excellent, with many based on traditional Norwegian recipes.

The evening entertainment included slide shows by Richard Raffan, Stuart Mortimer and Bob Neill, an Award Ceremony, fishing from the deck, quizzes, karaoke and an Auction on behalf of Cancer Research Norway. Pieces of work donated by the demonstrators and passengers raised over £6,000 for this worthy cause. Other activities sprang up during the trip from whittling and knitting to making jewelry and decorative paper baskets.

Odd Erik and his staff had taken 23 pallets of tools and machinery for this journey of 2,500 nautical miles. The last day came too soon and the end of another memorable and very successful voyage. Many thanks are due to Odd Erik and his staff as well as all the crew of the MS GANN for their hard work in planning this unique enterprise.

Many of us are already looking forward to the next trip, which is scheduled for August 2011. Keep an eye on my stand at the Shows for all the latest information! See you on the next Cruise!

### For details:

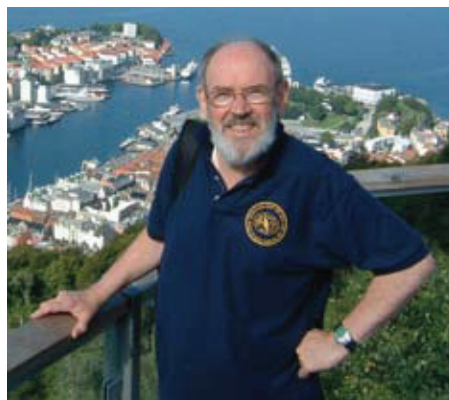
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**Demonstrators during the Norwegian Woodturning Cruise 2008.**



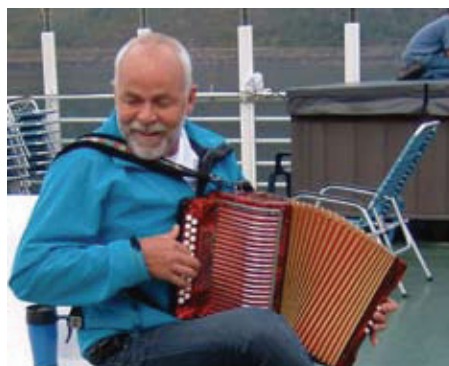
**The new MS Gann used for the 2008 Cruise.**



**Bob the Burner, author of this article.**



**Odd Eric, managing director, of the company that organizes the Norwegian Woodturning Cruise.**



**Kjell Musland's serenade.**



**Jimmy Clewes demonstrating on the cruise.**





**Mark Baker, editor of Woodturning magazine in the UK, demonstrating on a Vicmarc lathe.**



**Pole Lathe on board.**



**A nice turned and burned piece.**



**Asmund Vignes instructing a young turner during the cruise.**



**King Neptune anoints a passenger when crossing the Artic Circle.**



**A number of ladies learning to burn wood. Bob the Burner teaches the art of using pyrography to enhance turned items. The lady in the foreground looks like she is doing it right.**



**A nicely decorated square bowl.**



**A commemorative plate.**

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