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**Victorian
chair rescue**



Good Woodworking

The No.1 magazine for aspiring designer makers

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David Savage with technique tips
and eight high end saws on test



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- Les Thorne visits Wizardry in Wood
- Phil Davy makes a log tote



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Welcome

If you need a world to escape into come Boxing Day look no further. The last edition of *Good Woodworking* for 2012 is a real plum duff packed with all manner of woody delights. As opposed to candied peel, nuts and raisins we have candid comment from furniture maestro David Savage (page 32) on a range of high-end dovetail saws. Moving on, readers will be hit by the heady whiff of fine leather as another top-notch maker, Mark Griffiths, continues his occasional series on working with allied trades (page 40). Iain Whittington makes a really fine job of restoring a balloon-backed Victorian chair to its former glory (page 64). Turn a page and be amazed by a little bit of first-class workmanship from another age. David Oldfield shares the secrets of making a pair of gunstock doors for a manor house (page 68). All this plus the usual top-notch collection of tips, hints, reviews and readers' letters and news of how to recognise the hideous ash dieback fungus that is threatening the future of our ash trees (page 12). Today is a somewhat sad one for me. This is my last edition as editor of *Good Woodworking*. I shall miss the old place but I am moving on to concentrate more time on my furniture-making degree, which has moved into its crucial major project year. Good Wood will sail on under the expert hand of Andrea Hargreaves so I wish her well.

Mark Gould, Editor



Mark Gould
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Andy King
Technical Editor



Dave Roberts
Consultant Editor



Phil Davy
Consultant Editor

We endeavour to ensure all techniques shown in Good Woodworking are safe, but take no responsibility for readers' actions. Take care when woodworking and always use guards, goggles, masks, hold-down devices and ear protection, and above all, plenty of common sense. Do remember to enjoy yourself, though.

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December 2012

Tools • Projects • Techniques • Advice



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David Savage and his students test eight top-of-the-range dovetail saws

Ahead of the curve

Liam Curran explores the fabulous world of furniture designer and architect Alvar Aalto

Balloons of glory

Iain Whittington endures agonies to save a Victorian balloon-backed chair

Projects

Leather leader

Mark Griffiths enlists the help of a traditional leather worker to make a fine desk

Centrefold

Chris Knipe uses reclaimed and recycled timber to make a distinctive kitchen table

Spin it to win it

Les Thorne turns a decorative candle holder for a prestige competition

Techniques

An angle on my shoulder

Dave Roberts puts it all down to Pythagoras

Fairy tale

No Sleeping Beauty he, Stephen Simmons restores an ancient spinning wheel

Woodworking school

Jeff Gorman on the old-school way to make a rebated corner joint

Victorian revival

A balloon-backed chair caused restorer Iain Whittington a headache or two

The shooting room

David Oldfield finds that gunstock shoulders fit a handsome pair of French windows

Tote-em Phil

Phil Davy makes a sturdy log tote

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Good Woodworking and receive a **FREE** BOSCH X-LINE accessory set

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People & places

Meet a skiver

Victor Curd is one of the UK's last skivers – that's a traditional leather worker

High art on a human scale

Liam Curran on the extraordinary life and work of Alvar Aalto

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Growth Rings

Letters/Maker's notes

Readers' ads

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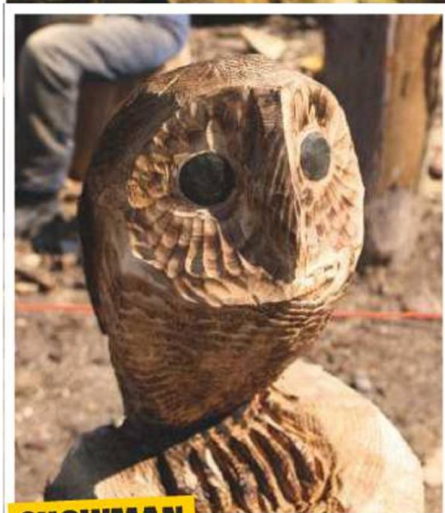
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Good Woodworking

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- Wet bath

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Clarke WHETSTONE SHARPENER

Produces accurate razor sharp cutting edges on chisels, scissors, tools etc

- 120w motor
- Grinding disc dims: 200mm dia x 40mm x 12mm bore
- Wet bath

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DERBY Derwent St, DE1 2ED	01332 290 931	MANCHESTER OPENHAW* Unit 5, Tower Mill, Ashton Old Rd	0161 223 8376	WIGAN* 2 Harrison Street, WIG 9AU	01942 323 785
DONCASTER Wheatley Hall Road	01302 245 999	MANSFIELD 169 Chesterfield Rd, South	01623 622160	WOLVERHAMPTON Parkfield Rd, Bilston	01902 494186
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Good Woodworking News

from the bench

Comment, insight, views and news of woodworkers from around the globe

Dinky Dremel does the double

The company says its new compact Moto-Saw is the only scroll saw on the market that can be used either as a bench-top product or as a hand-held fret saw. It is designed to make detailed cuts in a wide variety of materials up to 18mm for hobby, craft, woodworking and light DIY.

It can be used either in stationary mode, when the tool is docked in its base, or in hand-held mode as a coping saw. In its stationary cutting mode, the Moto-Saw can be used for



creative tasks, such as wood and metal decorations or decorative effects and model building. It can also cut window or doorframes and pieces of laminate. As a hand-held fret saw, it is perfect for cut-offs, model making and sawing through pieces of large crown moulding, for example. Dremel says the Moto-Saw is compact and easy to store; no wrenches or keys are needed to fix and tighten the accessories thanks to its keyless blade change; and it has an automatic blade tensioning mechanism. With three different blade types supplied, it can perform precise straight and curved cuts in different materials including soft wood, composite boards, laminate, acrylic, PVC and soft sheet metal.

Price £99.99. Available from www.amazon.co.uk and www.dremel-direct.com



Makita updates its multi-tool sets

Makita's best-selling six-piece LXT multi-tool set with 18V lithium-ion combi drill has been upgraded to include the latest versions of the individual tools. Makita says it has been able to maintain the same popular pricing strategy, so making the sets competitive and great value for money.

The DK18027 kit includes the new BHP458 combination drill with improved dust and damp protection and up to 88Nm of torque and increased percussion capacity, the BTD146 impact driver, the BSS610 165mm circular saw, the BJR181 reciprocating saw and the BGA452 115mm angle grinder. They also throw in a fluorescent torch, three 18V lithium-ion 3.0Ah batteries and the DC18RC fast charger for 22-minute recharge.

The DK18034 four-piece kit features the BHP458 combi, the BTD146 impact driver, the BSS611 165mm circular saw and the BML185 torch. Three BL1830 lithium-ion 18V batteries and the DC18RC fast charger for 22-minute recharge is included in this price-maintained kit, delivered with the padded carry bag.

The two-piece Makita DK18000 kit features the BHP458 combi drill and the BTD146 impact driver, two 18V Li-ion batteries and the DC18RC fast charger.

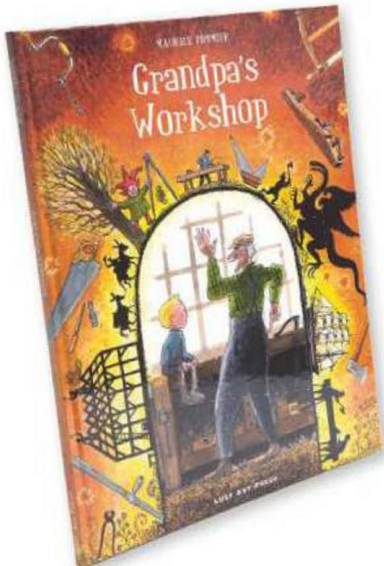
For prices and more details visit www.makita.uk.com



INCOMINGKIT

Tools tale is an ideal gift

Translated by Brian Anderson, an American born writer and woodworker, this is ostensibly a book for children, though the publishers say the stories, lessons and drawing style should appeal to anyone who has an appreciation for the natural and the fantastical. Author Maurice Pommier traces the lives of an unbroken line of craftsmen from a French family. The story unfolds through their tools and the stories of them being handed from one worker to the other. It is told through the



eyes of Sylvain, the youngest of the woodworkers in the family, as he spends his vacation in the shop of his grandfather, whom he calls Pèpère.

Sylvain wants to learn all about the hand tools in Pèpère's shop and the elves who hide amongst the shavings, benches and tool chests there.

As each tool's story is told, Sylvain learns a little more about his family and its connection to woodworkers all over the world, and this eventually leads to him being haunted by a sad family secret that is told to him by the woodshop's elves. *Grandpa's Workshop* is a magnificent tale filled with hundreds of beautiful illustrations but it is untouched by the modern tendency to sugar coat stories for children, and it is a little bit scary in parts – there is a tragic workplace accident, a war and even a family murder. Sounds ideal for a woody fan of any age.

£16.50 plus p&p

From Classic Hand Tools

01473 784 983

www.classichandtools.co.uk

Take the Microplunge

Micro Fence says its new Micro Plunge Base offers more portability and precision for jobs like installing hardware, architectural detailing, inlay work, picture frame building, luthier work, scale model building and precision repair requirements.

It is made to accept a range of high-speed rotary tools and pencil die grinders. When paired with a Dremel or Proxxon tool the company claims that it offers the ultimate in stability with the benefit of micrometer control (to .001in), for depth-of-cut adjustments.

It is compatible with the original Edge Guide/Circle Jig and all other Micro Fence accessories to offer precise control in the horizontal axis as well and weighs in at about 3lb with the Edge Guide attached. Optional accessories include lighting, dust collection, template guide bushing capability and adapters for various other motors. An



excellent variety of end mills as well as extended-shank bits are available on the Micro Fence website. The price in the UK is expected to be around £265.

For stockists visit www.microfence.com

Cue Bosch lights and music

The GLI PortaLED Professional from Bosch is a stackable storage system and a job site light in one. The floodlight integrated into the lid has 60 LEDs, which Bosch says are considerably more robust and shock-resistant than other light sources. The system can withstand a load weight of up to 100kg and weighs just 1.2kg less than a standard L-Boxx. With three brightness settings (30%, 70% and 100%) and four adjustable angles, it is designed to light up the work area on the job site precisely as required.

As with all L-Boxxes, the GLI PortaLED Professional can be stacked using a click system. It can be powered by either a 14.4 or 18V lithium-ion battery. Using a fully charged 18V 3.0 Ah battery and the highest brightness setting, the floodlight lasts for about three hours. The integrated LEDs have a lifetime of 50,000 hours. Prices range from £102 to £128 ex VAT.

To provide the words and music Bosch also offers the small and compact GML 10.8 V-LI Professional radio. It fits into half of the L-Boxx 102 (size 1) and external players can be connected via an aux-in port.

It offers 5W speakers, 20 volume settings and an equalizer function for bass and treble adjustment ensure optimum acoustics. The radio has the option to set five AM and FM presets. Additionally, it is possible to connect external devices such as MP3 players via an aux-in port. The controls on the front are dust-protected and easy to handle. The digital display shows the time, frequency and battery level.

Professional trades people can store another 10.8 volt tool, such as the GSR 10.8-2-LI cordless drill/driver in the other half of the L-Boxx 102.

The radio is powered by a 10.8V battery or can be connected to the mains (230/110 volts) using the adapter supplied.

On the middle volume setting and with a full battery, you can listen to the radio in cordless mode for around one working day.

A robust housing and the handles protect the display and controls against damage if the job-site radio should happen to fall. It remains fully functional when dropped from a height of one metre.

The GML 10.8 V-LI Professional jobsite radio is available from Bosch stockists now at the following recommended retail prices:

GML 10.8V-LI (2 x AAA batteries, AUX-In cable, DC/AC Adapter) £89.00 ex VAT, £107.00 inc VAT



Ash crisis: processed timber ‘not an infection risk’

Government action to stem the tide of infection still allows for the use of kiln and air-dried timbers

Government legislation introduced to stem the spread of *Chalara fraxinea*, the ash dieback fungus, still allows for the use of imported sawn timber or bark-free wood as it says these do not present an infection hazard.

The legislation also allows for the movement within Great Britain of all ash timber which it says presents a very low risk of infection.

The ban covers imports of ash plants, trees and seeds into Great Britain until further notice – because no pest-free areas are established. And it prohibits all movements of plant-passported ash plants, trees and seeds within Great Britain until further notice because at present there are no guaranteed pest-free areas in place.

Logs, woodchips and firewood, which pose a very low risk of disease transmission especially when they are kiln dried, can be imported from EU countries.

Full details, and information on spotting the fungus, are available from the Forestry Commission and while native ash growers and wholesalers are baring the brunt of the ban, other timber wholesalers feel a little left out of the information loop. Given the trauma associated with the Dutch elm tragedy of over 30 years ago which almost totally destroyed the UK elm population, David Mounstephen, the managing director of Yandles timber company in Martock, Somerset, said that

more information should have been disseminated.

He added that business had already suffered as a result of the fungus. “One big customer has already pulled out of an ash order.

“We have had no directions from government so we are using our own common sense. We are not accepting ash from any English suppliers. We are only buying American ash, which comes without any bark and it is kiln dried so it does not have any sap. We have got some old stock which has been air or kiln dried.

“As I understand it the fungus affects the bark and leaves so that is why there has been a ban on the movement of logs and on the import of baby ash trees from the continent. I don’t think there is a problem in good timber but as I say I have had no official information on this and that is bringing back some pretty unpleasant memories of the Dutch elm disease epidemic.”

Ben Wills, a green woodworker and pole lathe turner who works in London, said: “The prospect of losing our ash trees for me is a terrible one. I’ve worked with ash so much in my furniture making over the years that I feel an affinity with it that I don’t think I have for any other timber. It’s so versatile, easy to work, beautiful to look at, and plentiful; the idea of it becoming scarce, in the same way that elm is now, is unimaginable.”

Ben said there were one or two glimmers of hope. “Around 1-2% of ash trees in Denmark have shown resistance; that gives some hope that there will be enough disease-resistant trees here to keep the species from dying out altogether. Also, ash is a more prolific and successful tree than elm was, and has remarkable regenerative qualities, so I’ve read that it should be able to recover better than elm has.

“And on elm, as I understand it certain types of elm, particularly wych elm, are making a bit of a comeback in some parts of the country. True, they often get to a certain size and then succumb to Dutch elm disease, but they are at least growing, and that suggests that in time they will develop immunity to the parasite. I have the feeling that we will see a lot of our ash woodland lost in the coming years, and that will have an impact on our landscape. But I hope that because it is such a prolific tree, and looking at what’s happened with elm, we won’t lose it altogether. It just might not be as plentiful as it is now.”

Chalara fraxinea

Steve Scott, an area director with the Forestry Commission, has produced a video guide to recognising the fungus. He says to look out for brown and blackened leaves hanging on the stem looking as if they have been hit by frost.

He showed some saplings in an ash coppice where leaves were blackened and wilted and stems were beginning to discolour, going from normal olive green to purplish to brown.

Main trunks begin to develop distinctive diamond-shaped black-purple lesions through an infected leaf stem. Splitting the trunk revealed the fungal mycelia, the thread work of vessels that suck up nutrient, running up and down the xylem, the water-carrying cells of the tree. “This is how it kills the tree by effectively starving it of water,” he explained.

For more details see: www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara



An ash stem showing the characteristic diamond lesion



Infected leaves withering on a branch



Discolouring of ash caused by the fungus

University offers furniture graduates a business boost

Furniture conservation and restoration graduates from Buckinghamshire New University will be able to access furniture conservation work and private commissions through a new company set up by the University.

Called Bucks Conservation, the pioneering enterprise will channel commercial conservation and restoration projects to recent furniture, conservation, restoration and Decorative Arts graduates to help them make the transition from education to employment.

The University has undertaken furniture conservation work and private commissions for over 20 years, working with prestigious clients such as The Royal Collection, the V&A, National Trust and Lord Rothschild.

Private collectors and custodians from the heritage sector have supported the students by providing projects for them to work on. They have also provided locations for 'live projects' where the students work on site, undertaking live restoration and conservation projects as part of the degree course. Students work with historical and often priceless pieces, as well as more modern 20th-century items.

Now, under the guidance of the University's furniture conservation experts, graduates will gain valuable experience in a commercial environment, where they will be employed for 12 to 18 months developing their conservation skills and expertise as well as sharpening their business skills. Selection to join the new company will be by interview and a portfolio review.



Shelley Stannard, MA Furniture Conservation, Restoration and Decorative Arts graduate, pictured with the 1937-38 Isokon moulded birch plywood lounge chair, which she restored

Believed to be the first alumni business model of its kind in the UK, Dr Campbell Norman-Smith, course leader of the MA Furniture Conservation and Decorative Arts, says: "The launch of Bucks Conservation is a unique opportunity to support our most talented graduates and extend our expertise to a wider client base. We have developed an outstanding reputation over the years and often have an oversupply of commissions. This meets supply and demand and provides our

graduates with exceptional commercial experience which will give them an edge when looking for employment in the conservation and restoration professions."

Recent projects undertaken at Bucks include conservation of a George II console table from Wilton House, owned by the Earl of Pembroke, cleaning of a gilt frame surrounding a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds from the Courtauld Institute, and restoration of an original Panton Vitra chair.

If you go down to the woods...

Imogen the splendid Suffolk Punch plays her part in a project that is trying to protect and enhance an endangered ancient Irish woodland.

Horse logging is the traditional practice of removing felled timber from woodland using horses. This method is an alternative to using purpose-built machinery. It's easy on the eye and, in some cases, can be more environmentally sensitive. The technique was

demonstrated by Imogen with help of Noel and Stephen Donaghy of Total Tree Care. The Faughan Valley project in Derry aims to restore and enhance the area's diverse heritage. Sponsored by local councils, with Lottery cash and help from the Woodland Trust, the spotlight is currently on the natural landscape and the restoration of ancient woodlands

Michael Topping, the project officer,

explained: "Ancient semi-natural woodland – that's the small fragmented remnants of woodland that once covered most of the country – is a scarce resource. Most ancient semi-natural woodland was converted into farmland before 1830.

"However some areas were converted into commercial forest plantations during the 20th century and these are known as Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites."

According to the Woodland Trust, the gradual and careful restoration of ancient woods planted with non-native conifers is vital for unique communities of plants and animals that are currently clinging to life. The selective thinning of conifers provides light and room for any surviving broadleaf trees and also reduces the impact of heavy shading on the woodland floor.

Michael continued: "Our project offers comprehensive advice and funding to help landowners in the Faughan Valley restore those sites, as near as possible, to their former glory. And today we're actually demonstrating the removal of felled conifers, including Western Hemlock, using good old-fashioned horse-power."



Forest conservers take to horsepower

For those wanting to brush up on their skills or try something new, have a look at these courses taking place in the coming weeks.

December

10-11 Hand tools

Axminster Skill Centre,
Axminster Tool Centre
Axminster EX13 5PH
Tel: 0800 975 1905
Web: www.axminsterskillcentre.co.uk

14 Make a turned bowl

West Dean College,
West Dean,
nr Chichester,
West Sussex, PO18 0QZ
Tel: 01243 811301
Web: www.westdean.org.uk

January

4 Simple furniture for beginners

West Dean College,
West Dean,
nr Chichester,
West Sussex, PO18 0QZ
Tel: 01243 811301
Web: www.westdean.org.uk

6-7 Routing

Axminster Skill Centre,
Axminster Tool Centre
Axminster EX13 5PH
Tel: 0800 975 1905
Web: www.axminsterskillcentre.co.uk

16-17 Introduction to milling

Axminster Skill Centre,
Axminster Tool Centre
Axminster EX13 5PH
Tel: 0800 975 1905
Web: www.axminsterskillcentre.co.uk

24-25 Introduction to the small lathe

Axminster Skill Centre,
Axminster Tool Centre
Axminster EX13 5PH
Tel: 0800 975 1905
Web: www.axminsterskillcentre.co.uk

28 Furniture painting

West Dean College,
West Dean,
nr Chichester,
West Sussex, PO18 0QZ
Tel: 01243 811301
Web: www.westdean.org.uk

February

14-15 Woodcarving with Peter Berry

John Boddy's FWTS, Riverside Sawmills,
Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire YO51 9LJ
Tel: 01423 322370
Web: www.john-boddys-fwts.co.uk

23 Turning with Simon Whitehead

John Boddy's FWTS, Riverside Sawmills,
Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire YO51 9LJ
Tel: 01423 322370
Web: www.john-boddys-fwts.co.uk

Chris is the woodwork apprentice of the year

And he says being an apprentice is not all sweeping up and making brews for the veterans

Chris Lake, 18, an apprentice joiner from Devon has won the prestigious British Woodworking Federation (BWF) Apprentice of the Year Award 2012. Chris said he is really enjoying his apprenticeship as its full of hands on woodworking with very little sweeping up or making tea.

Chris's boss Graham Haydon, the managing director of GS Haydon & Son Ltd, said Chris was a winner from the very start.

"Chris showed promise from the beginning, even in the professional manner of his CV. Since he has started with us, Chris has shown an impressive work ethic, the right attitudes and aptitudes. Learning the basics fast, he has quickly moved onto more complex tasks and he is assisting other team members with their work.

"Chris put himself forward to work on some complex jobs here, and he has really done well. One of our clients praised him too, commending Chris's attitude and high standard of workmanship on a tricky stair restoration project. We have high hopes for this young man who will become a highly skilled joiner and a valued member of our team."

Dave Campbell, manager of the BWF Woodworking Industry Training Forum (WITForum), which provides services and support to joinery businesses looking to take on apprentices and promotes such opportunities to young people, said:

"For any young person looking for an exciting and practical way of learning new skills, earning good money and staying clear of student debt, look no further than woodworking and joinery manufacturing. BWF member firms are generally ahead of the game when it comes to investing in apprentices, and they open the door to people like Chris to enjoy a successful and rewarding career in joinery and to help us secure the future of this industry."

Chris received his prize at an award dinner at Lord's Cricket Ground Pavilion last month which was attended by UK joinery bigwigs and business leaders, Chris was presented with his award by Stuart Littlefair, Specialist



Manager from CITB-ConstructionSkills which sponsored the award. Chris also received a £150 cash prize from management consultants Lignum Associates.

Speaking after the ceremony Chris said: "I'm made up with this award! It was a huge surprise and it's great to get an award for doing something I really love doing. My uncle is a joiner and I always enjoyed doing some basic carpentry on the family farm as well as at school, so I started looking for joinery apprenticeships as soon as I left school.

