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THE GARDEN ROUTE WOOD TURNERS

*Helping Communities
to Help Themselves*

UPDATE ON THE LAUNCH OF
***TURNERS WITHOUT BORDERS (TWB) ,
WOMEN IN TURNING (WIT) and the
GARDEN ROUTE WOOD TURNING FESTIVAL***

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF WOODTURNERS



'Earning through Turning'

Dear Sedgefield Turners

Thank you for your positive response to the establishment of the first South African pilot project for **'Turners Without Borders'** (TWB) to be established in Smutsville township. We are also planning the launch of the **'Women In Turning'** (WIT) project and our own **Wood Turning Festival**. We are in the process of finalising all the arrangements with the American Association of Wood Turners (AAW) and the sponsors of equipment. This major initiative can only be made possible with your support.

Broad Base Concept



The aim of the South African TWB is to create a new craft industry, which incorporates the modern with the traditional. Creating hope and opportunity for people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

In parallel with the launch of the 2 projects we will hold our own **Wood Turning Festival** in May next year. The festival will include a 2-day workshop for experienced wood turners. It will focus on enhancements which is now becoming a dominant feature of wood turning. We will be honoured by the presence of Carmen De La Paz from the AAW, and our own John Wessels who are talented wood turners and have a lot to share with us on enhancements.

The Wood Turning Festival will focus on enhancements and will feature top experts Carmen De La Paz and our own John Wessels

Background

We are planning to launch this initiative in May 2016 and are exploring the use of facilities at the Saarsveld Campus in George.

The success of the proposed project is dependent on the support from the Sedgefield Wood Turners and the establishment of a unique non-governmental organisation freshStart which has established high credibility in the Smutsville area.

The fundamental premise upon which freshStart operates is uniquely aligned to the broad-based philosophy of the American Association of Woodturners programme 'Turners Without Borders'. The success of freshStart has been to create a sense of ownership amongst the schoolchildren, most of whom live in deprived conditions, for their own personal well-being. The majority of people are shack dwellers, do not own their land, have minimal services and their quality of life is often about day to day survival.

Sedgefield has no industry, and as a result employment possibilities are limited, especially for those without senior education. This creates a vicious circle and results in a collective feeling of hopeless-helplessness. Many become dependent on grants and hand outs, and which further lowers their self-esteem.

The programme is unashamedly driven through the creation of a new generation who is empowered to achieve their full potential. The main aim of freshStart Sedgefield is to empower people to make a fresh start in their life.

By virtue of the success of their initial foray into the community, the freshStart team has gained huge credibility with both the community and the local Knysna municipality. With the successful launch of their schoolchildren waste collection programme the freshStart team has directed their attention to the adult community within Smutsville. Their first project has been centered around the development of a craft centre in which people will be trained in various crafts with the specific objective of developing products and artefacts for sale into the retail market.

The establishment of the craft centre will have a significant impact on the unemployed adult population of the area. Initially the crafts project was to be focused on hand crafts, primarily in the area of clothing and other garment manufacturing.

However, as a result of discussions between Roy and Dee Marcus and freshStart, where the concept of Turners Without Borders was introduced, keen interest has been displayed in developing a core of people who would have the necessary skills to be able to produce artefacts through the use of wood turning techniques.

In honouring its commitment to partner with AAW, Roy and Dee believe that freshStart presents a unique springboard to launch the first Turners Without Borders programme in South Africa. Both the integrity and commitment of the freshStart team and their credibility in the community provide a low risk opportunity to introduce woodturning into deprived communities in South Africa. On this basis Circumference has committed itself to partner with freshStart.

Based on these initial discussions, a formal approach has been made to the Knysna Municipality to gain access to a small workshop which is located on the premises of the local community centre. Response to this approach has met with keen interest on the part of the local authority.

With the support of the AAW, it is proposed to launch both the Turners Without Borders project, and the South African Women in Turning programme in the Sedgefield area of the Western Cape. Amongst other drivers, the Women in Turning project will be designed to generate income to expand the TWB project to other regions in South Africa.

The concept was introduced to the small woodturning community in Sedgefield who have agreed to support the project. Several members have agreed to give up their time to assist the project.

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Best wishes for the festive season.

Roy and Dee Marcus

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