

# Tributes to Bob Lynn

—from Lindsay Holland #5845

I knew Bob for 55 years. He was intensely loyal to his family, his friends, his town, his church and the organisations to which he belonged.

He grew up with seven half brothers and sisters with family connections in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

His life long passion was working with wood. He started playing around and had wood when he was six and when he was 10 years old he made his first wood turning lathe. In 1924 he also bought his first tools, and began collecting wood samples, interests that continued until he died in February of this year.

Bob wanted to be a carpenter even though that was against his father's wishes. His father wanted him to take on a 'profession'. He moved to the Ashburton Technical School with a woodwork teacher, Alf Smith, and at 15 he accepted a five year apprenticeship in carpentry and joinery, spending 18 months on building and three and a half years in Tuckers joinery shop.

At Tuckers Joinery shop, he worked alongside Bill Gourdie, son of a prominent builder, and in 1939 married Bill's daughter, Bertha.

After finishing his apprenticeship, in 1934, in the depths of the depression, and with no work ahead, he went to Australia for 14 months. On his return he worked as a carpenter in Ashburton from 1936 until the outbreak of World War II. The tough depression days brought out his considerable business skills.

They were tough times, but he obtained a woodworking machine agency and imported a hand operated concrete block making machine. He also had a contract to turn bobbins for the Woollen Mills which he did on the weekends and nights—from which he earned as much again as his joiners wages.

His hearing problems started to become a problem and continued to worsen throughout his life.

In 1940, building manpower regulations were introduced, and materials and labour was restricted to essential war works. He was forced to work with 120 others to mass produce buildings for US Army camps in the Pacific and NZ.

In 1942 he was called up to an Army Training Camp at Lancaster Park. During training, by not hearing orders correctly, Bob caused a near accident involving hand grenades. The resulting enquiry and hearing test designated him unfit for overseas service and he returned to building work on a new 100 bed extension to the Ashburton Hospital.

At the end of 1943 Bob was released from war work and started as a builder. In 1946, he opened a small Joinery Shop next to his home. This expanded rapidly and by 1952 he had 18 employees. He then moved to a large workshop on Alford Forest Road, which was completed in 1957 trading as Lynns Construction Ltd, and Lynns Hardware & Joinery Ltd, and Lynns Engineering Ltd. Bob travelled extensively buying the latest machinery, sourcing timber supplies, and finding skilled staff. By the 1970's the three firms were employing in excess of 150 people producing work for major projects around New Zealand, including Parliament buildings, Victoria University, The National Library and many others.

Bob retired from active involvement in his businesses in the early 1980's to concentrate on preserving the craft skills associated with wood working and building his collections.



*Bob Lynn, 7 July, 1914 - 4 Feb, 2012.*

During his working life he started collecting wood samples from all over the world, and accumulated thousands of samples as a reference collection. He took out IWCS #1530 in May 1973.

He has been active in promoting traditional woodworking and woodturning and ornamental turning skills. His interest in ornamental turning, using lathes made in the early 1800's. As a result of this interest he became a life member of the Society of Ornamental Turners in London.

He became an acknowledged authority on the history of the lathe, and built up a collection of lathes rated as one of the best in the world, along with a vast collection of woodworking tools of historical interest. To preserve his collection he established the Lynn Historical Woodworking Trust in 1981, gifting his collection and much of his savings to the Trust which established a permanent home for the collections at the Plains in Tinwald.

Bob has authored two books, and he contributed many articles to technical magazines. He became well known internationally for his expertise and was always

*Cont' opposite.*

David Mouat has been appointed Associate Editor for the *World of Wood* magazine as of March 1, 2012. Dave is an avid wood collector, a long time member of IWCS and is currently the Regional Trustee for the IWCS US Southwest Region. He and has travelled the world extensively in his work as a Desertification (land degradation in arid

regions) specialist. He has extensive experience as a reviewer for peer-review publications and has been editor or co-editor of numerous proceedings of conferences in remote sensing, geobotany, and desertification. Most of these have been either UN or NATO sponsored. Dave will assist the Editor both in the editing of submitted articles as well as contributing articles on a variety of topics.



unassuming and unpretentious—always recording his occupation as *Carpenter*, and was usually found wearing his apron.

Despite his profound deafness which worsened with age, he has contributed to his community and many organisations, including the Hearing Association, Thistle Lodge, the Presbyterian Church, the Master Builders Federation, Joinery Manufacturers Association, the Timber Merchants Federation, the Farm Foresters Assn, the Society of Ornamental Turners, London, and the IWCS.

He was awarded the Queens Service Medal in 2007.



## Tribute from Chuck and Mary Holder

Bob Lynn, #1530 L, a long-time member in New Zealand, passed away on the 4th February, in his 98th year. He was a living legend in woodworking circles, and when Mary and I visited him in his new Museum of Woodworking and Ornamental Turning in 2003, in NZ, he gave me a signed copy of his book – “*Woodworking – my first 70 years*”! Can you imagine that? He was a true gentleman and will be missed by many – particularly his daughter and son-in-law Elizabeth and Lindsay Holland, who are also well established members of IWCS. We met them at the first IWCS meeting we ever attended - Purgatory, Colorado in 1996.

Mary and Chuck Holder.



## Editor

Bob made a huge effort to personally be with us for our visit to his magnificent museum during the 2012 AustralAsian Annual Meeting in Christchurch in November. It was indeed an honour to have him address us—and exchange notes with him in return. His museum was an inspiration for all. The report on this meeting begins on page 4 of this issue.

Morris Lake.



## IWCS Membership numbers

Below is a table of membership numbers for the last two decades. In 2011, 218 or 21% of the members did not renew; however, this was partially offset by 90 new members. The net loss of members was 128 or 12.4%.

28, or 31%, of the new members were in non-US regions.

### End of year IWCS membership numbers and yearly change

Year	Number	Change
1991	1451	
1992	1440	-11
1993	1566	126
1994	1528	-38
1995	1535	7
1996	1771	236
1997	1792	21
1998	1807	15
1999	1578	-229
2000	1511	-67
2001	1350	-161
2002	1271	-79
2003	1231	-40
2004	1177	-54
2005	1152	-25
2006	1096	-56
2007	1109	13
2008	1088	-21
2009	1064	-24
2010	1036	-28
2011	908	-128