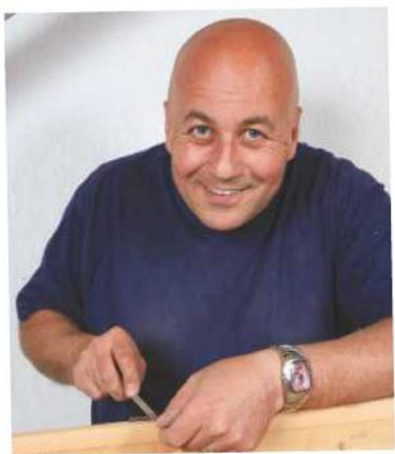
"I applied to loads of places and after two weeks' work experience at GS Haydon & Son, they offered me the opportunity I'd always wanted. It has been fantastic. I have received a lot of very good training, and now I get to do much more than I ever thought I'd be allowed to do in my apprenticeship – bench work, working with machinery like spindle moulders, panel saws and mortices, and not too much sweeping up! I enjoy it all."

The BWF WITForum and CITB-ConstructionSkills also gave recognition to the two runners up: Ross Spark of AA Taylor Ltd in Brighton, and Max DeCourcy of Parker & Highland Joinery Ltd in Lancing, West Sussex. Ross and Max were similarly nominated for the award by their employers for their hard work and dedication.

The Apprentice of the Year award honours and rewards the success of newcomers to the joinery industry. It acknowledges outstanding achievement, commitment, personal development and the added value that the apprentice gives to the host company.

Kit & Tools

New products, tools and tests



Busy couple of weeks just recently. I've managed to get a couple of shows in (see overleaf) alongside my usual work and it was well worth it as I came away with a few exclusive new products to review which will hopefully be winging my way and be ready for review in the next couple of issues. The W12 show was especially enlightening, and it looks like entry level CNC could be the next big thing – I'm hoping to get a look at exactly what makes them tick very soon...

Andy King

Andy King, Technical Editor
andy.king@myhobbystore.com



Bessey Multitool set

I spotted this at the D&M show and couldn't believe how cheap it was.

The plier function is replaced with a useful set of robust shears as well as the usual knife, file and screwdriver.

The torch is rubberised and has an LED cluster so is very bright and durable, while the knife has a locking function

and single-handed deployment.

With Christmas just around the corner this would be a perfect gift, but you'll need to get in quick as it's a limited offer, but well worth it. ★★★★★

Price: £9.20

Web: www.flinn-garlick-saws.co.uk

Prices

Our product prices reflect typical values as we go to press. We cannot guarantee these prices, though, and thoroughly recommend that you shop around.

Our awards



Awarded to an excellent performer that offers great value for money



Awarded to an item that stands out as a top performer in its field

How we rate...

★
★★
★★★
★★★★
★★★★★

Don't get your hopes up or your wallet out!
Well, it works but really needs improvement
Performs well, but you will find better
Great performance and value for money
So good, even Andy would get his wallet out!

It's showtime

Andy 'the showman' King kicks off his tour around the woodwork shows with a trip to Somerset for Yandles Autumn Show

For me, the woodworking show season starts with Yandles Autumn Show, and it's always worth a look as there are new demonstrators added every year.

After the unbelievably wet summer, I was certainly apprehensive though as the main parking is in a field, so the associated problems of getting back out were in the back of my mind!

It was actually a glorious day though, and with decent weather leading up to it, bone dry, so I could concentrate on having a good look around. As in recent times, the show has been jiggered around with exhibitors placed in different positions than before as well as new marquees here and there so you need to get a good look around to make sure you don't miss anything. I went round the show two or three times, and maybe not entirely for that reason, I was looking for Paul Hayden to grab a brew from

him, but he was nowhere to be seen – at least, as far as I could tell.

Green shoots

But there was a definite 'green' theme going on with some timber frame

construction in progress from Dorset-based Townsend Timber in the main barn.

Some excellent stuff was going on, and as they were alongside the Mafell stand, the specialist tools designed for such work were put to good use.

The portable chain mortiser was especially good to watch, leaving clean holes in the blink of an eye.

Moving on, and alongside the usual Woodmizer saw mill demo was another new demonstrator in Rachel Huggett.

She was working outside carving owls with chainsaws and Arbortechs and although I missed that particular part, the deft use of a blowtorch judging by the finish on a couple on show. That particular technique gives some very nice feather textures and adds a good depth to them, defining the features well.

TurboPlane

Talking of Arbortech, its inventor and company chairman Kevin Inkster was over from Australia demonstrating the latest invention, the TurboPlane.

Like the original Arbortech, it fits into a standard mini-grinder, but where the aggressive chainsaw design of the original leaves a rough textured surface, this new one has three knives, almost like a panel raiser for a spindle moulder.

It will flatten, dish and dome incredibly quickly, but leaving a very clean surface.

The edge of the TurboPlane rolls up around the cutters so it is very safe, only the bottom



Rachel Huggett in action





A Townsend timber man gets to work with the chisel...



...their portable chain mortiser was a joy to watch in action



Look at these beautiful Phil Edwards planes – with awesome Holtey iron



It's called a TurboPlane and that pretty well sums it up



The blades are enclosed, making the TurboPlane safe and really handy



Mister Edwards in action



The Power Chisel makes carving lettering or adding detail a doddle



Our very own Les Thorne was demo-ing his textured work

face engaging so you can use it against a guide batten or pattern to drop a recess, making it ideal for dishing a Windsor chair seat, with the definition of the cut being easily controlled by lifting the grinder once the profile is established.

A quick demo of the Arbotech Power Chisel showing how easily you can carve lettering, introduce detail into sculptures and such like and it convinced me I should be looking at both of these in the near future.

After a look at the usual tool stands for machinery and such like, I spotted Phil Edwards.

He's always at the show, but this time around he was actually demo-ing his own plane making skills. There were some very nice exhibits on view, but the little coffin smoother with dovetailed sole looked especially nice, and with the collaboration with Karl Holtey for the irons, they were all the more desirable.

Resisting the temptation to join the queue for the ice cream van, tucked back in a little alcove was our own Les Thorne demonstrating his textured work.

I managed a brief chat with him in between the shavings flying, and we talked of a visit to him so

he can see how my turning is coming along and to give me a few more pointers and lessons.

I'm always keen to add a string or two to my bow, so that's one that will be certainly be pencilled in the diary.

Contacts

www.townsendtimber.co.uk
www.rachelhuggett.co.uk
www.phillyplanes.co.uk
www.holteyplanes.com
www.noturningback.co.uk

The rise of the machines



Andy 'the Terminator' King is impressed with some very hi-tech heavy metal machinery at the W12 show

My bricklaying brother once said to me: "You can usually tell how bad recession is in the building trade by how many cranes you can see on the skyline." That's been a pretty good indicator in recent times, so driving up to the NEC in Birmingham and seeing a fair few cranes along the way I had a good feeling about the show.

I wasn't disappointed either. Alongside the huge industrial range of machines costing hundreds of thousands and built for mass production were plenty of smaller companies touting for business, with quality machinery for the smaller joinery shops. Axminster had a massive presence, showing their Industrial series ranging from the entry-level bandsaw to huge top-end Griggio computerised panel saws.

CNC machines

While being spoilt for choice with band



Watch out for a test of Mirka's new random orbit sander

saws, table saws, planers and the like from a raft of different suppliers, the show wasn't limited to the basic machines most of us are familiar with. Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines are becoming a more affordable part of the standard set up of smaller workshops, either as a specialist business in its own right, or to introduce a new range of design elements to the run of the mill standard work, and with a CNC capable of such diverse and intricate detail, it's certainly a great time to be a designer-maker. The smaller models have a reasonably unobtrusive footprint and there's likely to be good profit to be made if you explore the full potential. The



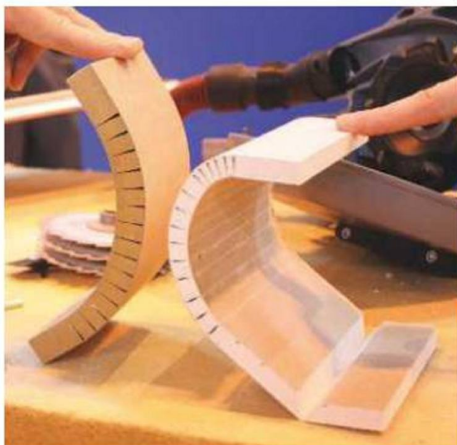
Poppers Senco – not for recreational use – they are nailguns



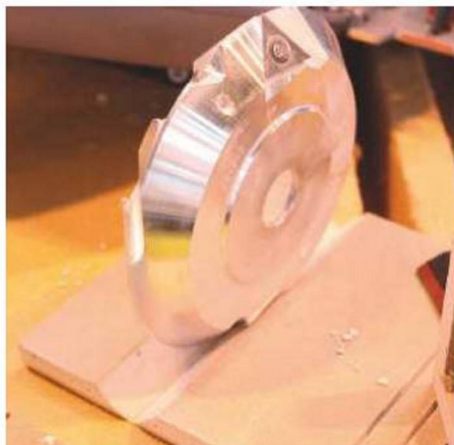
Andy's a big fan of Concept KTX screws



CMT's distinctive routers are back in the UK



Mafell's innovative plunge saw opens up a world of flexible possibilities...



...like cutting kerfs to make very bendy materials



This CNC machine is going to be building oligarch style yachts. Recession?

last time I attended this show it seemed to be that every man and his dog was promoting gas-powered nailguns as the original patent had expired.

This time round they were few and far between, but specialist nailgun company Poppers Senco had a prime spot in the show and the original and revolutionary Fusion gun has expanded with thinner-gauge nailers and pinners in straight and angled clip versions.

For the workshop a whole wall of air-driven guns and compressors was on display along with screwguns for drylining and decking applications, and there's new stuff in the pipeline that I'm keen to get a look at. Plenty of other finishing kit was on view, with big units for mass production, but Graco had a neat concept based on a standard spraygun that is on my list to look at, so watch this space...

Good screws

Of course, you can't spray without a fine finish to your work, and abrasives specialists Mirka had a neat demonstration of its random orbit sander on the go.

Very impressive stuff, so another one on the test list. While big machinery took up the majority of the show, it's not all about the heavy metal. Dispersed amongst it were the peripherals we all need, including fittings,

ironmongery and screws. It was good to see my own personal favourite fixings company Concept Distribution was there with its superb KTX screws, and these have now expanded to include stainless steel, ideal for marine and external applications.

Hard to miss was a big wall of orange router cutters from CMT. Speaking to the new distributors Tainer Distribution Ltd, it was evident I was not alone in thinking they had departed from these shores a couple of years back as I haven't seen them anywhere. But it's certainly good to see them back, and having been lucky enough to see how they are made at the Italian factory, I can certainly vouch for their quality.

A few hand-held power tool manufacturers were dotted around, and Festool and Mafell had some excellent new stuff on show.

Mafell marvel

I had a quick run-down of the new Festool jigsaw and it looks to have reinvented the wheel with some of the innovation it has built in, so that's yet another for the 'to do' list. Mafell rival Festool for quality and innovation but the adaptation of their plunge saw is awesome.

It ain't cheap, but when you see the potential, in the hands of a woodworker with a mind for design, it will pay for itself. I was asked

if I wanted an exclusive review once it's available, but do I take the UK distributor NMA agencies up on the offer? Oh go on then. So all in all, a great show for not only the industry, but also the trade user. I was certainly impressed by what I saw, and putting my brother's crane comment into context, as I was making for the exit I couldn't help but notice a massive CNC machine lifting sheet after sheet of blue laminated stock into position for cutting and milling. A piece of paper taped to the side of the safety barrier said simply 'Sold to Princess Boats'. That indicates there's certainly money out there, even if it's only the likes of people who can afford luxury flybridge cruisers who have it to spend. At least it's allowing these bigger machines to still be sold, if only for keeping the luxury boat industry buoyant.

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Kempton Park
racecourse was
the venue for one
of **Andy's** favourite
power and hand
tool shows

My second show in a week and this one is always a favourite.

There was a bit of a change around to previous shows with DeWalt having the big marquee outside the main building.

New stablemates Stanley had their own area where I spotted a new set of wooden-handled chisels alongside the recently launched socket style ones I looked at in GW248. They appear decent enough, so I've pencilled them in for a whizz on the test bench.

New technology

DeWalt has been pushing on with its new Li-ion battery technology, and the 4.0Ah option will

undoubtedly give rise to some new innovation next year, so I'm keen to keep up to speed on that front. In the meantime, the new brushless motor impact driver certainly looks the business. Another to test I think. The dinky little 10.8V torch with a swivel head, integral stand and magnetic bracket caught my eye as well – a handy addition to the kit if you are a DeWalt fan.

Moving inside, Makita had a big presence, and seems to be continuing the limited edition white tools throughout the range with a planer and jigsaw on view amongst the more familiar turquoise. The battery range is certainly expanding with a multitool on show, and



Look out for a test of Stanley's new range of wooden-handled chisels soon



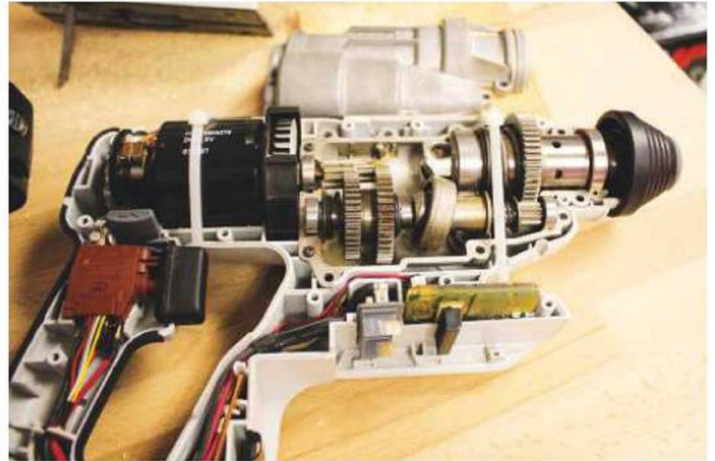
DeWalt had a big presence at the show...



...and Andy loved the little swivel headed 10.8V torch



Turquoise delight. Makita had a new multi-tool on show



So this is what goes on inside a power drill



Bosch unveiled two new sanders...



...and has modified the dual-base router

currently in my own workshop, a rather excellent random orbit sander.

Innards exposed

Panasonic had a big following a few years back and its drills were top class but seemed to disappear off the radar in recent times so it was good to see that they are back, and with some cracking kit including a new one on me, a drill that will take both its 14.4V and 18V batteries. Sounds impressive, so I'm keen to check it out. In the meantime, if you ever wondered what goes on under the bonnet of a good power tool, the drill on display with the innards exposed certainly gave a good idea of Panasonic's build quality.

Bosch was pushing its latest range of kit, with two new sanders in $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ sheet format evident. The dual-base router has had an upgrade as well with an improved base configuration. The plunge saw is well worth considering too and one more to add to the ever expanding review list.

Hand tools

Irwin had a new set of chisels ideally suited for the on-site chippy who wants something he can give a good clout with a hammer.

These have handles of the same profile as the ever popular Splitproofs but with a tang that runs right through the handle along with a

metal striking cap. King of the clamps Bessey had a nifty little set of expansion blocks for fitting laminate flooring that I'm keen to check out, but with Christmas around the corner it was a no brainer that the three-piece set comprising a torch, multitool and knife would be a shoe-in for this month's Gadget (see page 13). Festool had a demo marque and the guys were keen to give me the lowdown on the planer with interchangeable cutter blocks. It's a neat idea, with cambered and scalloped blocks for doing distressed and other styles of finish. The standard block is also worth a mention as it has the blade at an angle so the cut is made on a shear for a cleaner,

premium finish. All in all, another show well worth the visit, and it's certainly one of the best on the circuit for hand and power tool enthusiasts, plus it's free to park and get in!

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Irwin's new chisels look like they can take a hammering



Festool's new planer has cambered and scalloped blocks for distressed finishes



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From the left: O1 steel, A2 Steel and PM-V11 steel, all with identical grind bevels

Veritas PM-V11 Blade

Are Veritas' new powder metal blades all they are cracked up to be? **Andy King** risks the wrath of Lee Valley by letting them loose on some, whisper it, MDF



▲ My initial testing was on 19mm MDF, cutting 50m running total

Well, having mentioned the new Veritas 'powder metal' in *GW256*, this blade turned up out of the blue direct from Canada a while back with the caveat that it was embargoed and not to be discussed publicly until approved by Lee Valley. So taking that on board, it's given me time to check out the claims made that the new steel is slightly easier to sharpen than A2 but with an edge retention way beyond it. Sounds good to me.

Scarcely sharp

But such claims immediately had me thinking 'OK, I need something that will wear an edge quickly to check the claims.' Time to break out the MDF...

It's certainly a very abrasive material and will dull an edge much quicker than standard timber planing. Having an equivalent blade in A2 as well as the slightly softer O1, I had three options to check the claims as well, but despite the fact that the new blade came in a pack

saying it was ready to go, trying to remove a few hairs from my arm did little but scratch an itch! So first stop, my not very hi-tech sharpening regime: the ever faithful Trend diamond stone followed up with a rub over on a piece of oak charged with green honing compound to hone and polish it, (aka Scarcely Sharp), doing the same for all three blades.

As I have one of those digital computer microscopes I thought I'd do a few 'before and after' shots as well just to see if there was a marked difference in the durability and damage to the edge.

MDF alert

Shortly after putting the blades through the torture of planing MDF I received an email saying the website dedicated to the new PM-V11 steel was now live. www.pm-v11.com/

A look at that showed loads of different information, magnified pictures of different edges during and after planing, scientific approaches to honing, testing and so forth,

and lo and behold, they had used MDF as a test medium!

They also included this as a footnote: "The material we cut was MDF, chosen for its uniform consistency and abrasive quality. (Note: we don't recommend you plane MDF with your Veritas® planes, even with a PM-V11 blade. Please don't. Trust us.)"

No real reason as to why, but looking at their own findings, the abrasive quality does wear even this new steel quite dramatically, so it may be a long-term damage thing.

Even so, MDF has established itself as a valid building material and is seemingly here to stay so it's going to need planing at some stage, so I'll have to risk it.

Testing

But what of my own findings? Well, I first used the O1 blade, with my test stock a 500mm long piece of 19mm thick MDF, taking 100 passes or 50m as a running length.

Getting to 50m I definitely noticed the cut was harder to make, needing more force on my part, although the way MDF planes with a lot of dust rather than full shavings, the waste being removed remained constant.

Switching to the A2, I did exactly the same, and although nothing overly scientific about the blade projection, I set it to what was as close as possible to the O1, a pretty coarse cut checked with a digital calliper by taking a few initial passes on a piece of pine.

The A2 pushed beyond the O1 quite readily. The effort needed seemed more constant but did need a bit more towards the end, but not as much as the O1, so on to the new powdered metal version.

Again, the cut was pretty constant throughout, but remained a clean and easy cut throughout the MDF test, with no extra effort at the end so the durability certainly seems to ring true.

I had thought of going back to the microscope to check the edge, but instead, moved on to end grain on oak.

Target met

As the PM blade was still in the plane, I continued with that, taking proper, well structured shavings with ease, almost as a freshly honed blade would do.

Fifty passes was the target, and achieved.

The A2 stood up well and still took shavings so it's still a valid steel in its own right, but I could feel it was taking more effort to push the plane, with a need for increased downwards pressure to keep the cut engaged.

On to the O1, and I was actually quite surprised when it took shavings as well, but extra push was definitely the order of the day, and it was really a struggle to get it to cut beyond a few strokes without it juddering.

The PM-V11 certainly seems durable over the others, but with a long stint on all three on MDF and then shifting to oak, feeling like one of those TV Chefs selling knives with an everlasting



▲ MDF produces lots of fine dust rather than shavings



▲ Next stage was the end grain oak, with clean shavings still being cut



▲ Some of the aftermath of basic testing



▲ The PM-V11 still had enough edge left to take shavings on oak



▲ And also on pine, although there was definitely a need for more effort to push the plane



▲ The Andy King 'Scarcely Sharp' honing set up comprises a Trend diamond stone, some Veritas green honing compound and a piece of flat oak

edge that will cut shoes in half, cut into steel and rocks and still slice a tomato, I gave it a final quick push on long-grain oak and pine.

Honing claims

It was still taking decent shavings from these even after all the work it had done, but I decided to re-hone the PM-V11 to see just how much difference there was from where it stood after the testing.

It also gave me chance to check the claim of 'easier than A2 steel to hone' as it had been pushed hard.

As I use a diamond stone as my choice, there's always a fast and clean bite, but A2 (and some A2s more than others for some reason) often feels too hard and 'skatey', as if it's being worked on a clogged stone.

However, the Veritas A2 as well as this new powdered metal both feel that bit easier, so maybe it is trickier to define that particular claim as I could raise wire edges on both very quickly without losing the 'bite'.

I'm all for ease of use though, and I had the PM-V11 honed, stropped and up and running again inside a couple of minutes, so I'm happy with that.

A quick check on the oak end grain with a fresh hone and it was easy to see that the new steel, while holding up incredibly well on such unforgiving material as MDF does dull, but not as quickly or as readily as O1 or indeed A2, and that's going to be the selling point in all of this.

If you want to get maximum work from each edge rather than a touch up here or there during the course of the day, then it's a definite consideration, but Lee Valley itself is happy to point out that it's not a replacement for anyone using O1 or A2.

Canny marketing

It says its simply an additional option, and you have to admire the company for that. It never does a hard sell but gives you plenty to drool over and lust after, but it is also canny enough to see that not everyone wants or needs the ultimate, but can offer the option if you feel you do so.

I've had the iron in a plane for over a month now, and where I tend to give any iron a little touch up prior to use no matter what, I'm getting used to the fact that this does retain an edge very well indeed. The talk of chipping and crumbling of some A2 steel when it's ground and honed at angles of around 25-30° has long haunted that particular steel composition, but from what I've seen so far, the new PM-V11 seems to match all the maker's claims. It's not cheap though, so you have to decide one way or the other whether it ticks all the boxes for you before you go for it. I'd be inclined to say that if you work timbers that do tend to dull an edge quickly it could prove its worth in a short space of time.

For the rest of us, it's a matter of honing a bit more frequently, but that's no bad thing as long as the steel is good.

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It's that time of year again when our island's location, fifty-something degrees north of the Equator and on the receiving end of the procession of Atlantic lows, makes itself felt in the all-too-often overcast skies that strain the life out of the shortening daylight, and require a turning up of the wicks in the workshop. Before you put another Anglepoise on the end of your bench, though...

Dave Roberts, Consultant Editor

Light & shadow

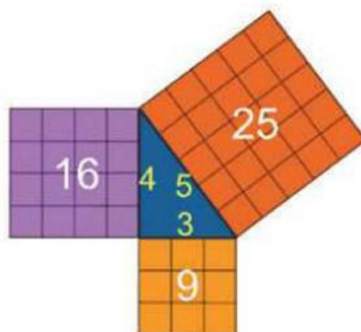
... Give some thought to increasing the level of indirect lighting in your workshop – the sort that's bounced off ceilings and walls to provide a diffuse and largely shadowless light. If you can make this bright enough to provide the illumination and contrast necessary to read a steel rule accurately, say, you'll probably find this a more comfortable solution than using multiple-point sources, which create localised patches of bright light and hard reflections that require your eyes to constantly readjust as you move around the workshop – readjustment that contributes to eyestrain and fatigue, blunting both pleasure and productivity.

The theatricality of approaching winter may also have been responsible for my latest flight of fancy regarding a door that I need to make. I've conceived a fancy, you see, for disguising it as a bookcase, complete with *faux* books and a hidden catch. It's a bit *Famous Five*, I know, but that's the fun of doodling isn't it? – you can indulge even the most frivolous of ideas for free. Anyway, one of the questions arising was how deep could I make the 'bookcase' before it began to catch on the door frame as it opened? The answer turned, quite literally, around that indispensable back-of-envelope tool, Pythagoras' theorem, $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$. Because the width and depth of the door form the opposite and adjacent sides of a right-angle triangle (A and B), the sum of the squares on these two sides equals the square on the hypotenuse (C). The square root of this sum, then, gave me the length of the diagonal – the maximum width of the door as it swings open – allowing me to determine how much clearance must be allowed between door and frame to permit free movement.

What's surprising is just how little clearance is needed. If the door was made 40mm deep

(enough to achieve the bookcase effect with the help of some wood stain 'shadows' beneath the shelves to deceive the eye) and 736mm wide, then its proportions would be such that the diagonal would be a touch over 737mm. This means that it could be made to open freely with modest and not unsightly clearances; but for the fact that it'd intrude on the room too much, the door could actually be made twice as deep for a diagonal width of only 740mm.

While my Uncle Quentin study door is presently no more than a hasty sketch, I have finished the small cupboard and drawer described last month (Make do & Mend GW260), prompting a couple of retrospective comments. The first concerns my plan to use a



pair of small ball catches as drawer stops to prevent the drawer accidentally being pulled out too far, but which would still allow it to be easily removed and refitted when required. In the event, I let the catches' brass strikers into the top edge of the drawer back to protect it from the pressure of the ball bearings, and the whole set-up works very neatly. Less well thought-out, however, was my intention to add kickers to the drawer unit's cross rails. This was a little over zealous as the rails themselves, which are flush with the face frame, do a perfectly good job of keeping the drawer level as it slides back and to. What they don't do, of course, is keep the drawer straight, and for this I relied upon the beech-faced runners. However, even although these are a close sliding fit in the drawer's rebated sides, the drawer is so wide that even a small amount of play at one end creates movement at the other, allowing the drawer to twist fractionally. Luckily, the degree of twist is so small that the racking isn't enough to spoil the smoothness of the drawer's movement; instead, as Pythagoras might've said, it encourages you to pull both drawer knobs at the right angle.

In a spin

Stephen Simmons gives the niddy-nod on the restoration of spinning wheels

Two skills are essential when restoring spinning wheels: practical woodturning and linguistic knowledge. A high proportion of spinning wheel parts are turned and for the beginner the vocabulary of spinning is arcane to the point of being impenetrable. The distaff may be recognisable but maidens, the mother-of-all, the footman and the flyer are not the people that first spring to mind. I've forgotten what the niddy-noddy is but, believe me, it does exist.

The spinning wheel dates from the early 14th century and by the 18th century was an essential part of the furniture – and economy – of most British rural households (pic.1). Some aspects had become relatively sophisticated but the basic design was essentially unchanged. For example, the footman – the lath that drives the wheel – was still connected to the treadle by a simple piece of leather rather than a more complicated hinge. The 18th century saw some gentrification as spinning became a fashionable pursuit for upper-class women, like painting papier mâché trays in the 19th. The design of these fashionable wheels diverged from their work-a-day counterparts: they became much taller with tapering legs. Elegant they may have been, robust they were not, but as they were designed more for show than serious output they could afford to be relatively flimsy.

Wheel decoration

The timber used, the amount of decoration and the wheel itself also differed. Everyday models were made from local hardwoods, usually oak and beech for the structural parts with yew and box for screw threads and other parts that were subject to stress or high mechanical wear. Any decoration came in the turnery. The fashionable versions were in more expensive, exotic woods: either mahogany or, later in the 18th century, satinwood and with much more decoration. Inlaid shell motifs and chequer stringing were popular on the mahogany ones and the satinwood model here – from Tissington Hall in Derbyshire – has a painted spindle gallery (Pic.2).

The wheel of everyday models was made in sections from the same local hardwoods but on the fashionable ones cast metal was much more common; the rim of the Tissington one is

► Pic.1 The basic design of the spinning wheel hasn't changed much since medieval times...



▲ Pic.2 ...but the 18th century saw some gentrification...

in lead and, with the satinwood spokes, is perfectly balanced (Pic.3).

It is impossible to cover all potential restoration problems in a short space but most are mechanical with very logical solutions that need little explanation. There are, however, some general points that you should find useful.

Woodworm infestation

The most common problem, except for mahogany wheels, is woodworm infestation. Beech and satinwood are particularly susceptible and it was the major problem with the Tissington wheel: three of the four feet and much of the balustrade were affected.

Replacement was the only option for badly weakened load- or stress-bearing parts and for the whole of the top rail of the balustrade that disintegrated to the touch, but other parts, including most of the balusters, could be saved by stabilising if not strengthening them.

The original turning was so fine and delicate – down to a diameter of 4mm – that replacements had to be exact copies: a millimetre's variation would make things either too clumsy or too fragile. It's the sort of work that makes turning pens seem cumbersome and is best left to the expert. I'm no turner so I farmed it out to an enthusiastic and extremely accurate copyist.



▲ Pic.3 ...in terms of design, materials and decoration

It's worth emphasising that there's nothing wrong in getting other people to contribute to any restoration project if you're not up to any aspect – it's much better than ending up with a second-rate job. Should you do so, you must be clear about what standard you want and ensure that all the work is up to scratch. After all, you are still responsible for the finished article.

Strengthening technique

Effective copying demands that the turner has an original to hand. Where parts could be easily detached or were so badly affected that they had dropped off, like the foot (Pic.4), this was not a problem. The difficulty arose with the disintegrating baluster rail. This was too far gone to remove a section for copying – it had to be strengthened to dismantle enough in one piece.

The technique is to inject a dilute mixture of resin glue – Cascamite in this case – with a needle and syringe and let it cure for 24 hours. This job needs a steady hand and light touch but it can be done. The first section I tried collapsed halfway through but there was still enough rail left for another few goes and it worked at the second.

The same technique was used for stabilising the affected balusters that were going to stay, but with one difference. The glue was tinted the appropriate colour with earth pigment, but a water-soluble concentrated stain can be used instead.

Screw thread replica

The trickiest challenge you may face is to replicate the thread on the belt-tightening



▲ Pic.4 Woodworm infestation is a common problem...



▲ Pic.5 ...and for load-bearing parts replacement is the only solution

screw. It wears too loose or rots... either way it has to be replaced. If you haven't got a thread-cutting box of the right diameter and pitch you'll have to resort to shaping by hand. The pitch can be taken from any remnants of the original or by careful measuring inside the retaining hole in the bed... the equivalent of the nut.

After marking out the spiral on a piece of hardwood turned to the maximum diameter of that hole, you can now begin to carve the thread with a tool appropriate to its profile, either V-shaped or square. Do a little at a time and keep testing it in the nut. It is trial and error so work gently and be patient. A tight fit is your objective – slackness will prevent the screw from working effectively. Any serious binding will create shiny high spots that can be eased away by blade or file.

Blending repairs

The most realistic way of blending in the new light satinwood on the Tissington wheel was not to stain the wood direct but to give it a coat of garnet shellac polish after having raised the grain. This technique gives a credible time-darkened appearance – and has the benefit of being completely reversible with a wipe or two of meths if it's not right.

TIP

Before starting any work familiarise yourself with how all the parts relate to each other and how the wheel actually works. It makes things so much more interesting than a purely technical exercise and you'll probably make a better job of it.

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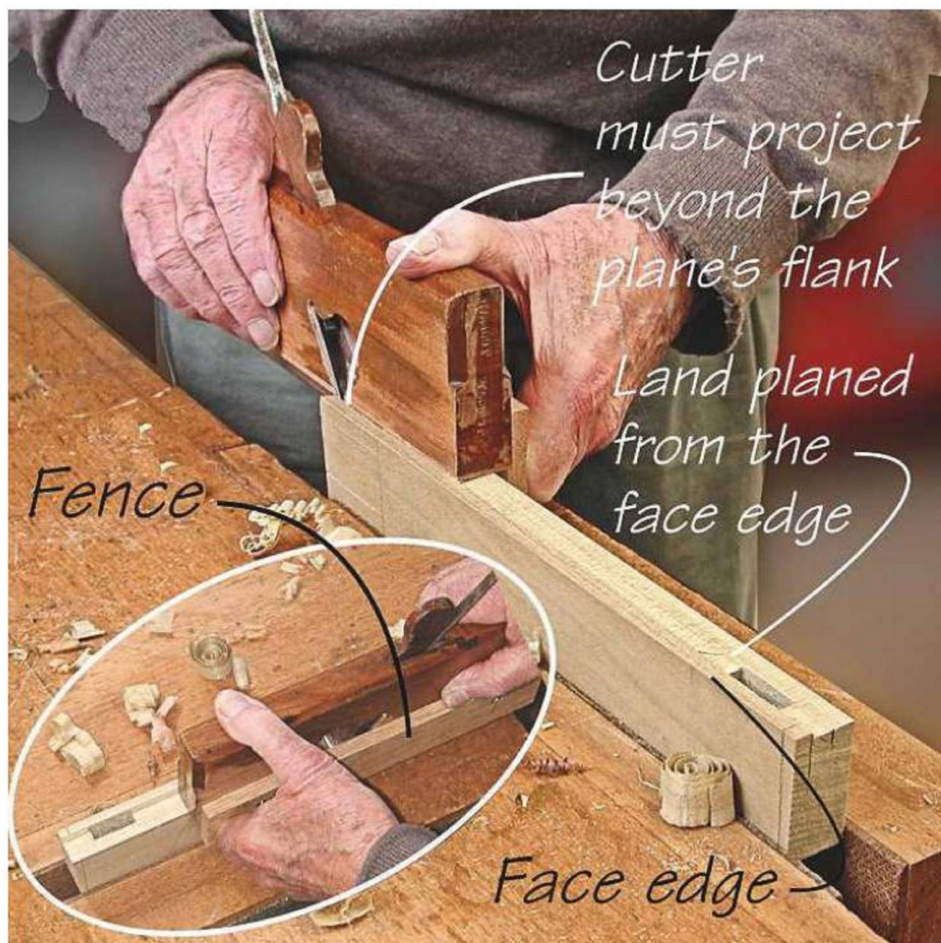
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▲ Pic.1 For convenience Jeff worked on one long piece

Shoulders back!

Jeff Gorman recalls how he was taught to make a rebated corner joint

The Millbank Scheme, a 1930s' woodwork course, included a corner joint of a frame whose inner edges are rebated to form recesses for holding a mirror. Because rebates have to be planed the entire length of the edges, the tenons require offset shoulders known as long and short shoulders (Pic.2). Please note that the short shoulder fits against the carefully prepared face edge but the long shoulder has to abut against the rebate land planed from two-thirds of the width of this edge (Pic.1).

As I've been teasing out technical detail from the exercise, I left you at the stage where I'd chopped the mortise and sawn the tenon cheeks (cuts 1 & 2 in Pic.3) of the rebated haunched mortise and tenon exercise (Pic.2),

saying that I had to put the job aside and make a fence for a wooden rebate plane. If you should ask why I hadn't yet sawn the shoulders, I'd explain that this would have reduced the length of the surface available for guiding the fence of the rebate plane (Pic.1, inset).

Some years ago I arrived rather late at the sale of an ex-tradesman's tools and found almost everything had gone but a large tool chest whose bottom contained various bits and pieces that no-one had considered worth buying. To the relief of the organiser I bought the entire chest and incidentally acquired this plane.

Plane know-how

It is important to know that – like a shoulder plane – the side of a rebate plane's cutter must project very slightly beyond the plane's flank

TIP

When closing a trial joint, avoid a blood blister by keeping fingertips away from the gap between a shoulder and a rail!

Lubricate the fence and sole with a rub of a candle end.

(Pics.1 & 4), otherwise the plane will drift sideways with each stroke and produce a stepped or 'terraced' listel (Pic.6). While it would be tempting to achieve this by a hammer tap or two, such a lateral adjustment is likely to send the cutting edge off-square, so to cut an even-thickness shaving, the blade must be sharpened with its edge dead square to the axis of the blade (GW232).

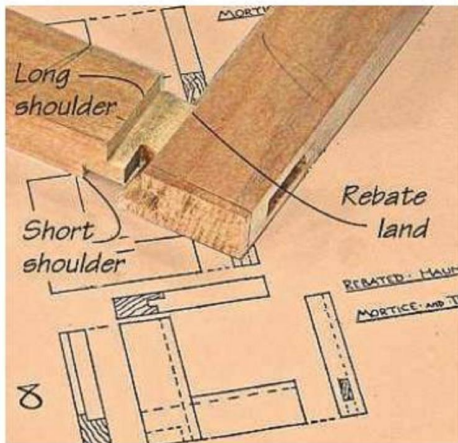
As I was setting the plane I began to guess that this item had probably been ignored for good reasons. It turned out to be one of those wooden planes that can be set only in the binary condition of too coarse or zero. Although I tried to improve this by smoothing the worst of the unevenness of the hand-forged back of the blade and – as far as my limited kit allowed – by truing the accessible parts of the frog, I fear that actual use showed that the effort had been wasted and I had to settle for using a coarser set than I really wanted.

Fencing

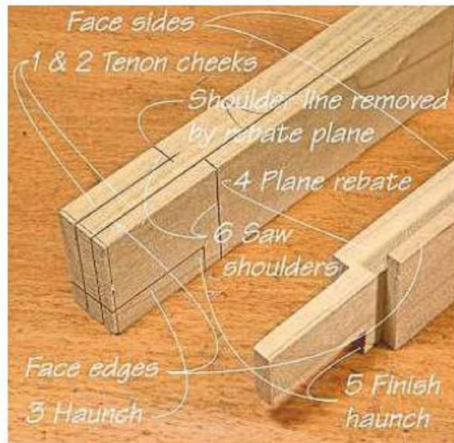
Since this was just a nondescript plane I did not feel it sacrilegious to make the fence from whatever wood was suitable. Tolerating the amused scorn of someone who fondly calls me a wood miser, I keep a few plastic ice-cream tubs stacked with likely-to-be-useful offcuts from various jobs. Since they are stacked vertically, I had no difficulty in finding a 230 x 20 x 12mm strip of dark wood – possibly bog-wood of some kind – that formed a runner for the fence and a small 225 x 40 x 9mm piece of American oak for its support (Pics.3 & 4).

Once I'd glued the runner onto the support and screwed the assembly to the plane, I needed to determine how far the fence should overlap the sole, bearing in mind an allowance for the lateral offset. During the marking out routine (Pic.3), I'd already set a marking gauge to the rebate's width so after slightly reducing this setting by a judicious tapping of the tip of the gauge's stem on the bench top, I pecked a short line on the plane's sole. Firmly holding the job against the plane's flank, I used the point of my marking knife (Pic.5) to make a corresponding peck on the end of the fence-to-be and then used this peck to set another marking gauge for gauging a line that established the runner's final thickness.

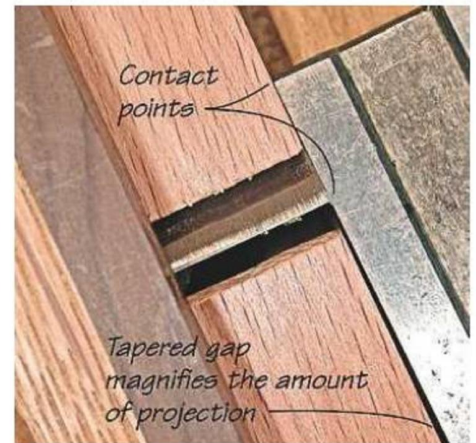
I ought to confess regret that actual use proved that I hadn't got the offset right (Pic.6). Maybe – as the other photos suggest – the plane's flank wasn't as flat as it might have been. Also, the blade was cutting more coarsely than I really wanted. However, I wasn't too cross about the situation because I needed a photo to illustrate the terracing, and



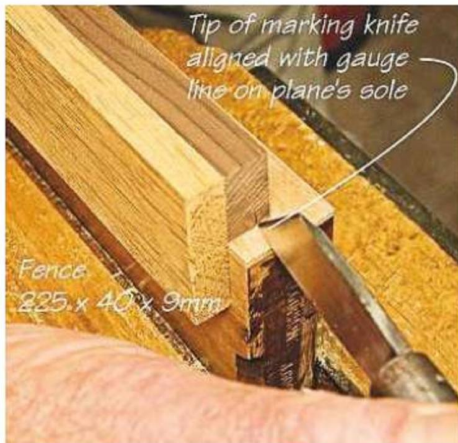
▲ Pic.2 The long and short shoulder rebated joint used for mirror frames



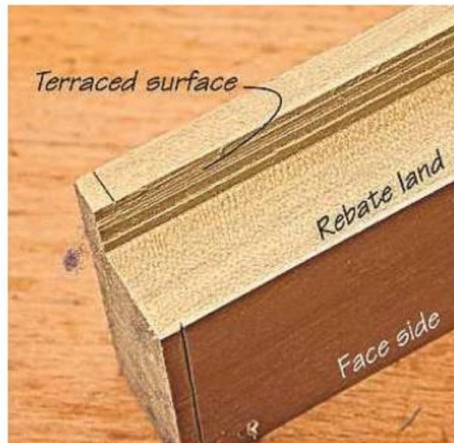
▲ Pic.3 Illustrating the strategy Jeff followed in working the exercise



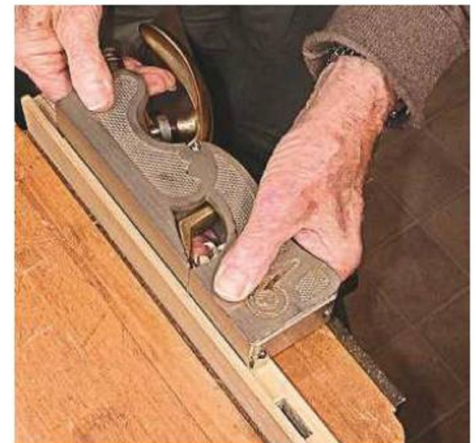
▲ Pic.4 Using an engineer's straightedge to indicate that the cutter projects slightly sideways



▲ Pic.5 A safe and sure way of avoiding measurement error when locating the fence's face



▲ Pic.6 The consequence of the plane's lateral drift...



▲ Pic.7 ... is corrected with the shoulder plane



▲ Pic.8 Restoring the cut line removed by the rebate plane



▲ Pic.9 Testing to ensure that the long shoulder squarely abuts the rebate's land



▲ Pic.10 The mortise sides serve to register the saw as it prepares the groove sides

demonstrate the use of a metal shoulder plane to rectify the error (Pic.7).

Completing tenon

The next stage offered the satisfaction of sawing the shoulder and haunch lines to complete the tenon (Pic.3), but this had to endure a short delay while I used the

adjustable square to restore the cut line removed by the rebate plane (Pic.8).

You will note that to avoid working inconveniently short workpieces I've worked the exercise as a single length, but once I'd sawn the two halves apart I had the satisfaction of seeing the parts snick together with just firm hand pressure.

Jargon buster

- Listel** – an architectural term for a narrow band between two mouldings
- Land** – the wide surface of a rebate adjacent to the listel
- Frog** – the sloping surface that supports a plane's blade



Rah-rah rhythm

David Savage takes a critical look at some small cross-cut saws and shares his own three-step technique for cutting perfect small joints, but you'll have to keep an ear out for the correct sound

I watched in amazement as Ken Bulmer took a shiny saw to a piece of mahogany and cut it into two long separate pieces.

He did it with a perfectly straight cut. He did it effortlessly, almost unconsciously, with the skill of a man who had been handling tools all his life. That was my girlfriend's dad nearly 50 years ago. He did something that evening that made me become a woodworker and was to form my whole life.

We don't use saws so much now in small workshop practice; the table saw and the band saw are just easier and better. I have a lovely old Disston panel saw that hangs off a hook in my bench room gathering dust, and even that has been bettered by many of the modern throwaway hard-point saws. But there are areas of saws and sawing that we still have to know about and get right. There is still no way that the modern furniture maker can cut small joints without knowing how to use a saw.

So we gathered together a group of new dovetail saws from several manufacturers all over the world and put them in the hands of my students. They were asked to compare and tell me about their experiences. I would then try out all the saws and tell you about it.

My aim is to tell you about how to use one of the saws and how to make it your own. Funny phrase that, make it your own, but somebody once told me: "You don't own a saw until you know how to sharpen it and use it."

Teeth and tpi

These are small rip saws that are generally only used in dry hardwood. The resin from soft wood clogs the tiny teeth of these small and delicate saws so they tend not to be used so

at right angles (see diagram).

Tpi means teeth per inch. My own saw, made by Roberts and Lee, has a tpi of 22. Many modern saws have a tpi of 15 or even less. Some are now offering progressive pitch, meaning the toe of the saw has some fine teeth, maybe 22 or 25tpi, to help you get the job started, leading into a more coarse saw behind to cut fast down the line.

I suffer from having a very fine tooth line on my saw which means that it is great used on tiny components. But for general carcass sawing I would really benefit from a second saw, perhaps a half tenon, with a slightly longer blade and set up with a wider kerf.

Question of kerf

What is kerf? It's the width of the saw cut that you are making in the timber. Usually this is controlled by the set of the tooth line, one bent left, the next bent right. The effect of this is that you will saw a kerf wider than the plate of the saw, so preventing the saw binding in the timber. We need a bit of slack but not too much. A new saw can be refined by taking a small fine slip stone and stoning off just a very little of the set on each side. However, we want to remove less material from the job. We want



David's student Dale Jones rah-rah's with some of the best dovetail saws around

much for this material. The rip pattern of the tooth line is also more easy to sharpen being filed straight across at right angles to the plate of the saw. This is important as sharpening a small saw must be easy and regular.

Matthew Platt at Workshop Heaven reminded me that cross-cut saws cut more smoothly. He is right; a look at my own dovetail saw revealed that over the years I have changed the rake of the tooth line from rip to the laid-back pattern of cross-cut but still filing

to have a finer kerf in order to have more control of the cut. We don't want to lose all the set, or the saw will bind, giving less directional control so it is a delicate balance to strike. This is best done over a period of time, having used the saw and got the hang of what's going on – part of the process of acquiring ownership I guess.

When one of our students gets a new saw we often suggest that a member of staff tries it out first. New saws don't always saw straight

Kit & Tools Special



David feels it's not acceptable for makers to offer saws with gaps like this...



...between blade and handle



The brass back of the saw imparts stiffness and weight



Lightly does it, a tight grip adds weight to the handle...



...and extend your forefinger, called the guide finger down the length of the handle



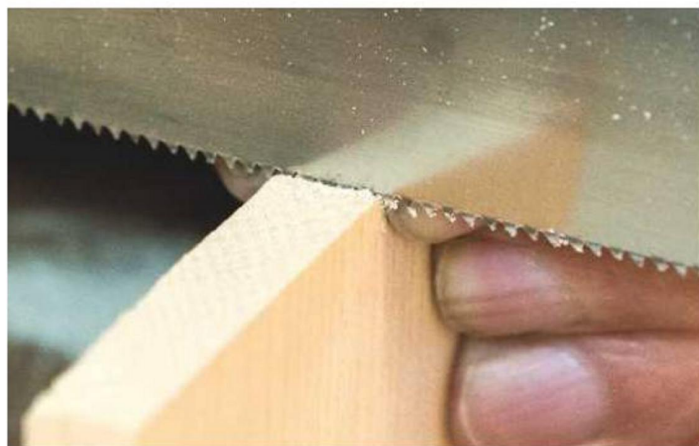
Use your free hand to grip the job...



...and rest the saw against your fingernails



With everything in place take a breath...



...exhale and give one purposeful stroke

out of the box because they are sharpened by machine, this process often leaving the rag on one side of the blade which influences the direction of cut. Be aware of that when you buy a new saw.

This problem is easily cured, again taking a small slip stone and gently running it along the side of the blade to take off the excessive rag from the sharpening process. But if you are new to sawing and new to the saw you may not know if this needs doing, so be aware.

Hand in handle

The handle is the next thing to consider. These are hand tools so they need to fit your hands, which is why we never recommend a fixed tool list to students. We say... these we think are OK, try them out, talk to other makers in the workshop, borrow theirs. What fits her hand won't necessarily fit yours.

Then there is the fit of the handle to blade. We almost gave up with English-pattern dovetail saws about 15 years ago. I bought a new Roberts and Lee saw to go with my little saw. I wanted a half tenon a bit longer, to have a thin saw plate, straight tooth line and slightly more kerf for carcass work. I paid top price – over £100. The ruddy thing came with a gap between the saw handle and the blade that you could... no, I won't go there.

The situation was saved by firms like Canadian Adria and Lie Nielsen in Maine making English-pattern saws with handles properly fixed to the blade. The issue is wobble, direction and control of the bleep bleep saw. We want an extension of our arm, down through our fingers, extending way out to the tip of the blade.

Judging by the saws sent by Thomas Flinn and Co for review, the problem is still there. The Pax saw which was only just acceptable, had a better fitted handle than the Roberts and Lee saw. This had a small filler piece stuffed in the gap between saw and handle. This is just not good enough when Adria, Veritas, Rob Cosman and Lie Nielsen all can get a good fit handle to blade. Why can't we manage it?

The shape of the handle is key. The horns above and below where your hand grips the handle are part of the feedback to your hand. It's like sensing the wheels of a car on gravel through the steering mechanism back to the steering wheel; you want feedback. The angle is critical and is related to the overall weight of the blade and brass back.

So-called gents' saws have no place in this workshop because they have a simple turned handle and lack the feedback of a proper saw handle. If you want to see a good sophisticated saw handle look no further than pre-1939 Disston saws.

Saw technique

Now we are getting into it. Sawing is about allowing the saw to do its job. The brass back to the blade gives stiffness and weight, and a



...move the saw purposefully using its full length...



All the action should come from the shoulder

nice saw should fall down the line under its own weight. You should be moving it forwards and backwards, not down.

Once you grip that handle too tight you are adding to that weight, pushing the blade down. Don't do it. Instead hold the saw in action like you might hold the hand of a well-behaved child – lightly, but firmly enough to control its potential for wayward behaviour.

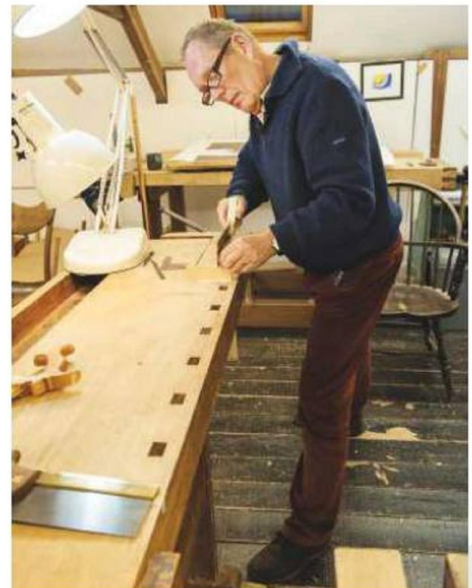
Extend your forefinger – called your guide finger – down the side of the handle. This position helps to direct the line of cut by extending your hand into the length of the saw. Break the complicated action of sawing down into three separate stages: the start, the run and the stop.

Starting cut

You must start the cut in exactly the right spot. This can determine the fit of a joint. So you need to mark out and you need a bench light



...aim for a stance that has the saw extending your arm in a straight line



Sometimes you may need to change your stance to ward off a wayward cut

to illuminate where you are going. Use the fingers of your free hand to grip the job and rest the saw right up against the fingernails so it's a hard stop not a spongy, fleshy one. You can then move the saw up to the mark and cut either to just leave the line on or at half mark. The toe of the saw is now able to just tickle the job, just with the toe. I place the saw, breathe in and give one purposeful stroke. The tickling method with the toe of the saw is more popular and posh modern saws, like those from Rob Cosman and Lie Nielsen offer fine teeth at the toe leading to coarser teeth.

Running with it

Next is 'the run'. You will have a line to follow, so set the job low in the bench to prevent vibration. Position the bench light so you really can really see where you are going, then saw. You should aim for a stance that has the saw extending your arm in a straight line with all

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action should be from the shoulder in a straight lovely line. Lightly grip the handle. Move the saw smoothly back and forth. Use the full length of the saw, listen to the action sounding like 'rah-rah-rah'. Don't rush and don't press down. Let the saw fall down the line under its own weight. This is very Zen, you do not pull the saw left or right. Think it down the line. You need to be very much in there. It's like taking a cycle or motorbike through a fast S bend. You think your way through the bend, shifting body weight very slightly to sweep through it. You may do this all looking over the saw, but if the cut is long you may need to change position and look under the saw. Move your weight

back, bending your knee and lowering your sight line. If you cannot see you will go off line. It's all about concentration; you need to settle down and get into a rhythm of cutting dovetails for drawers very fast and accurately. Rah-rah-rah... rah-rah-rah. The Rob Cosman saw has a benefit here: because the main body of the tooth line is relatively coarse you get down to the line in two or three pushes. This keeps the line you cut straighter, which is very important. We see students learning this stuff, cutting lots and lots of practice pieces. As they get to saw vertical and straight their stance improves, the back leg comes around, the head stays over the job, they focus and relax, micro

adjustments all come in to make it work. The human body is a wonderful thing. Lastly 'the stop'. You need to know that the cut ends there and hit that stop line. Simple as that, rah-rah – not rah-rah-rah-aahg!

When I was young I had a summer holiday job in a local joiner's run by an old guy called Albert who smelt like a mixture of boiled sweets and urine. Every Friday without fail, last thing before going home, he would "just touch up that saw". He placed his tenon saw between what he called chops. These were two pieces of timber that were made to fit around the handle and support the blade for the length of the saw. It was his last job before

How the saws measured up

Roberts and Lee Dorchester dovetail saw

Price: £77.19

Web: www.flinn-garlick-saws.co.uk

This, the 10in version of the saw, had the worst fitting handle of the group. It was not liked by any of the workshop. I have proudly used a Roberts and Lee saw for 40 years, like my mentor Alan Peters. How have the mighty have fallen.

Not recommended



Thomas Flinn Pax 1776 dovetail saw

Price: £109.70

Web: www.classichandtools.com

Nice competent saw at a reasonable price. The handle was better fitted than the Roberts and Lee. We badly wanted this saw to be the best, but as Dale said: "I am gutted that these British saws just don't cut it."

Not recommended



The Rob Cosman Professional Joinery saw

Price: £225

Web: www.classichandtools.com

This has a section at the toe of the saw at 22tpi and a tooth line of 15tpi. It is a very well-made, nicely weighted saw with a well-fitted and designed handle. This was the most popular saw of all tested and the one that I would buy if I wanted a new saw. The white resin handle was a little off putting – the kind of saw that Austin Powers would own. The price was also a problem.

Highly recommended



Lie Nielsen Progressive Pitch dovetail saw

Price: £117.00

Web: www.axminster.co.uk

This is a lovely saw, beautifully made with a brass back that gives a decent weight. The well-fitted handle is of good design and is well finished. The progressive tooth line was good but not as good as the Cosman single area of 22tpi which worked really well.

Recommended



going home after sharpening all his blades, filling out a time sheet and sweeping up.

It was the only time in the week I saw him sit down. He took out a double extra slim taper file and very lightly gave each gullet a single stroke. He would file straight across at right angles to the saw plate. Every alternate gullet was touched with the file as he watched the shine of the newly created surface creep down the line of the saw teeth. He then turned the saw around and filed the gullets on the other side of the blade. This is high-concentration, eye-watering work. Then he went home, or more likely to the pub. "You don't own a saw till you can sharpen it, and use it, proper like."

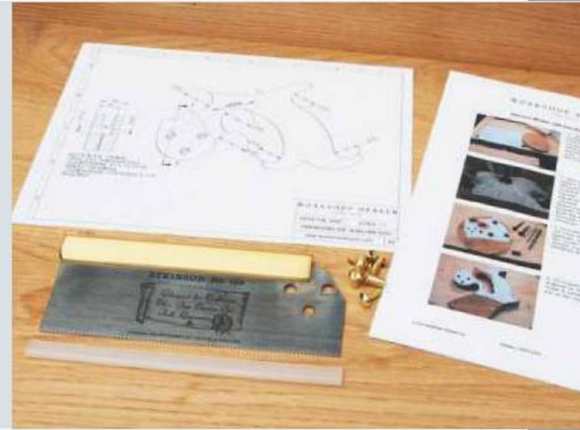
Atkinson Walker saw kit 9

Price: £43.90

Web: www.workshopheaven.com

I like this kit. It is the only saw that comes with a saw file and instructions on how to make and fit the handle to the blade. This is work that is beyond the new maker but it's not really hard either. You do need already to have access to a good small saw to cut the slot for the blade, but that aside it is a nice kit from which can be made a really good competent saw at a modest price.

Recommended



Veritas small cross-cut saw

Price: £58.50

Web: www.axminster.co.uk

This is a different take on small saw design; the resin back makes a lighter saw. Described as a small cross-cut saw, when sharpened at 90° this is a lovely little tool. Very popular in this workshop, the price and good functionality make it very attractive.

Recommended



Gramercy dovetail saw

Price: £118 plus import tax

Web: www.toolsforworkingwood.com

A replica of an 18th-century saw, this one is small, light and beautifully made. It is fine for small stuff but you would need another saw for general carcass work. Very pretty and a delight to use. Comes with good instructions, very expensive.

Recommended



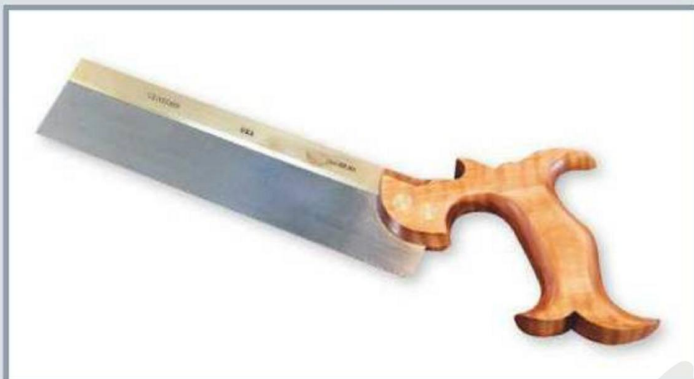
Lie Nielsen Thin Plate dovetail saw

Price: £108.50

Web: www.axminster.co.uk

A really a lovely saw at a reasonable price. Well made, the 15tpi toothline is for me a bit aggressive but others get on with it. The workshop favourite.

Highly recommended



Adria Dovetail saw

Price: £116.94

Web: www.classichandtools.com

From Canada comes one of the first of the new breed of small saws. Beautifully fitted, with a well-shaped handle, it has a nice weight to the blade and a tooth line of 15tpi. A well-established workshop favourite at a fair price that maybe needs to be taken to the next level please by Adria.

Highly recommended





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Victor Curd and colourful examples of his craft

The art of skiving

Mark Griffiths learns from traditional craftsman Victor Curd how to create and fit a leather skiver

Put the words leather and furniture together for most people and the image of an over-stuffed Chesterfield sofa springs to mind. There is, however, another far more specialised skill, one that has hardly changed in hundreds of years: the craft of creating tooled leather desk and table tops.

Once in high demand, this trade – like so many – has suffered in recent years. Left with a few commissions and just the small trade of restoration work, a large proportion of artisans in leather have long since shut up shop, but one craftsman is still going strong. Second-generation leather man Victor Curd has spent his whole life in this trade, starting as a young

boy helping out his father in his East End workshop, and running his own leatherwork business on the south coast in Brighton for the past 55 years. After trying to retire a few years back Victor was soon at his bench again – I guess the feel of a golf club can't match the familiar handle of a tooling iron.

Pre-tooled leathers

In a life spent mastering his trade there isn't an aspect of this craft that Victor doesn't know. Back in the time when such furniture was in high demand Victor's team would be producing items such as leather-topped wine tables in their thousands. His work is now mainly restoration and specialist one-off pieces, along

with a thriving trade in supplying pre-tooled and stained leathers to customers all over the world. Orders are emailed in, then cut, coloured and tooled in the workshop and dispatched to the client a day or two later.

The high level of skill and attention to detail has seen Victor employed at Buckingham Palace, and brought commissions also from celebrity 'royalty' Posh and Becks, along with countless other high-profile projects.

Over the centuries very little has changed in the trade, and when walking into the workshop you are first struck by the rich aroma of hide leathers, which turn out to be from sheep not cows as I expected, skivers from sheep tending to be both lighter in weight and less expensive.



▲ Pic.1 It's sheep not cows that donate the leather for Alan's skivers...



▲ Pic.2 ...as it's both lighter in weight and cheaper



▲ Pic.3 The all-important embossing tools. Most of these were handed down from Victor's father



▲ Pic.4 Each wheel is etched with a distinctive geometrical or natural pattern

Racked raw hides

The workshop is set out very simply with the raw hides rolled and racked on one wall and the opposite wall bearing a rack made up of wooden rods the size of broom handles, over which skivers are hung when finished.

Fixed to the wall above this are two racks of the all-important embossing tools. Made up of a rotating metal wheel fixed to a long wooden handle much the same size as a turning tool, the edge of each wheel is etched with an intricate pattern which can be either geometrical or natural in its design.

Many of these tools have been inherited by Victor from his father, while others have been collected over the years, these precious tools not being something you can pick up from your local DIY superstore.

In a corner of the workshop is a small gas camping stove on which the embossing tools are heated prior to using, and more importantly where the tea is brewed. Dominating the centre of the workshop is a large flat and clean work table.

Making leather top

It is always a joy to watch a master craftsman at work and all of Victor's years of experience were in evidence as he demonstrated how to produce a beautiful leather top.

Firstly the natural cream-coloured hide was stained with a green dye, the intensity of the

tone made darker on the skiver's edges to create a soft 'used' feel. The skiver was then cut 2in over its finished size, leaving the extra for the final trimming in.

An embossing tool, in this case with a Greek key pattern, was heated on the gas stove, then Victor produced the only modern development



▲ Pic.5 Hide is naturally cream coloured. This skiver was stained green



▲ Pic.6 The Greek key pattern embossing tool being heated



▲ Pic.7 All that glisters – that's fake gold leaf



▲ Pic.10 To join two skivers Victor cuts 45° chamfers on the opposing edges...



▲ Pic.11 ...wipes a smear of PVA on each...

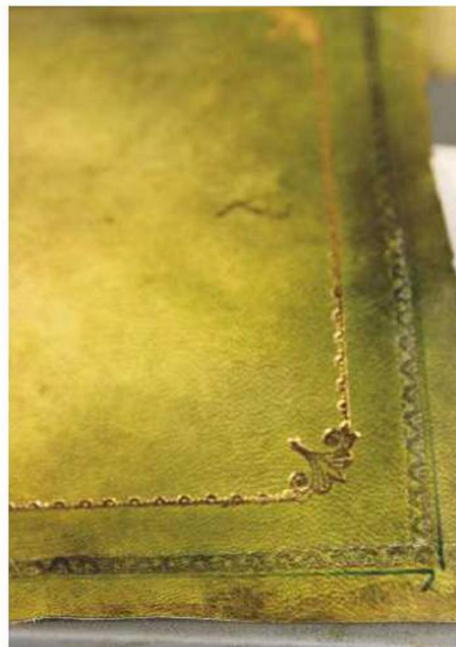


▲ Pic.12 ...and to finish runs a 'blind' line over the seam – perfect!

in this ancient craft, fake gold leaf on a roll, which is indistinguishable from the real thing when applied; the fake gold leaf is not only far easier to work with, it costs a fraction of its counterpart. With a straight edge and a keen eye, Victor rolled the hot embossing tool over the gold leaf strip, leaving its shimmering impression in the hide.

Joining skivers

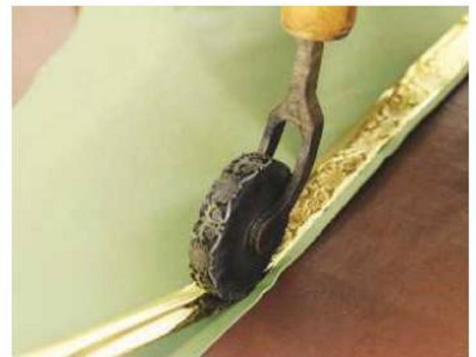
Victor shared with me his own technique for joining two skivers in order to cover larger



▲ Pic.13 Before fitting a new top all the old leather and glue must be removed



▲ Pic.8 A sharp eye, a straight edge...



▲ Pic.9 ...and decades of experience leaves a shimmering golden trail

surface areas. He frowns on today's standard technique, which is to butt two cut edges together and then run a length of Sellotape along the back edge, instead cutting freehand a small perfect 45° angle on the opposing leather edges, wiping a smear of PVA on each, then fixing by running a wooden roller over the joint. To finish, a 'blind' (no gold) embossed line was run over the seam; this is done to hide the joint line, but I have to say I found it hard to see anything.

Preparing groundwork

Before fitting a leather the groundwork must be prepared. If replacing a damaged or worn top in an old or antique piece of furniture the original skiver must first be completely removed including the residue glue. Sometimes applying warm water with a damp cloth before going to work with a scraper can be of help.

With the surface clean and dry, use a two-part filler to make good any holes or defects, then sand with an 80-grit paper on a block to leave a smooth surface on which the leather will happily sit.

To create a new top start by veneering a border of about 50 to 90mm around the edge, either straight or cross grain.

Next, set a router with an 8mm cutter to the width you wish your finished border to be, using the router's fence against the top's edge. The 8mm cutter should be set to give a rebate depth of approximately 5mm.

Square off the corners with a chisel, and pencil mark a line in from the rebate of 30mm, then, using a bullnose plane, make a shallow



▲ Pic.14 Use a router to cut an 8mm by 5mm rebate...



▲ Pic.15 ...then mark a line 30mm in from the rebate...



▲ Pic.16 ...and using a bullnose plane make a shallow chamfer down from the line



▲ Pic.17 Finally trim the skiver so it fits the rebate tight at the veneer edge



▲ Pic.18 Some beautifully textured green and burgundy skivers



▲ Pic.19 More examples of Victor's skills

chamfer from the pencil line to the 5mm rebate.

Finally, soften the chamfer with sandpaper, taking care not to dull the crisp veneer edge.

Fixing skiver

With the groundwork prepared, coat the surface with a thin application of PVA glue; this can be watered down if it feels too thick.

Having trimmed two of the skiver's right-angled edges to the correct width, set these in place into the rebated top, then use a soft cloth to work out any air pockets and smooth the skin down. Using a straightedge trim the last two edges of the skiver so that it fits into its corresponding rebate tight to the veneer edge, and again smooth into place.

When the skiver is dry, take an old piece of towel coated in a wax to match the timber, and work into the whole top, then gently buff off.

Lost art danger

It was both an education and a privilege to spend time watching Victor applying all his years of experience to this craft which, unfortunately like so many others once a common part of the furniture-making trade, is in danger of becoming a lost art.



Leather craft history

The joint skills of the woodworker and the leather worker can be traced back to the dawn of civilization, this combination of natural materials having been used together to create everything from shelter and storage to embellishment. Examples of leather and wood furniture have been discovered all over the world from the Egyptian pyramids to Viking burial mounds.

The art of embossing leather again has a wide history, fine examples being found at sites dating from Ancient Roman in southern Europe to those of the Nordic tribes in the north.

The use of leather as a material to upholster furniture has continued to remain highly popular to the modern day, but the specific use of leather as an insert into desk and table tops dates from around the 17th century and came into its glory in the 18th when widespread use of the quill pen required some form of surface to make writing more comfortable and protect wood-veneered tops. Baize was one option but leather was far more opulent.

Combining with the talents of the bookbinders of the age, the use of gold tooling along with coloured leather dyes was soon high fashion, and it stayed this way through the 19th century and up to the 1980s when the vogue for reproduction furniture was superseded by the desire for more simple modern light-coloured timber furniture. Unfortunately the use of leather in desks hasn't fared well in contemporary furniture. Could it be that more of us are choosing to use laptops these days rather than quill pens?

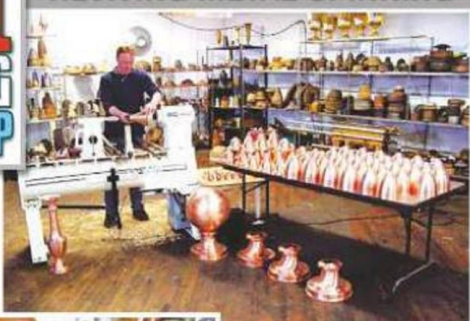
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The Decorating Elf

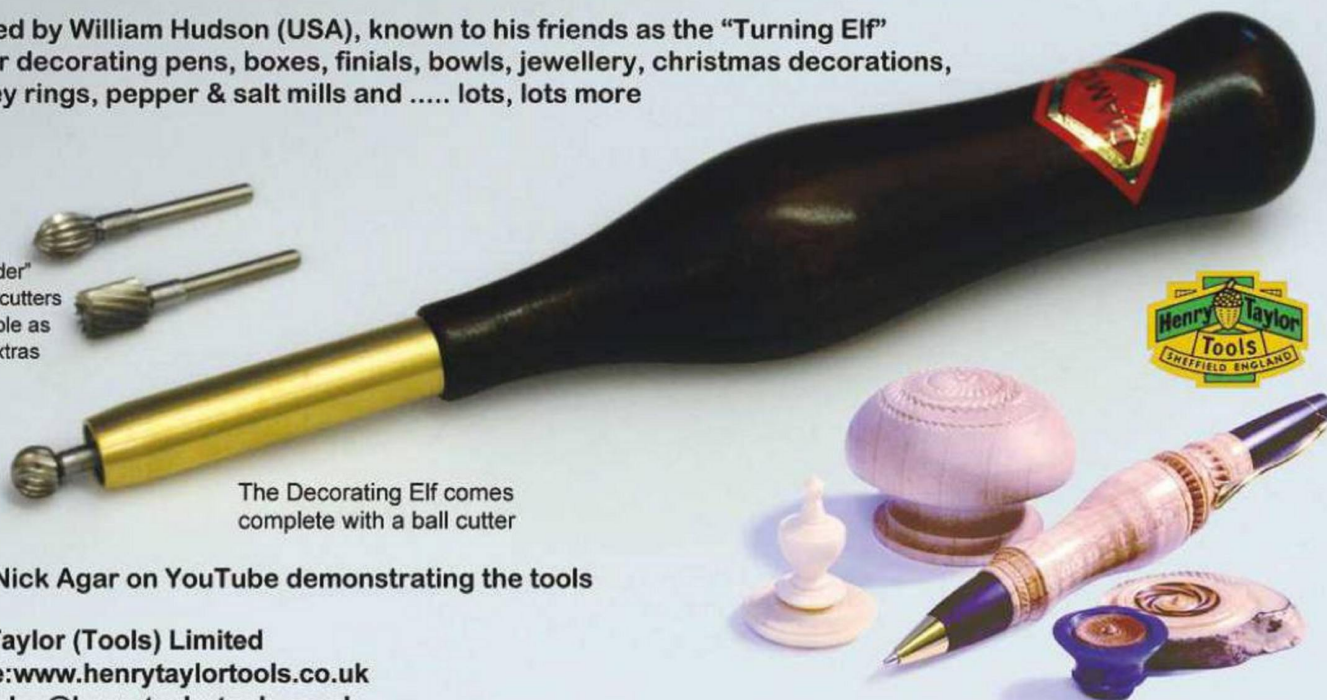
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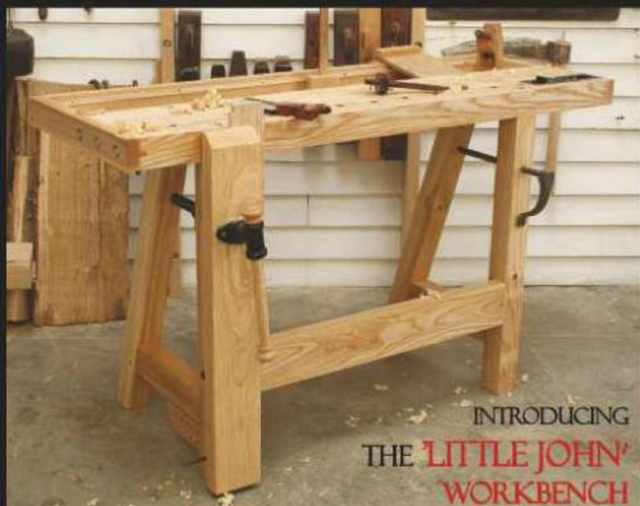
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Recycled dining table

Oak, maple, pitch pine, pallet wood

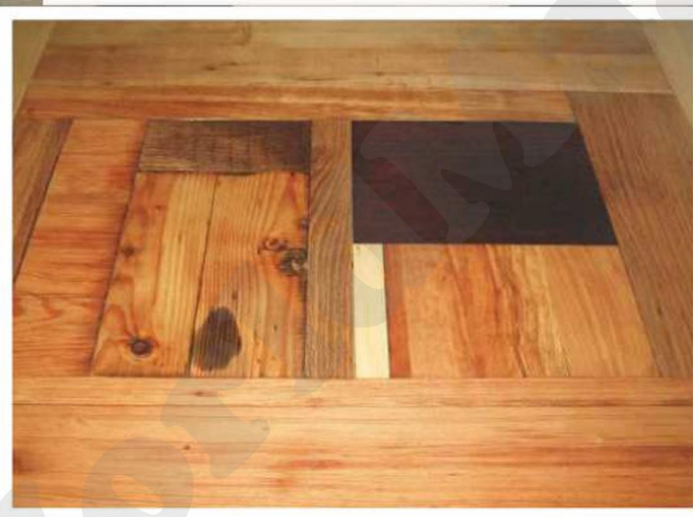




The patchwork top is an old door with the glass panels not fitted. It was surplus from an auction sale. I infilled the panels with recycled ply and then used offcuts of antique timbers from my furniture restoration days to glue into the panels. Its made from oak, maple, pitch pine and some pallet wood for good measure.

Mostly I try to keep one surface pretty much as I get it, which can make construction interesting but keeps the character. Orbital sanders are great for this. I use a lot of scaffold boards, pallets, broken and un-restorable antique furniture and recycled building timber from wood recycling projects, auctions, skips and, when I have to, the reclamation yard. The joints and construction are mostly traditional with as many through joints/visible joints/dovetails showing if it helps the design along. Finishes are mostly linseed oil and wax.

CHRIS KNIPE



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Anatomy of a Classic



◀ This is a modern reproduction of the classic Paimio chair. It was designed in 1932 it still looks freshly minted

Photo: Artek

Genius of the forest

Inspired by Finland's lakes and trees, Alvar Aalto sought to put humanity into modernist architecture and furniture, explains **Liam Curran**

You know you're important in your own country when the state airline holds back a scheduled flight on the tarmac because you are late for take-off.

This was one of many accolades accorded to prolific Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto, to date still one of the most famous Finns ever and one of the most well-known architects in the world but whose international breakthrough was as much for his wooden furniture designs as for his groundbreaking buildings.

The fame and status is understandable, as his ascent during the first half of the 20th century chimed with, mirrored and promoted the emergence of Finland as a modern European nation that was beginning to make

▶ In 1976 Aalto was honoured by the Finnish people with this stamp



Photo: Shutterstock



▲ The iconic Finlandia Hall in concrete and Carrara marble was completed in 1971

Photo: Shutterstock



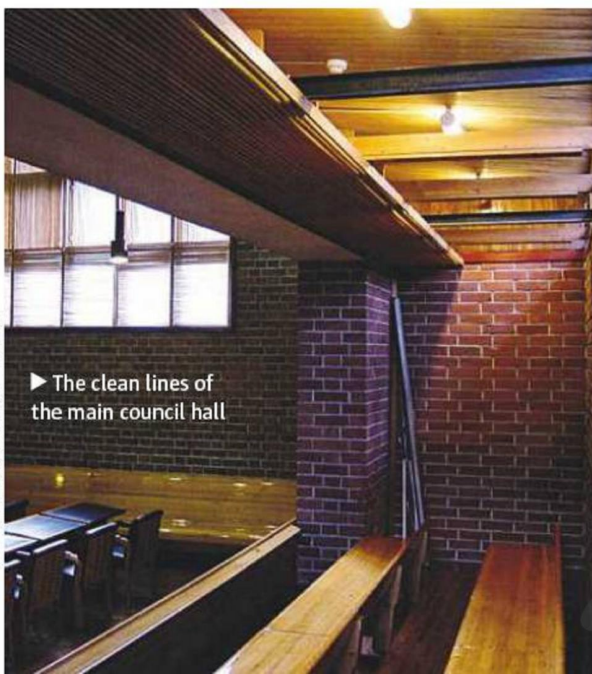
▲ Saynatsalo Town Hall – ‘a civic building on a human scale’

Photo: TIM BROWN ARCHITECTURE



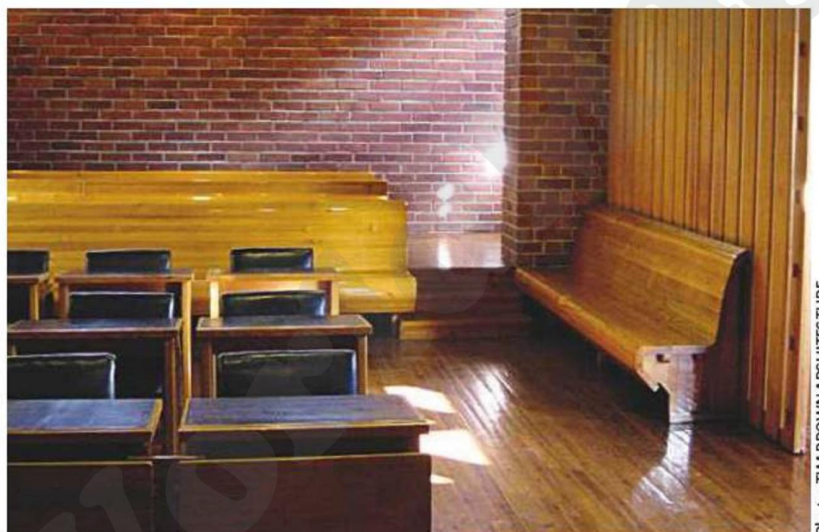
▲ Aalto designed every element of the building including the wooden interiors

Photo: TIM BROWN ARCHITECTURE



► The clean lines of the main council hall

Photo: TIM BROWN ARCHITECTURE



▲ The benches incorporate Aalto's trademark curves

Photo: TIM BROWN ARCHITECTURE

Anatomy of a Classic



◀ The Armchair 400 was designed in 1936. The frame is in natural lacquered birch. The seat and back are in foam and Dacron

Photo: Artek

its mark on the world in the fields of industry, design and culture.

According to the Design Museum his greatest buildings 'fused the naturalism of Finnish romanticism with modernist ideals as did his influential furniture and glassware'. To put it another way, he tried to incorporate human and natural elements into the modernist style of buildings that otherwise, to this day, might still be viewed by the man in the street as 'featureless concrete blocks'.

Grand entrance

Aalto said: "The goal is to make the little man a little happier by offering him a setting which suits him exactly, and does not make him a slave to standardisation." The phrase 'little man' might be down to the difference between Finnish and English but it is worth recounting that on at least one occasion when he arrived

Photo: Artek



▲ Designed in 1935 in birch and ply

on time at the airport for his Finnair flight, he instructed the chauffeur to drive around for a bit so he could make a grand, late entrance.

Either way, it is clear that this son of the Finnish forest was fascinated by wood and experimented with it in many ways in order to ensure that his modernist buildings were more human. Aalto believed that contact on the skin with natural materials produces a positive effect on the human spirit.

Augustus Pugin, a previous subject of Anatomy of a Classic (GW259), was also fascinated by the detail of wood and, although their styles were utterly and radically different from each other, there are various surprising

Photo: Artek



▲ The Y61 stool from 1947 is in natural lacquered birch with a quilted canvas or leather seat

similarities between this Finnish modernist and our very own Victorian Gothic designer, but three particularly stand out: both men were keen to design not only the buildings but the corresponding furniture and furnishings within; both were keen on the marriage between simplicity of design and practical function and both ended up designing monumental, iconic buildings that somehow define their nation. In Pugin's case it was the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben and in Aalto's case the Finlandia Hall in Helsinki.

▶ The H92 and H94 tables are in lacquered ash veneer, 1956. The extension leaves are stored underneath the table



Photo: Artek

Cleanliness

In the same way that the Big Ben clocktower tells the story of a nation – Parliament, tradition and stability – the simple lines of the dazzlingly white Finlandia Concert and Congress Hall symbolise Scandinavian cleanliness, modernity and the neutrality of Finland.

For the Finlandia Hall in Helsinki, completed in the early 1970s during Aalto's final monumental period, was one of the key backdrops for some of the most significant diplomatic battles of the Cold War, hosting the founding meetings of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) sometimes known as the Helsinki Accords. Older readers will remember news reports from the '70s regularly featuring Helsinki and the OSCE, which became a vital forum for dialogue between the USSR and the West.

According to the University of Helsinki: "Finlandia Hall is the most important Cold War site in Helsinki. The conference building was the venue for the signing of the Final Acts of CSCE [Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe] in 1975. According to one anecdote, the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, was so ill at the time of the CSCE that a fully-equipped hospital room was built especially for him in the building. A resuscitation team was on stand-by because Brezhnev had in fact collapsed."

The full name of the creator of this building was Hugo Alvar Henrik Aalto, born in 1898 in the rural village of Kuortane, about 200 miles north of Helsinki. His father was a surveyor and his grandfather a forester, and throughout his life he kept his deep feeling for the Finnish landscape of forests and lakes. As an architect, what moved him was not just the lie of the land, but its practical geology. He saw building as a matter of "grappling with the very matter yielded to us by the earth's crust."

Inspired by nature

For Aalto, nature was an inspiration. He frequently made the natural surroundings of his buildings part of the architecture: nature was brought into the building through the views from the windows or through the use of wood as a construction material.

Nature and the forest is closely bound up with Finnish identity; its national epic poem, *The Kalevala*, is full of folklore, mythology and the forests, with many legends, stories and poems drawn from the region of Karelia. Karelia, which still has a significant emotional pull for many Finns, was largely Finnish-speaking and had been fought over for several centuries, between Russia and Finland's former ruler, Sweden.

Aalto was still a student in 1917 when Finland declared independence following the Russian Revolution, but he went on to build, in

◀ Neat stylish clothes tree and umbrella stand both in birch



Photo: Artek



Paimio Chair

Aalto served in the Finnish National Militia during the civil war that followed

independence but he went on in 1921 to pass his architecture degree at the then Helsinki University of Technology, now part of the renamed Aalto University. In 1923 he



Photo: Artek

▲ The Armchair 45

moved back to the town of Jyväskylä (pronounced Hoo-vas-koo-la) where he grew up after his family moved there from Kuortane.

From Jyväskylä, Aalto launched himself on the world with panache and aplomb by advertising outside his new practice in 2ft high letters and then marrying architect Aino Marsio the following year. For the next five years they experimented with the bonding and bending of birch and plywood as he wished to learn "the language of wood fibres," and it was this research that led to Aalto's revolutionary designs of the 1930s.

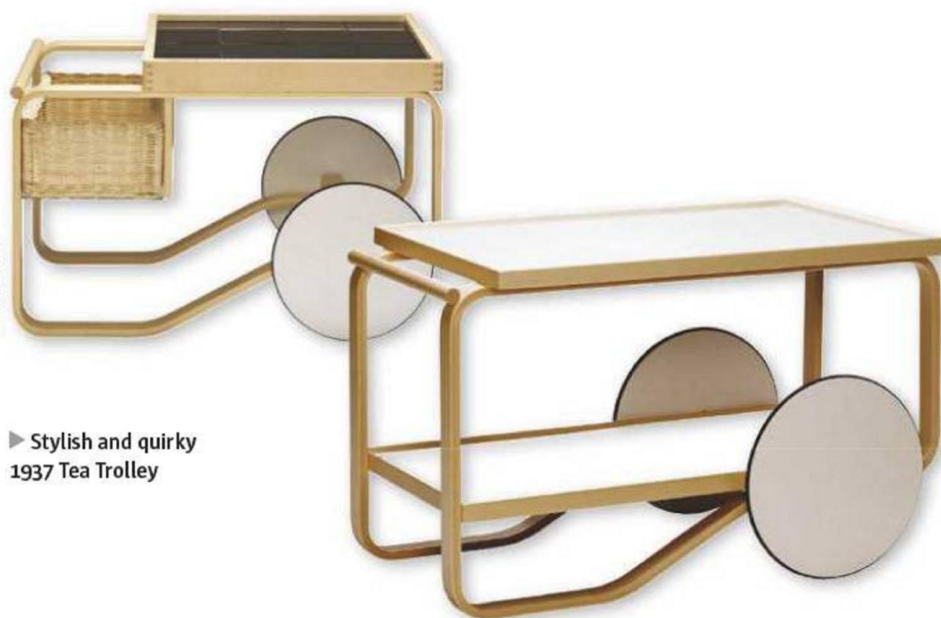
A truly innovative chair at the time was named Model No.41 and is still being sold by Artek, the company he founded. The chair, also known as the Paimio Chair, is made from laminated and solid birch frame, birch being a very flexible and springy material. The seat is made from bent plywood which has been heavily lacquered and the scrolls at the back of the chair have been bent into such a shape by removing several layers of the plywood veneer.

The shape was specially designed to enable easier breathing for tuberculosis patients at the Paimio Sanatorium, built in 1932 and one of the hundreds of buildings he went on to construct all over Finland. The sanatorium was typical of the holistic approach taken by Aalto and his wife, who also contributed to the design of the fixtures and fittings.

Embracing Gesamtkunstwerk, a German

Anatomy of a Classic

Photo: Artek



► Stylish and quirky
1937 Tea Trolley

term meaning a total work of art, he and Aino would design not just the building, but give special treatments to the interior surfaces and design the furniture, lamps, furnishings and glassware. His starting point for the design of the sanatorium was to make the building itself a contributor to the healing process, calling it a 'medical instrument'.

Sunning balconies

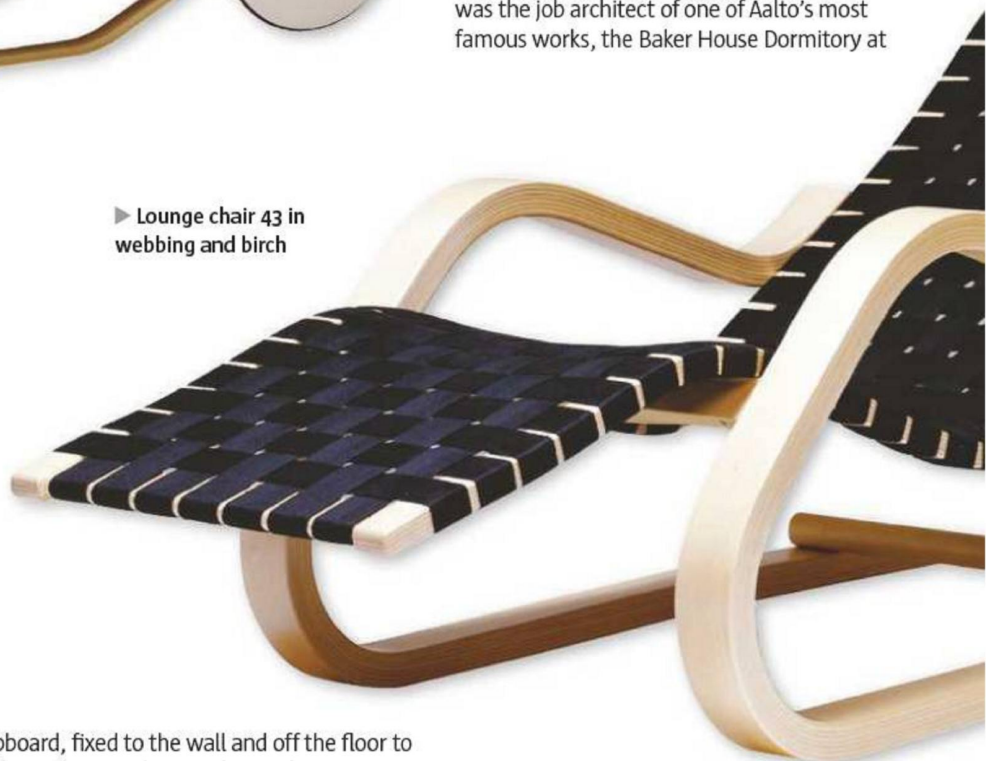
He knew that TB patients would be spending most of their time lying down and staring upwards, so he placed the lamps in the room out of the patients' line of vision and painted the ceiling a relaxing dark green to avoid glare. Each patient had their own specially designed

Photo: Artek



▲ This screen in laquered pine dates from 1936

► Lounge chair 43 in webbing and birch



the method by which the Doric legs were formed: thin saw cuts were made along the grain of a piece of birch wood – most of the length of which formed the leg – thereby allowing the necessary flexibility to bend the piece at the top.

Into these slots were glued thin sheets of veneer, which, when set, maintained the right-angle bend. At first, the L-shaped legs had to be manufactured by hand, forming the tight curve out of the separate veneers of wood as it was glued, but a machine was soon developed that could perform this action in a hot press.

Filming into brain

Aalto believed he was no great academic philosopher but understood that "great ideas arise from the small details of life." Veli Paatela was the job architect of one of Aalto's most famous works, the Baker House Dormitory at

cupboard, fixed to the wall and off the floor to make it easier to clean underneath.

TB was killing many Finns in the 1930s and the only known 'cure' at the time was complete rest in an environment with clean air and sunshine. So at the end of each ward were sunning balconies, where weak patients could be wheeled out in their beds. Stronger patients could go up to the sun deck on the very top floor of the building.

As patients could spend a long time in the sanatorium, the building was designed to foster a community spirit and the facilities included staff housing, a chapel and specially laid out promenade routes through the surrounding forest landscape.

Another classic furniture design, much copied and today still instantly familiar, was his three-legged stacking stool, initially created for the Viipuri library, whose design allowed many to be stacked at once. He called the standard leg of these stools the 'Doric' leg or the 'bent knee'. Aalto and furniture maker Otto Korhonen, based in the city of Turku, patented

the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the USA, where Aalto taught as a visiting professor. In his book about the great man Paatela writes: "Once when we were on a beach on Cape Cod, by the Atlantic, Alvar and I were going to go for a swim, Alvar suddenly stopped. The waves had washed a few corals onto the sand and Alvar stood there and said: [...] 'I'm filming it into my head. I might need this shape one day.'"

This attention to detail propelled Aalto to successfully create buildings for over six decades across Europe and in the US. He designed 70 buildings for Jyväskylä alone, of which 37 were realised. One famous design was the civic centre for the logging town of Saynatsalo, now part of Jyväskylä, which has very warm brick and wood interiors. A civic building on a human scale, it is seen as a key stage in his career, trying as it did to humanise the modernist, functional style.

Like many great artists he benefited from wealthy patrons who were friends. In this case they were Harry and Mairela Gullichsen who were part of the Ahlström industrial dynasty that handily owned a wood-processing firm. For them he built the stunning Villa Mairela in the town of Noormarku, birthplace of the Ahlström Corporation.

Described as 'strangely cohesive', Villa Mairela was a project where he was given license to experiment with no real cost limitations, something very rare for designers in wood and architecture. One impression given is of walking in the forest, created by vertical irregular posts, with the house described as 'a collage of materials

Photo: Artek



▲ The Pendant Lamp in aluminium

some bushes."

From the 1930s and onwards, Aalto's designs were exhibited and acclaimed at world fairs and exhibitions throughout the world and his moulded furniture was exhibited in London in 1935, to great critical acclaim. To cope with the consumer demand Aalto, together with his wife Aino, Maire Gullichsen and Nils-Gustav Hahl, founded Artek that same year.

Aalto's work was enthusiastically received in the US and the Museum of Modern Art organised a major exhibition in 1938. A year later, he completed the Finnish Pavilion for the

1939 New York World's Fair. Frank Lloyd Wright, upon viewing the Pavilion, said simply: "Aalto is a genius."

The fact that his designs are considered cool today and still look and feel modern is corroborated by the fact that his High Stool and Stool E60 manufactured by Artek are currently used in Apple stores across the world to serve as seating for customers. Finished in black lacquer, they seat customers at the Genius Bar.

Shaped modern Finland

Aalto was born in Finland when it was a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire and died in 1976 when man was walking on the moon, having helped shape his country's evolution, indelibly leaving his imprint across it with around 400 of the 500 or so buildings he had built.

His buildings also went up in Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Croatia, Russia, Sweden, Iceland and the USA and his reach could have been even wider as he was invited to submit plans for projects in Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Dominican Republic and Canada. Do to the political upheavals of the last century these and others were never realised, however, although many of the architectural drawings survive.

Aalto's work possesses the quality, innovation and appeal that will always outlive the life of the architect, with the designs always seeming fresh and modern. Their longevity lies in the practical use of, and the fascination with, his work. Examples are dotted around Finland's major cities and his furniture can be bought on the internet.

In his piece on Nordic architecture, Jaime Ferrer of Catalunya's Polytechnic University puts it nicely: "Alvar Aalto's architecture in favour of natural materials, vernacular details and curved lines becomes a lyrical collage of references to the Finnish Forest. For Alvar Aalto... architecture was always a form of mediation between man and nature." And you can still buy his really cool chairs and stools.



► Birch veneer shelf



Photo: Artek

amongst the trunks of countless birch trees in the Finnish landscape'. Built in 1939, the Villa Mairela is regarded as a significant dwelling that marks a transition from traditional to modern architecture. It is possible for Good Woodworking readers with cash to spare to check this out for themselves as it is available for renting.

Vernacular tradition

Marie Gullichsen said: "We asked him to design something Finnish, but something in the spirit of the times," and the Aalto museum today says: "The clients' wish came true, right down to the smallest details. The Villa Mairela is full of details where the Finnish vernacular building tradition is combined with a modern vocabulary of form. The Villa Mairela entrance is startling, consisting of an entirely free-form canopy supported on two columns, a single concrete column and a composite timber column, with walls made of slender vertical timber poles with the bark left on and

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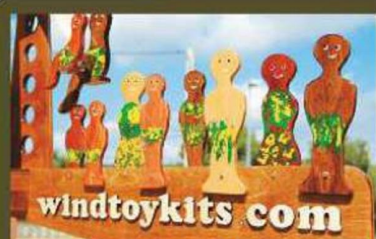
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Student life means business

No bunking off lectures nowadays says **Mark Gould**. His furniture degree involves setting up a production line to make Macassar ebony boxes aimed at the discerning Christmas present buyer

I have been given the job of production manager at college. We are aiming to make between 40 and 50 high-class walnut, Macassar ebony, cedarwood and cherry boxes. It's been a fascinating and challenging business to design a foolproof step by step production line which everyone can understand and use.

We aim to sell the boxes for £29 – we could easily have marked them up to £40 or more as the prototype made by lecturer and professional furniture maker Chris Emmett looks very understated and classy – but we want quick turnover.

Materials costs have been very low so far – we have been scrounging offcuts and all sorts of bits and pieces from around the college workshops and the mill and we have even been donated some ebony by another lecturer. The value and cost of course is in the making. I have set up a schedule of processing the wood into manageable lengths which will then have slots (for the base) and rebates (for the lid) and a bullnose which will give a classy finish to the top edge of the sides.

Other students are designing jigs for gluing up, cutting slots in the corners for tiny decorative slivers of cherry, and for creating the chamfered top which basically looks like a house roof.

This last jig has taken a lot of hard work but the idea is that 14mm-thick lengths of wood will simply be dropped in and secured at the correct angle for the chamfer with an 80-grit sandpaper-covered backplate. The angled wood will then be passed by the blades of a router or spindle moulder. All that's required is for the



The walnut box tops simply slot into the jig which is passed across the cutter

To cut the slots for the decorative cherry keys fellow student Tim made this neat jig

angled tops to be tidied up with a sharp plane.

The jig for the cherry slivers is also neat. It's a V-shaped block just a little taller than the dimensions of the box with a 4mm slot cut into the front face. The corners of our boxes fit exactly into the V-shaped recess and are locked into place so a 3mm slotter can be run through the guide slots, et voilà. Thin squares of cherry are glued in place and the waste cut off with a zero set backsaw.

As the boxes are so slim and elegant cramping using conventional mechanical cramps might just turn out to be too brutal and could distort the boxes out of square so we

might only need to resort to a stout elastic band or some masking tape – but we are still in the prototype stage as I write.

Of course finishing is vital to the success of the project and Chris, our lecturer, has stressed that we must under no circumstances oil the insides of the boxes.

Apparently finishes such as Danish oil or Organoil have a tendency to go rancid smelling when drying in a confined space and anyway they would detract from the lovely natural smell of the cedar base. We wouldn't want that. I will send GW a Christmas card with a picture of the finished box.



Good Woodworking

Letters & Makers' notes

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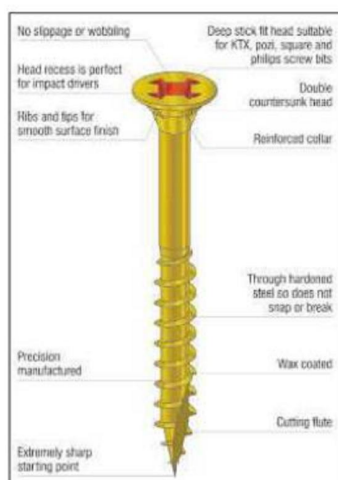


Don't forget Concept says Geoff Smith

In letters *Good Woodworking* Issue 258 someone was having trouble with screws types. I thought it might be worth mentioning Concept KTX screws which seem to take every bit type, including Posi, Philips, Robertson etc. I have only used them with the supplied bits but they seem to last a lot longer than Posi bits. Also on the planer blade question, I have a Record PT300 planer with three blades and used to spend hours setting them up and don't think I ever got it right. I bought a set of turn blades and holders from Doug at Cutting Solutions and, once set up, change them in minutes. Also, if you nick anything you can turn them and carry on. Thanks for a great magazine.

Geoff Smith, Cheshire

Andy King is a big Concept fan as he mentions this month so keep watching these pages for his views Mark



Praise for the outback pioneer for superglue finishing

I have just been reading the latest issue of *Good Woodworking*, in particular the article about Andy Pickard (GW259). It was a shame that the technique of using cyanoacrylate (CA) glue as a finish on pens wasn't covered in more detail as you can see the superb results Andy has achieved in the picture on page 52. The 'guy in Australia' he is referring to is undoubtedly David Lim who sells woodturning blanks, materials and tools from his web site (www.timberbits.com).

David also has a very good series of videos on the site covering the making of pens including the CA finish in great detail. At the very least you should give him a plug somewhere in the magazine as his prices are very reasonable, the more so when you consider he will ship to the UK for 5 Aussie dollars (about £3.25!). Better yet, why not see if Les Thorne is up for doing an article on this technique?

I have been using David's technique for a while now and I am very happy with the results as the attached picture shows. The finish produced is like glass, which is hardly surprising given that you finish off with 12000 grit Micromesh abrasive and then polish it some more!

Alan Currans, by email

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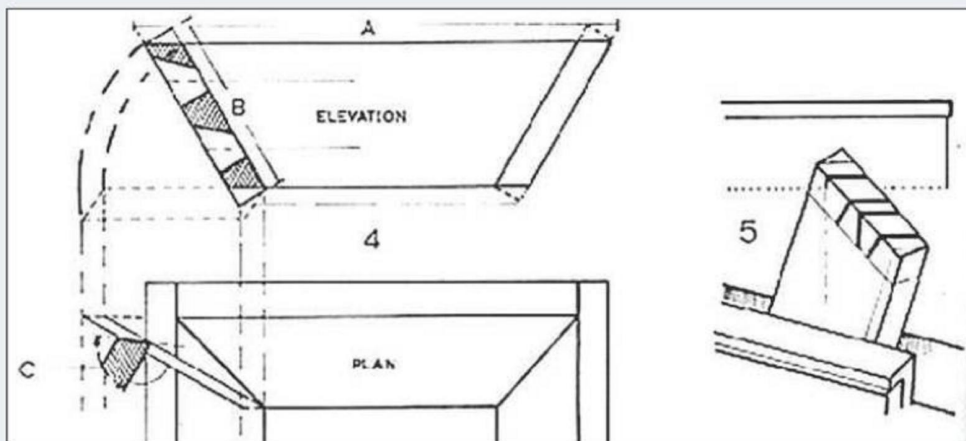
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Help! How do you make a bevelled dovetail

I am trying, unsuccessfully, to make a bevelled dovetail joint for a project. The two books I am using to try and create this joint use different techniques, and I have been unable to follow either with any success. As a subscriber from issue No.1 do you know if this subject was ever covered? And if so, in which issue. If the subject is not in a back issue I would appreciate any help you can give me. Yours in hope.

Nick Kendall (woodworker – failed)

Hello Nick

A tricky one to explain, and trickier to draw! I'm assuming a single splay, i.e. two vertical sides with two splayed rather than a full on, all four sides like the fruit tray type things? If it's the latter, you are in the realms of geometry to project the joint correctly as it involves compound cuts.

There is some info on this on line, but lifted from a reference book by Joyce.

It's certainly not a joint for the faint hearted; I've never cut one!

If it's a one-splay joint it's an easier option; all you need to consider is the amount of splay and eliminating a short grain situation.

A shallow tilt could be set out as normal as the pitch wouldn't really affect the joint so you could set out with a bevel or gauge marking from the end grain, keeping an identical pitch to each tail side.

However, if you have an excessive splay you have to alter the dovetail pitch on each side of the tail to allow for the tilt and keep the grin pattern relatively straight to the tail for maximum strength.

I've done them on some huge hatches for a boat I worked on, but at that time it was a matter of what looked right to retain the profile and strength rather than a particular formula.

I did find this walkthrough on line which shows a good clear methodology which should help the reader and works well:

<http://peterstumer.blogspot.co.uk/2009/07/laying-out-angled-through-dovetails.html>

Andy

Corrections and clarifications

In the last issue of the magazine we carried an article on turning a pair of candlesticks which, due to a production error we inadvertently attributed to our regular turning correspondent Les Thorne. The article was, in fact, written by former *Good Woodworking* contributing editor Dave Roberts (for clarity the Dave Roberts in question is a professional turner and not the current contributing editor of the same name). Apologies all round for the confusion

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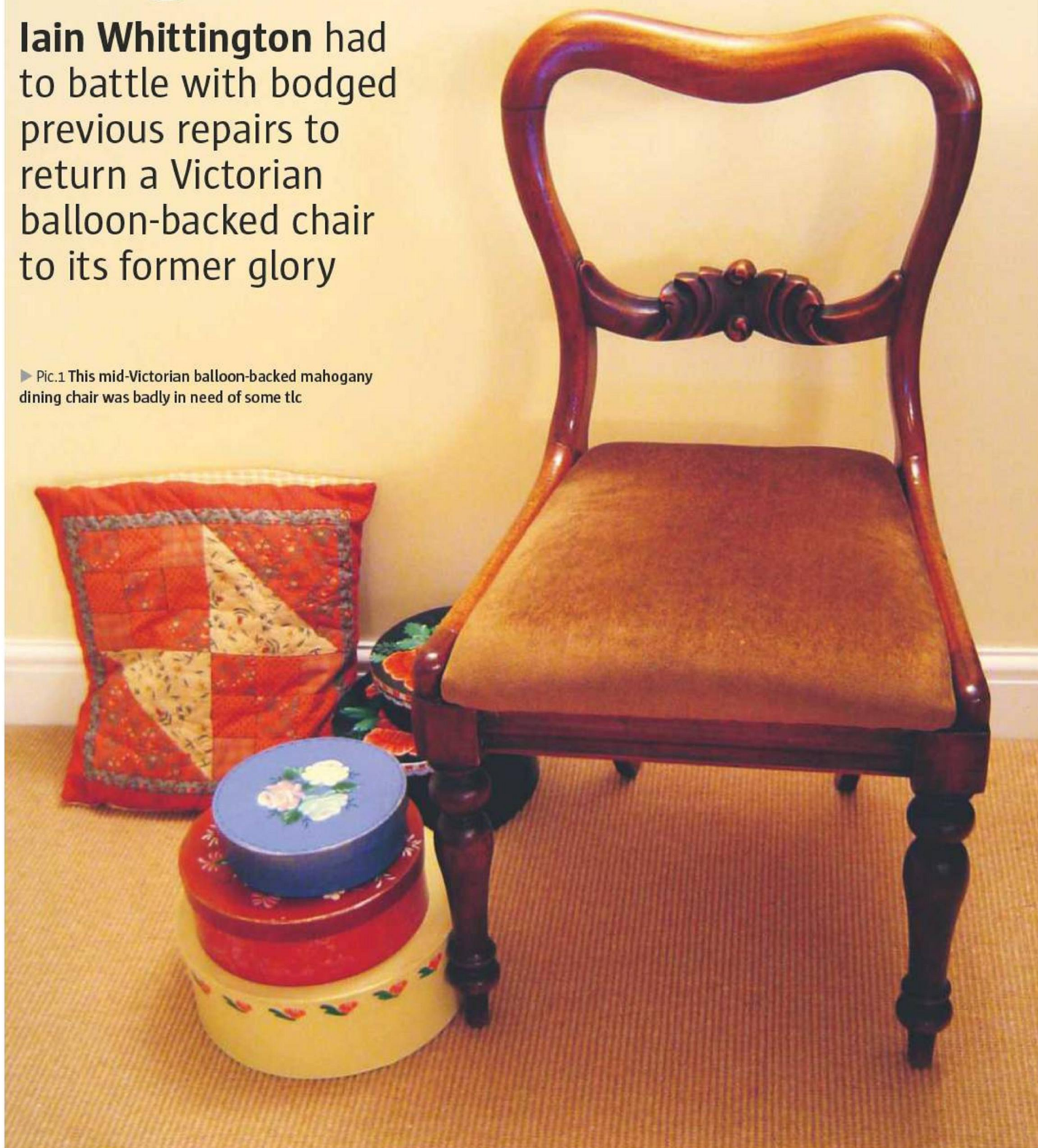
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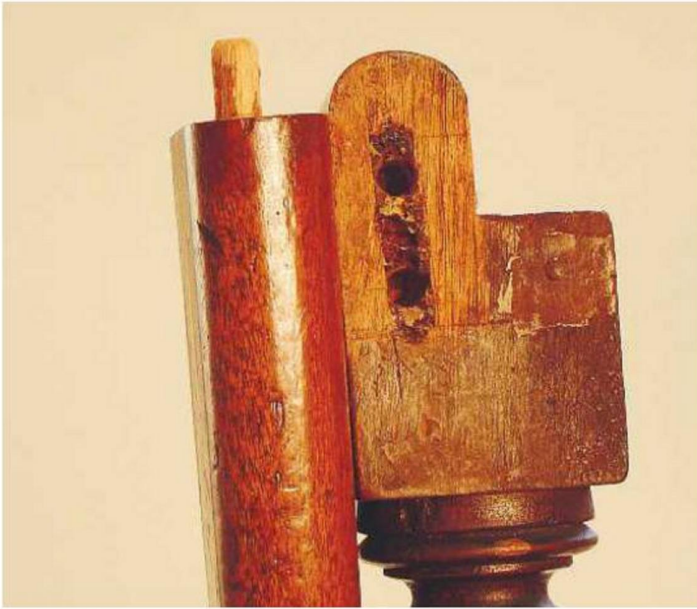
Chair rebuild nightmare

Iain Whittington had to battle with bodged previous repairs to return a Victorian balloon-backed chair to its former glory

► **Pic.1** This mid-Victorian balloon-backed mahogany dining chair was badly in need of some TLC



Balloon-backed chair restoration



▲ Pic.2 Failed dowel joint



▲ Pic.3 Dowels in failed tenon



▲ Pic.4 Woodworm in tenon



▲ Pic.5 Remove the broken tenon

Are chairs like buses? You don't see one for ages, then two come along together? Just when I had finished the oak chair (GW256) an old friend turned up almost as a flat pack, with one front leg and two stretchers now of independent means.

This is one of a set of mid-Victorian balloon-backed mahogany dining chairs with carved splats and drop-in seats, all good friends who have visited individually over the last decade. At some stage they were reinforced with metal brackets that were removed during an earlier renovation. Unfortunately, this previous work had also included a re-glue of some of the joints with modern urea/formaldehyde resin glue (more commonly known as Cascamite/Extramite, or whatever the name is currently), which in common with most modern wood glues is structurally stronger than wood. Such glues are a restoration nightmare as not only are they non-reversible, but this structural strength also means that when the repaired joint fails, it inevitably takes some of the original old wood with it, as this is now the weakest component of the joint. In addition, the residue is phenomenally tough and takes



▲ Pic.6 Cut and trim the dowels



▲ Pic.7 Cut the tenon shoulders



▲ Pic.8 The mortise in the stretcher had to be cut by hand



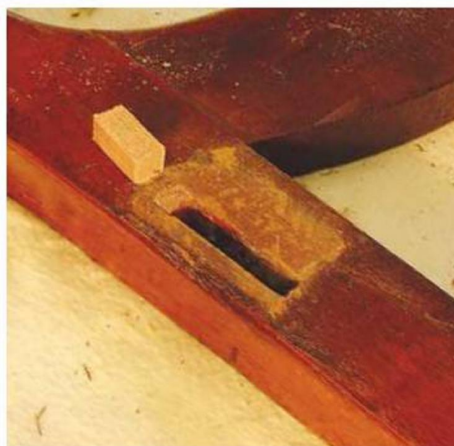
▲ Pic.9 Glued-up tenon



▲ Pic.10 The wormy-riddled 7.5mm tenon...



▲ Pic.11 ...and the 8mm dowel repair



▲ Pic.12 Mortise shoulder repair

the edge off any hand tools that come near it.

All the conservation/restoration guidance is that any repair should be reversible whenever possible. Where hide glue was used for original assembly – which is the case for most old furniture presenting for repair – that is what should be used for restoration. It has a hidden benefit, in that hide glue will reactivate any residual old glue that may be left behind, while modern glues will just treat residual old glue as dirt, so fail to bond properly. With pre-mixed

liquid hide glue readily available, there is little excuse not to use it for restoration; the only thing to remember is that the shelf life is not infinite, so check the bottle before you use it.

Broken tenon

The major cause of the disintegration of this chair was the previous quick replacement of a broken tenon (**Pic.2**), with the insertion of a couple of dowels in the broken tenon end left in the mortise (**Pic.3**) with a liberal application

TIP

While using dowels to repair a tenon may be a useful, invisible and quick way for a repair, if you want it to last and be reversible, I would recommend that the broken tenon is first completely replaced using hide glue and finished flush before dowel holes are drilled in both parts and the whole then re-assembled.

of Cascamite. Unfortunately, the original tenon would have already deteriorated in the initial failure, and being end grain it inevitably lacked the strength required to hold the dowels indefinitely, with the Cascamite not failing round the dowels, but simply pulling old tenon wood out in chunks.

Unfortunately, the overspill of glue had also stuck to the shoulders of the mortise, and pulled some of the original mahogany away with it. In addition, woodworm had got at one of the tenons (**Pic.4**) on the back stretcher, and taken the corner off the mortise as well.

▼ Pic.13 Glue-up and clamp



Balloon-backed chair restoration



▲ Pic.14 Leg/shoulder repair

Full repair solution

Now faced with the failure of the previous repair, the only viable solution was the full repair, involving cutting out the broken tenon from the mortise in the detached leg (Pic.5)



▲ Pic.15 The pegged tenon...

and then inserting a loose tenon in the stretcher to suit the original mortise.

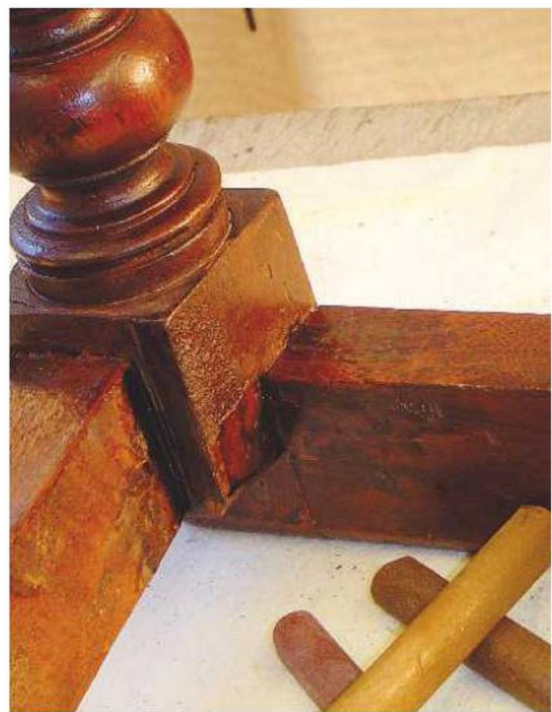
One of the nice things about working with old furniture is that the wood you come across is usually very pleasing to work. Fortunately, I have an imperial dimension mortise chisel that fitted the original, so after carefully clamping the rest of the chair in my twin-screw front vice, the time had come to trim back the errant dowels (Pic.6) before starting on cutting the mortise for the loose tenon.

Unfortunately, the liberal use of Cascamite had left a hard residue on the shoulders, so armed with my 'builder's' chisels and a diamond stone – to regularly repair the edge – I set to work paring away until a flat, square surface was left. After that sawing the shoulders entailed sitting up on the bench to get the right angle (Pic.7) before cutting a mortise in the stretcher by hand (Pic.8), which in old mahogany was a joy.

I am a timber hoarder, so a small piece of suitable material was found and dimensioned by hand, then glued in place (Pic.9). In this case, I made an exception to the general rule of only using hide glue, and used a gap-filling polyurethane adhesive to firmly fix the loose tenon in the stretcher, then re-assembled with hide glue to reversibly fit the remaining exposed tenon in the cleaned mortise. That way, should it need to be disassembled in the future, the joint will come apart, but the tenon will remain in the stretcher.

Woodwormed tenon

With the first repair now ready, I moved onto the woodwormed tenon, where one end of the tenon is mostly gone (Pic.10). As the tenon is about $\frac{3}{8}$ in (75mm) I decided that the best structural repair would be to insert a stock 8mm beech dowel to replace the wormed area and trim it to the size of the tenon (Pic.11). With beech being stronger than mahogany, and the dowel drilled halfway into the stretcher and secured with modern glue, this will more than replace the function of the original. The corresponding worm damage in the shoulder of the mortise was also cut out and replaced with a matching patch.



▲ Pic.16 ...and final tenon finish

More making good

Before re-assembling the chair, all the joints were cleaned of old glue to ensure a good fit, and woodworm killer added where applicable; however, I decided to leave the repair of the mortise shoulder on the front leg – damaged by the use of Cascamite in the joint failure – until after re-assembly (Pic.12).

With the chair again complete (Pic.13), I cut the Cascamite damage out of the top of the leg and inserted a small piece of matching timber with modern glue on the leg/mortise side (Pic.14) and hide glue on the tenon/stretcher side (Pic.15), again in the hope that any future disassembly would leave the patch firmly attached as a permanent repair to the leg mortise.

To further reinforce the loose tenon, a couple of beech dowels were inserted in the stretcher from the inside of the frame – using the holes left from the long gone metal corner brackets – then trimmed flush (Pic.16).

Finishing touches

Once all the woodworking was complete, the visible part of the new tenon was toned down with spirit-based stain, French polish and restoration wax to make it less intrusive on the eye. I am in the habit of filling all remaining external woodworm holes on a chair like this – more to enable new activity to be more easily spotted than for cosmetic reasons – before applying some French polish and a final coat of wax.

Resources

Liquid Hide Glue

from www.titebond.com/product.aspx?id=9e9995b4-08eb-4fc6-8254-c47daa20f8ed





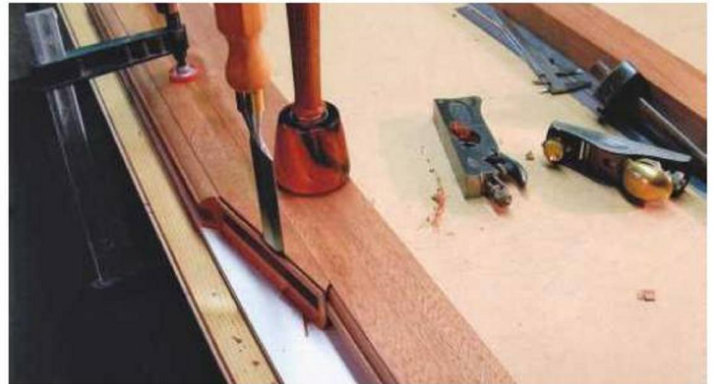
▲ Pic.1 Joinery section used as reference when marking up



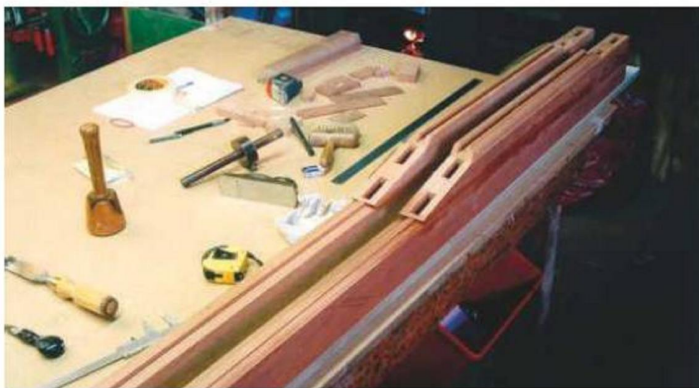
▲ Pic.2 Shoulder cutting on the dimension saw using the fence stops



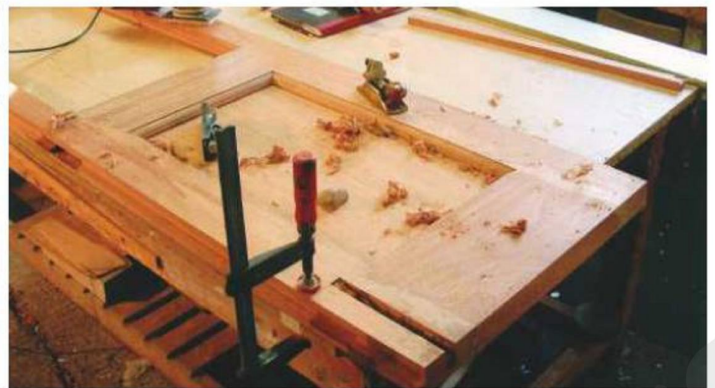
▲ Pic.3 Bandaging the cheeks of the tenons



▲ Pic.4 Paring down the gunstock shoulders



▲ Pic.5 A pair of stiles awaits the rails guide



▲ Pic.6 A door being fitted with a large 200mm polished brass flush bolt – not an easy thing to do

By George, he's got it!

David Oldfield wanted these French doors to be right in every detail as befitted a Georgian manor house

In the autumn of last year I was approached by a cabinetmaker I had known for some years with drawings for a pair of French doors with folding internal shutters. His clients were owners of a large Georgian manor house in Somerset. Could I come and have a look at the room the work was destined for?

The exercise

This was a handsome dining room facing out to the gardens at the rear of the house, lit by three large sash and shuttered windows. The central window was to be removed and the French doors installed to give access to the gardens. The room could then serve a dual purpose, not only as a dining room but a place to entertain when holding garden parties. The house was impressive, every room looking like a set for a photo shoot, and when I met the owners I understood why, she being an interior designer and he an aero-engineer.

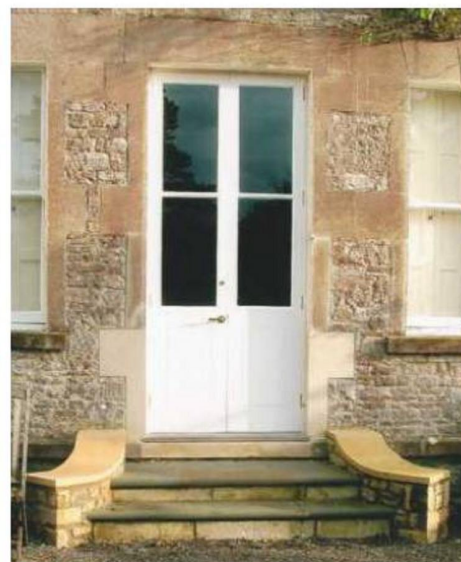
This sort of work is not really my bag but I agreed to take it on because it was a serious commission and I was going to have to give it all the attention it deserved. A survey of the window and masonry revealed a horror story, with everything out of kilter in all directions. The supplied drawings showed admirable but technically wrong draughtsmanship. Did this architect know anything about doors? In total the clients and I had to



▲ Pic.7 The inner face of the doors; the ovolo moulding is a replica of mouldings on the existing shutters



▲ Pic.8 The outward face of the doors; the panels are flush, surrounded by a captive bead – typical of mid-Georgian work



▲ Pic.9 All that work to achieve what looks like very unassuming doors; they look as if they have always been there – what I set out to accomplish



▲ Pic.10 The shutters are being folded into the centre

resolve 14 issues, and in the end they accepted my suggestion for gunstock shoulders.

These are not popular with joiners because they are awkward to make, but they are the proper thing to do on period French doors – or any French doors for that matter. The gunstock helps to reduce the width of the upper stiles while increasing the strength in the lower part of the doors (see diagram).

The making

These doors being 2975mm high, I selected first-grade utile mahogany because of its stability. If a pair of doors were to warp little could be done about it so the stock was planed and left oversize in stick for several days. Convinced that any movement had stopped, I re-dimensioned and began the machining, moulding, mortising and tenoning etc (Pics.1

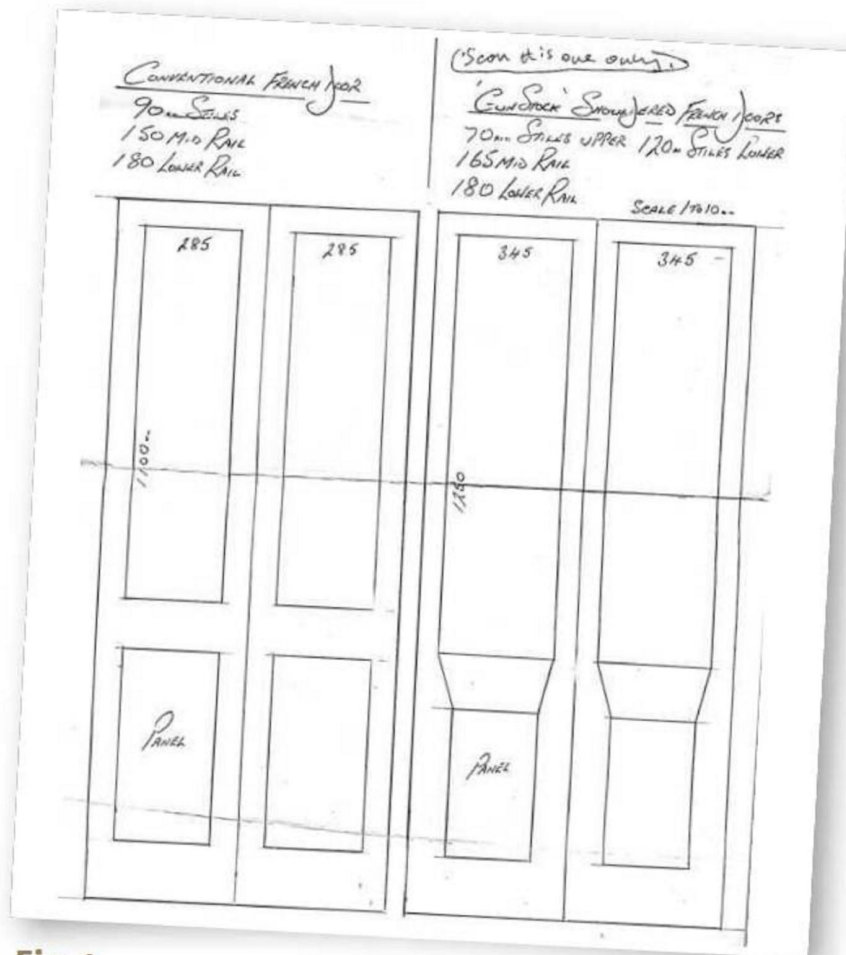


Fig.1 Gunstocks cut width and offer strength

to 8), then thought about the folding shutters. Ever done them? Watch out! They are a trial unto themselves. These were 3000mm high and I shuddered when I found in the survey what had to be done to make them fit snugly in their recesses and then four-fold out perfectly into the centre.

The masonry and existing architraves were so far out of true that I had to make the shutters out of parallel. Fitting was a story best

left untold but my engineer client understood and his patience was exemplary.

Conclusion

Would I take on a project like this again? Probably. It was the site fitting that gave me the screamers. But I felt I had to do it for the house and for the money, and also for the ultimate satisfaction of knowing that I had got it right and it was going to stay right for a very long time. Amen.

Around the House

with Phil Davy



On holiday in Spain recently, I had an unexpected bonus. With a

few hours to kill at Bilbao I had the chance to visit the Guggenheim Museum. This extraordinary building is worth a detour if you're ever in the area.

One floor was devoted to David Hockney's exhibition A Bigger Picture, many recent images created on his iPad. His love of the Yorkshire countryside included numerous vivid paintings of trees.

Whatever our views on contemporary art may be, these pictures were stunning. Rather poignant if our native ash trees are likely to disappear across Britain...

Phil Davy

Phil Davy, Consultant Editor

Nostalgia

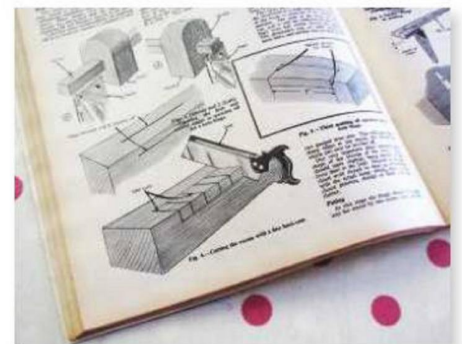
Practical Householder

You never quite know what you're going to come across when visiting a National Trust property. Discovering Berkshire's Basildon Park a few weeks back, by far the most popular room seemed to be the kitchen, restored to how it would have been in the 1950s. A welcome departure from the Trust's normal 'hands off' approach, there were plenty of items lying around for visitors to handle. Included were a couple of copies of *Practical Householder*, dating from 1957 and 1959. Priced at 1/3 (one shilling and three pence), the contents were fascinating. If you read each issue from cover to cover I reckon you'd be able to pass yourself off as a master builder in no time!

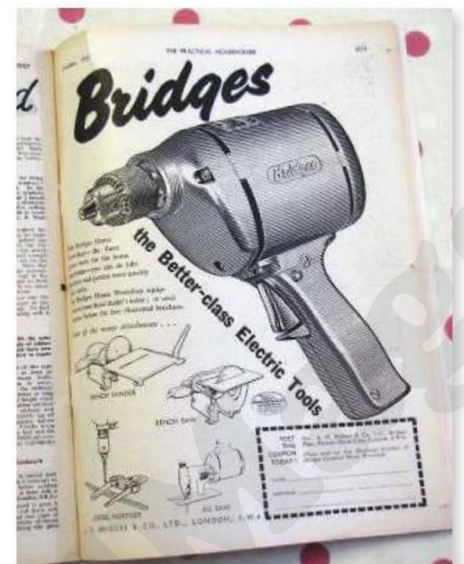
As the title implied, Britain's first DIY magazine covered the lot. You could learn how to refinish washing machines and fridges, make a leaded window, care for carpets, French polish and even maintain a gas fire. And all in one issue – publishers certainly knew how to cram material in 50 years ago.

My favourite feature was a two-pager on how to build quite a complex timber garage, with little in the way of drawings to help you, but with so much information in just two pages, artwork almost seemed unnecessary. Conversely, a feature on fitting hinges had some excellent drawings, and relied solely on hand-tool techniques, naturally. Amusingly, the author was a W Gates! Advertisements were an eye opener and could be somewhat sexist. I spotted one for vacuum cleaners that was directly targeting women. To be fair, there was usually a female appearing on the cover, busy helping hubby with the decorating or holding a piece of timber. And of course we can't forget the ubiquitous pipe and even ads promoting smoking in the workshop. How times have changed...

There were fewer power tools back then, but familiar names included Wolf, Bridges (later merging with Stanley) and Black & Decker. Heavier and more robust than most of today's tools, a 3/4in chuck drill could be



W Gates relied on hand tools when fitting his hinges



The power tool names way back when included Wolf, Bridges and Black & Decker

bought for a princely five shillings in 1955. Admittedly it was more than a decade later, but I clearly remember saving up for my first B&D electric drill. This could be fitted with a range of attachments, a system pioneered by Bridges, I think. Suddenly it seemed possible to build just about anything. Who needed hand tools? But that has to be a story for another day...

Winter Project

Takes: *One weekend*

LOG TOTE



Logging on

Tools you'll need

Mitre saw or handsaw, biscuit joiner, jigsaw, sander, drillstand, drill/driver, bench planes

Phil Davy shows you how to build a tote to carry logs from the pile to the fireplace

Spending a few days at a beautiful Cornish farmhouse B&B a few months ago, the roaring woodburner was a particularly welcoming feature when arriving on a cold, damp autumn afternoon. I was amused the next morning to find the owner had parked a wheelbarrow full of logs in front of the huge fireplace, having wheeled it across the pristine beige carpet. This got me thinking of an alternative way to carry logs without bringing in mud from outdoors. Although my log tote may not be able to compete with a wheelbarrow in terms of capacity, it's easy to make and use.

Of course, you can build it any size and virtually any softwood will do the job, so it's a good time to use up those offcuts. Hardwood would be more durable, though this would add to the weight. When loaded up with logs the tote is heavy enough, though it's pretty sturdy at the same time. Overall dimensions of

this tote are 450mm long x 380mm deep x 400mm high.

I had several odds and ends left from previous projects, so used 100 x 25mm PAR softwood for the lower sides, 50 x 25mm for the upper rails and 75 x 25mm for the ends. The tapered sides were cut from 200 x 25mm stock, tapering at 82°. These should not be glued to the lower box, but simply screwed to allow for wood movement. I used plated, countersunk 4 x 30mm screws for this stage.

Broom handle

A length of 24mm broom handle was perfect for the hand grip, protruding 5mm at each end from the sides. It's best to drill the 24mm holes in the tapered sides with a stand-mounted drill, as you'll have trouble sliding the handle across if these are slightly out of alignment. You will probably need to sand down the handle slightly to enable it to slide through cleanly.

Although the base is made from 15mm-thick slats it would be quicker to fit a ply or MDF base. I just think slats look better, even though they'll be hidden by logs most of the time. You could always drop in a loose 6mm MDF base to prevent debris falling off the logs onto the floor.

You may find it easier to use pocket-hole screws for the joints. I'd run out of the smaller size 0 biscuits, while size 10 are slightly too long for 45mm-wide timber. To get around the problem I was forced to use size 10 biscuits, cutting off the excess with a fine-tooth saw once the glue had dried. This meant filling the exposed ends of the slots before painting, but a project such as this is not exactly a piece of fine furniture, so it's quite acceptable.

To finish the tote I brushed on two coats of General Finishes Milk Paints in Autumn Haze, which does not require a primer. If storing the box outdoors, add a coat of suitable exterior satin varnish if using these paints.

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1 To get some idea of overall size for the tote, measure across a couple of suitably sized logs



2 Cut timber to length for the sides and ends. Allow an extra 2mm on each side piece



3 Mark out positions for biscuits on the side and end components. Cut the slots for No. 20 biscuits



4 Sand inner faces of sides and ends. Spread the biscuits with PVA glue and insert them into the slots



5 Assemble the box and add cramps across the ends. Check for square and adjust if necessary



6 When the glue has dried, trim the excess end grain carefully with a bench plane



7 Draw around a suitable object to find a pleasing radius to shape the top edges of each side



8 Mark out both tapered side pieces, using a compass at the top. The radius for this arc is 40mm



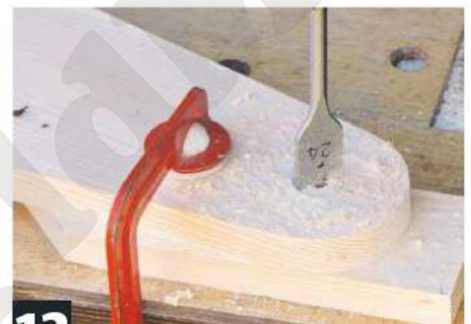
9 Cut out the tapered sides carefully using a jigsaw. Alternatively, do this with a bandsaw



10 Cramp both sides together and grip them in the bench jaws. Plane down to the pencil lines



11 With sides still held together, shape the top curve using a sanding drum mounted in a drill



12 Drill holes for the handle using a 24mm flatbit. Check the fit by drilling an offcut first

Winter Project

Takes: *One weekend*

LOG TOTE



13 Hold the tapered sides against the box and mark centrally to determine the inside screw positions



14 Saw the base slats so they are a snug fit in the box. Lightly sand the arrises before fixing



15 Each slat is glued and nailed in place. Drill pilot holes to prevent the wood from splitting



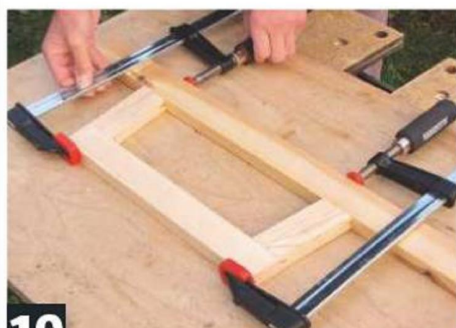
16 The two outer slats are butted up against the ends. Glue and cramp in place before nailing



17 Set a sliding bevel to the angle formed by the taper. Upper side components are cut to match



18 Cut the rails that make up the upper sides. These are butt jointed together with biscuits



19 Cut biscuit slots and glue together top rails and supports. Shape the ends when dry



20 Cut matching slots in the top edges of lower sides, then glue the upper rails to the lower box



21 Cramp the tapered sides to the lower box to keep everything aligned while the glue dries



22 Screw the tapered side pieces to the inner rails and box from the inside. Don't glue these, though



23 Slide the handle through the holes. Drill pilot holes at each end and fix with lost-head nails



24 Fill any holes and sand the box. Brush on a couple of coats of varnish or suitable paint

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Useful kit / Ryobi RMT1201 multi-tool

Almost every power tool manufacturer seems to have either a corded or cordless multi-tool in its range these days. Most are limited to sanding, scraping and cutting tasks, although AEG's superb tool with completely interchangeable heads (tested in GW257) promises a lot more. Sister company Ryobi has launched two new models, the 12V cordless version competing with the likes of Bosch and Dremel.

Immediately obvious when you pick up this tool is the size of its body. Longer than the 10.8V Dremel and Bosch models, it's actually slimmer but weighs a tad more at 0.9kg. Many multi-tools are quite bulky, but the Ryobi feels perfect, especially if you have small hands. Most of the plastic casing is covered in soft-grip rubber, making it ergonomically the best multi-tool I've handled.

The on/off slider switch is up top, while the speed dial sits on one side. Speed range is from 5000 to 20,000rpm. Above the dial are battery-status LEDs, a pretty useful feature. As lithium battery power dies off rapidly, a visual indicator of remaining juice in the tank makes sense. A traffic light system (red, amber, green) illuminates for a few seconds at switch-on, then is extinguished to conserve battery life. The white LED worklight at the front stays on for five seconds once you've switched off the tool.

Charging up

Like similar tools, you insert the 1.3Ah Li-ion battery at the end of the body. Charge time is just under one hour. There's no ignoring the charger when it's operating – a flashing green LED bright enough for a party! On the downside, only one battery is supplied, but a spare power pack will set you back about £25, which these days isn't excessive. I suspect that Ryobi will be introducing more 12V tools sharing the same battery platform if its successful One Plus 18V range is anything to go by.



The controls are just where you want them



Almost perfect multi-tasker

Besides the delta sanding pad, semi-circular and straight-toothed blades are included, plus an adaptor for other brands. You change the head with the hex key supplied, though there's nowhere to store this on the tool itself.

Conclusion

I've been using this Ryobi for several outdoor jobs recently, primarily repairing a traditional casement window that included a broken pane of glass. Fitting the semi-circular blade to the

tool made cutting through the old hardened putty straightforward – it's definitely a miserable task if using just a chisel and mallet. Like any multi-tool it's ideal for sanding small areas, too. In fact, it's now the tool I reach for when doing most sanding work.

★★★★★

Price: £79.99

Ryobi

Made in: China

Web: www.uk.ryobitools.eu



You'll never run out of juice in the middle of a job with these warning LEDs



Changes are effected with a hex key



Useful kit / Bosch PSR Select driver

Russian roulette



The intelligent charger detects battery condition

With Skyfall the latest film marking 50 years of James Bond this year, power tool manufacturers seem to have missed an opportunity. Perhaps it's my vivid imagination, but I can't help thinking of Russian roulette when handling the new Bosch PSR Select screwdriver! Let me explain. With most cordless drivers you have to physically insert and remove hex bits from the tool holder. On the compact Select there's a magazine filled with 12 screwdriver stubby (25mm) bits. Simply rotate this until you find the bit you want, push a selector button across and you're ready to shoot. There's even a satisfying click as though it's primed and ready for action.

The assortment of Pozzi, slotted and Torx bits included should be enough for most DIY tasks, a clear window above the magazine magnifying the bit below. Squeeze the trigger and an LED makes this clearly visible for 20 seconds. Once you've found the bit you want, slide the button and it emerges from the front of the tool. Clever stuff. Bits can easily be replaced when they wear, or if you prefer to use harder-wearing ones. There's a forward/reverse button above the trigger, with direction indicator arrows on top, plus battery level gauge. There's the almost mandatory worklight at the front of the tool, too.

Slow but sure

If you've never used a low-voltage cordless screwdriver before, you may be surprised by its speed, or rather lack of it. At 210rpm the Bosch is pretty slow, but that's perfect for assembling flat-pack furniture and so on. Too fast and you're more likely to damage the screw heads, especially if you've not quite matched up the correct size or pattern.

Powered by a 3.6V, 1.5Ah battery, like any drill/driver with a built-in power pack the charge time is pretty slow. In this case it's four hours, so it's not a bad idea to plug in the tool when taking a break. Fortunately, partial charging is not a problem with lithium batteries, the intelligent charger detecting battery condition.

Conclusion

It's unlikely we'll be seeing 007 using a power tool anytime soon, but wouldn't that be cool?



Price: £59.99

Bosch

Made in: Hungary

Web: www.bosch-pt.com



The magazine takes 12 stubbies...



...from which you select the one you want



The all-important controls and battery level gauge

Tools
for a
Tenner



Roughneck spring cramp

Buying a couple of extra cramps for the workshop is never a bad idea. When you find an

inexpensive product with a really strong spring action, it's tempting to get a few. This Roughneck nylon cramp has soft-grip inserts, soft swivelling jaws, a 50mm capacity and is mighty powerful. In fact, it's one of the best spring cramps I've come across. I found them in my local hardware store on offer at £1.99 each, so shop around and you may still be able to snap up a bargain.



Price: £3.99 each

Olympia Tools

Web: www.olympia-tools.co.uk

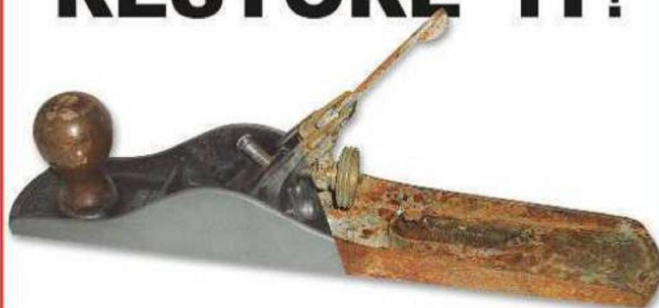
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Wizard candle power



A very prestige project sees **Les Thorne** make a candlestick that combines Victorian style with a contemporary finish



▲ Pic.1 This design owes something to one of Stuart Dyas' Classic Forms

Sometimes the ideas for my articles fall into my lap. I had been asked to enter the Worshipful Company of Turners' Wizardry in Wood competition for a candlestick to be used at their banquets.

It had to be turned on a lathe and incorporate a solid brass scone from the Axminster catalogue (catalogue ref. no. 700082), supplied to each entrant. There were no restrictions as to shape or style but the overall height, including the brass scone, had to be 330mm, the base being of any shape so long as it had a minimum diameter of 150mm diameter (or square) and a maximum diameter of 180mm (or square).

If my work was chosen it would be photographed and this, together with a short CV, would be placed in a leather-bound book to be put out at the livery company's dinners and become part of its history.

It all sounded very exciting so I filled in my application and started planning. I wasn't sure at first whether to do a traditional style or go for something a little more contemporary, in the end deciding to go for a Victorian-type turning with a modern paint and gilt cream finish. This method of finishing requires a timber that is open grained, limiting my wood choice to ash, oak, elm or sweet chestnut; I opted for ash because it gives consistently good results in conjunction with liming.

The blanks were measured and cut. They are not from the same board but as they are to be covered in paint it shouldn't make a difference.

Design

This design is loosely based on one in the *Classic Form* book by Stuart Dyas (Pic.1). I have used this book in previous articles and I would just like to say how essential it is for woodturning design. Any of the detailing I put on the base does need to be really well cut because the gilt cream will accentuate any marks that I leave on there, so keeping it simple is a benefit if you think your tooling is not up to it. Amazingly the design I have chosen from the book worked out that I just needed to add 50% to scale it up to the right size.

Base work

Whenever I do a project that involves faceplate and spindle work I try and do the faceplate piece first so I mounted the base on a screw chuck, using a bowl gouge to clean up the bottom surface. This does need to be slightly concave so the candlestick will not wobble (Pics.2 & 3).

Once I was happy with the surface I turned a recess in the bottom to accept my dovetail jaws. This is 3mm deep and will be filled with hardboard before I put the baize on.

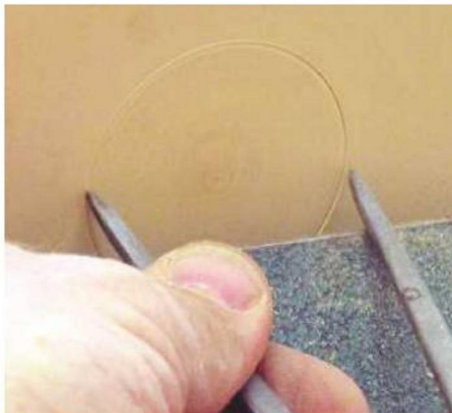
To achieve maximum grip from the jaws make sure that they make a circle (Pic.4). Measure this before you put the wood onto the screw chuck and ensure that the angle you cut



▲ Pic.2 The bottom surface needs to be slightly concave...



▲ Pic.3 ...so the candlestick won't wobble



▲ Pic.4 For maximum grip the jaws must make a circle



▲ Pic.5 The dovetail angle must closely match the one on the chuck



▲ Pic.6 Put the wood onto the jaws and get ready to turn...



▲ Pic.7 ...a shape that requires just a small fillet and an ogee



▲ Pic.8 The hole for the stem is 30mm diameter



▲ Pic.9 This cleaned area will be filled with gilt cream

Turning



▲ Pic.10 Ebonising lacquer goes on next...



▲ Pic.11 ...to prepare the surface for the gilt cream



▲ Pic.12 The large hole requires use of a large-diameter point on the live centre



▲ Pic.13 With the callipers set to the diameter of the base hole, the left-hand end is turned down



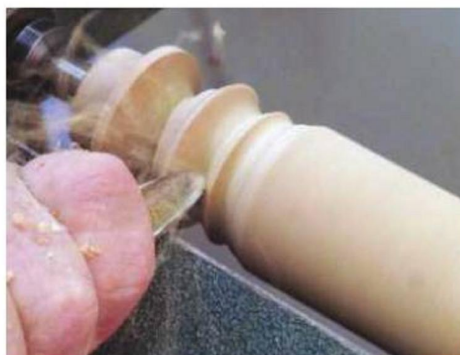
▲ Pic.14 This being a one-off Les takes a freehand approach to the design



▲ Pic.15 The fine details may need a little adjustment...



▲ Pic.16 ...but you will be surprised at how pleasing...



▲ Pic.17 ...the results can be...



▲ Pic.18 ...and they are even better with a good sanding...



▲ Pic.19 ...to prepare the surface for the ebonising lacquer

on the dovetail is as close as possible to the one on the chuck (**Pic.5**).

Once done I put the piece of wood on to the jaws and was ready to turn the rest of the base (**Pic.6**). The shape is fairly simple but elegant, with just a small fillet and an ogee profile (**Pic.7**).

The next job was to drill a hole to accept the stem. When doing a one-off like this I quite often do it on the lathe, but if I were batch turning these it would be done afterwards on a pillar drill.

The hole does not need to be all the way through and in this case I made it 30mm diameter (**Pic.8**).

Careful sanding

The completed turning now needed careful sanding. I cannot stress enough how important it is to get this right, so make sure that you remove all the sanding marks by not making too big a jump in grit sizes and use a good-quality abrasive such as the Rhynogrip Red Line.

Once happy with the surface I used a liming brush – a suede brush would do – to remove some of the early growth from the rings to leave a lower area to be filled with the gilt cream (**Pic.9**).

A proprietary ebonising lacquer was applied to the surface (**Pic.10**). When I first tried this technique I used black shellac polish but the lacquer is much easier to apply well. You can see from this close up of the surface that the paint has settled into the holes, making an ideal surface for the next stage (**Pic.11**). I will apply the gilt cream when I have completed the stem.

Now for the stem

The piece of wood that I have for the stem is a little bit smaller in diameter than the plan implies but it will work, I hope. I mounted the timber between centres and to accommodate the large hole (**Pic.12**) used my large-diameter point on the live centre. As with all two-part turnings the spigot needs to be accurate so the Vernier is set to the diameter of the hole in the base and the left-hand end of the stock is turned down to the right size (**Pic.13**).

Because this is a one-off I did not work to a plan or rod, and once the work was round I marked out where I thought the details were going to be (**Pic.14**).

The sizing cuts were done with the parting tool and the details shaped with a spindle gouge and a skew. Work from the tailstock end first because this will maintain the strength in the wood whereas if I thinned down the right-hand side this action would weaken it.

I had to adjust the position of the details only slightly and I was pleased how the overall shape came out – working in this way by eye is a good test of your turning ability (**Pics.15** to **17**).

The shape was now complete and, like the base, needed to be sanded perfectly before



▲ Pic.20 Mounting the candlestick between centres on the lathe means your hands can be kept off the work while applying the gilding wax



▲ Pic.21 Rub the cream into the grain...



▲ Pic.22 ...until all the low areas are filled with the gold...



▲ Pic.23 ...and the grain is completely filled



▲ Pic.24 Excess gold will mar the finished result



▲ Pic.25 For a professional appearance, attach baize to the bottom



▲ Pic.26 Cutting the baize with abrasive produces a neat result



Stuart King demonstrates a da Vinci-style lathe

Yes! Les is a winning wizard

The Worshipful Company of Turners has supported the craft of turning for a number of years, mainly by starting up the Register of Professional Turners, our only nationwide mark of ability.

October saw the third of the Wizardry in Wood exhibitions, the previous ones being in 2004 and 2008. I was lucky enough to attend the one in 2008 because I had been awarded a bursary the year before but 2012 was to be my first as an exhibitor.

With the show being at the wonderful Carpenters' Hall in Throgmorton Street, London, the logistics of setting up were very difficult, this building being right in the heart of the City of London, very close to the Bank of England.

To make things a little easier I travelled up with fellow exhibitor Nick Agar so there were two of us swearing at the other London drivers. As well as 20 top turners displaying their work, there were a couple of displays such as the Mary Rose exhibition and ornamental turning.

With the drive towards decorative turning in the UK it was fantastic to see all genres of 'rounded' wood on display, such as pole lathe work, ornamental, craft, artistic and utilitarian, and many of the turners' displays showed a very eclectic mix.

Diversity on show

The show was open to the public with a small admission charge but there were two evening functions where most of the selling seemed to be done. It was very apparent that the love of wood was alive and well with typical comments being: "I turned a bowl when I was at school" and "the feel of wood is sensual."

This year the event was combined with the bi-annual competitions run by the Worshipful Company, the many entries on display showing the diversity in British turning, and it must have been a difficult job choosing the winners from the entries.

Prizes of up to £1,250 were awarded for the 'blue chip' competitions such as a pair of lidded chalices. Luckily my candlestick was chosen.

There were a couple of pole lathes in action, one being used by Robin Wood who is one of the only pole lathe bowl turners around, and also a chair bodging display. Last but not least Stuart King used a lathe designed by Leonardo da Vinci which did seem to work OK, but I must admit I do like a couple of horsepower myself.

I have been to the American Association of Woodturners symposium which is often described as the definitive display of turned work but we can match that with our work over here. Thank you to the Worshipful Company of Turners' volunteers for working so tirelessly in support of the craft of turning.



Our Les strikes an unusually coy pose as he shows off some of his work

spraying (Pic.18). Using the liming brush as before, I removed the softer growth by working in the direction of the grain before spraying with ebonising lacquer (Pic.19).

Once it was really dry I mounted the candlestick between centres on the lathe; this allows you to apply the gilding wax without handling the work (Pic.20).

Gilt cream

Gilt cream is available in colours such as gold, silver and bronze. The jars are small and your first thought will be that they are expensive, but only a small amount is used at a time.

I like to apply the cream with my gloved index finger, rubbing it across the grain until all the low areas are filled up with the gold (Pics.21 and 22). When the grain is completely filled (Pic.23), remove the excess with finishing or lemon oil. Do not make the surface too wet as you can start to wash the gold out of the grain; if this does happen just apply more gilt cream.

Keep looking closely at the work to make sure that the surface is clean; any gold left on



Some of Les's candlestick rivals

that's not in the grain will ruin the overall effect (Pic.24).

You could use a paste wax to help rub off the excess gilt cream, but do a trial piece as some of the proprietary paste waxes contain harsh solvents that can remove the black.

Assembly

After gluing the candlestick components together, I attached the candle cup via a screw down the centre, then covered over the bottom surface with baize (Pic.26). Cut a piece slightly over size, stick it on and then use a 100-grit piece of abrasive to lightly rub around the edge until the baize is cut through. This gives a very good neat finish.

Does Les's candlestick make the livery company's banqueting table? Find out by reading the Wizardry in Wood panel.

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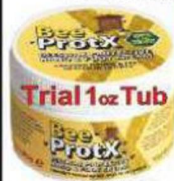
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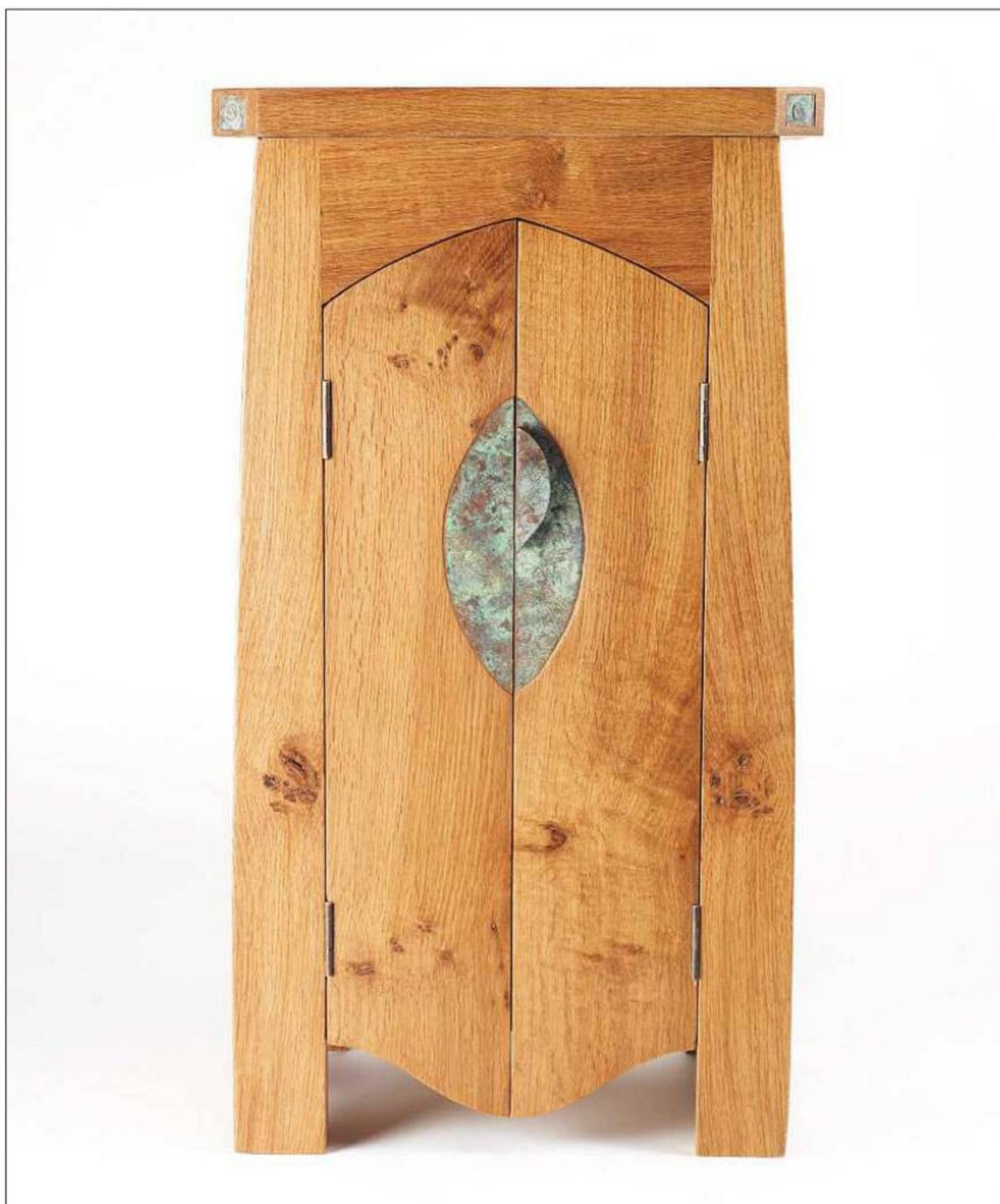
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VICTORY CELEBRATION Furniture maker Katharine Fernie used oak and copper from HMS Victory to make this superb cabinet. The materials were removed as part of a recent renovation and have been used to create the 1805 Collection, a commemorative collection of limited edition works by leading craftspeople. Katharine says: "It was taken to a barn in Norfolk and that's where I went to select the timber I wanted. It was magical walking into that barn, wall to wall timber of many shapes and sizes, mostly shortish and chunky and looking like interior beams from the ship. Apparently there was 34 tons of oak and 10 tons of copper and all in remarkably good condition.

"I chose to make a small cabinet to keep the cost of the materials down but it still proved to be very expensive in the final costing. I selected chunks of oak that I then machined into planks. The sides were machined to approximately 6mm thick so they could be bent round the frame to give the nice gentle curve of the sides, similar to cladding the hull of a ship. The oak proved easy to machine unlike some other ancient oaks that I've used over the years. The sheet of copper which would have been one of many protecting the hull below the water line was cut by hand to make the decorative insets and handle on the front."

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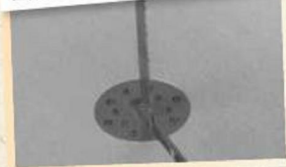
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