SHARPENING TURNING TOOLS — COMMON PROBLEMS SOLVED THE WORLD'S LEADING MAGAZINE FOR WOODTURNERS Make hollow forms What you need with Andy Coates To know about and Sue Harker specialist tools Abrasives for PROJECTS FOR YOU TO MAKE pen turning Lidded box with a carved handle Deep fluted hawthorn vase Lace bobbin display stand Natural-edge bowl **Turning for fun:** Andrew Stevens in profile Routing on the lathe: swinging & arching techniques

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# Categorising yourself



thought long and hard about this month's potential 'hot potato'. I focused on recent comments and conversations and one topic that has cropped up time and time again is how people categorise themselves. In that, I mean how people will often call themselves beginners, improvers, intermediate or advanced turners. I have commented on this before but it is worth saying a few words about it again. During the conversations and discussions, I would invariably ask by what standard does one judge and label themselves or others accordingly? If it is based on the number of years one has been turning and that number is 20, then it is totally irrelevant if the person has only completed 20 projects in that time. During that time, it means they have had little experience, practically. If it is based on how many projects one has created in those 20 years, it does not say anything about how good the items created during that time are. If you only look at the quality, it does not say anything about how that item was created. It could have been chewed into shape over the years and sanded and labelled as turning. It remains a beautiful

piece of work, but it wasn't turned. Now, I am on record as having said that I don't care how people create things as long as they do it safely, end up with what they wanted and have fun getting there. And that still holds, but if someone says they are a beginner as far as turning is concerned, I pretty much guess they want to learn the skills involved in turning and not sculpting something with their teeth.

I know I am being contentious, but I think categorising people or people labelling themselves doesn't always help; it is an artificial barrier. In fact, I would go so far as to say that it constrains people. An opinion is always subjective and subject to your own or another's thoughts and all that entails; it never gives the whole picture.

I think people should be upfront and honest about where they need help. The next question would be where do they go to get that advice? But that of course means they need to go to people who are respected to give honest, impartial help as well as ensuring that they actually know what they are talking about. That is another

topic for a future leader... There are clubs and organisations that have set up training programmes for turners, which are sequential, progressive skill and knowledge-building programmes catering for ever more difficult and complex techniques, etc. Many people avail themselves of such courses and for various reasons, others do not.

There is no right or wrong answer to this, but, the fact remains that categorisation by yourself or others without formal assessment criteria – yes, like the old guild system – is nothing but perception, be it our own or that of others. Am I advocating the old guild methods and formal training qualifications? No, unless you want or need to do them. They have their place. Other people are free spirits, who pick and choose as they like and create whatever they do in any manner appropriate to get from A-B, with the caveat of working as safely as possible. So are labels helpful and do we need them?

markb@thegmcgroup.com



Woodworkers Institute website (**www.woodworkersinstitute.com**) is thriving. It would be great if you took a look and participated in the various discussions and competitions in our community, or see us on Facebook & Twitter.



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 $80 \underset{\text{about special tools}}{\text{What you need to know}}$ 

Kurt Hertzog shares a few tips on tools, including grinding, tool shaping and angles, and tools made or altered to perform special tasks





#### **NEWS, LATEST PRODUCTS, MAGAZINE UPLOADS & EVENTS**

can all be found on www.woodworkersinstitute.com. These all appear on the magazine homepage and you can see a bigger selection by scrolling down the page and clicking on the individual stories. We also have an extensive online archive for you to browse

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**Conversion chart** 

2mm (5/64in)

# Community

Leader Mark Baker talks about how we categorise ourselves as turners

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#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Woodturning is an inherently dangerous pursuit. Readers should not attempt the procedures described herein without seeking training and information on the safe use of tools and machines. All readers should observe current safety legislation.

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# Round & about

We bring you the latest news from the world of woodturning as well as letters from the Woodworkers Institute forum and important dates for your diary from the woodturning community

# News from the AAW



Tom Kindom pictured with the new MWA woodturning workstation

# Minnesota Woodturners develop accessibility solution

The Minnesota Woodturners Association (MWA), an AAW chapter with more than 241 members that meets in Roseville, Minnesota, had a new member, Tom Kindom, who was interested in attending the chapter's handson woodturning classes.

MWA welcomes all members to its courses, but was not appropriately equipped to teach Tom, who uses a wheelchair. So, chapter members browsed items online to identify equipment options that could potentially be helpful in accommodating Tom's needs. Then, the MWA programming team went to his home, where Tom showed them his workshop and explained his challenges. They measured the height of his wheelchair in relation to his lathe with the goal of designing a workstation that would effectively serve Tom's requirements.

After extensive dialog and several aborted drawings, MWA member, George, a master furniture craftsman and woodturner who happens to be blind, said, "Why don't you hang it on the wall?" Eureka! The idea was brilliant and the team quickly drew up the new sketches.

Tom, who is an experienced CAD – computer-aided design – contractor, used the sketches to generate the ultimate workstation plans. He sent the team the CAD drawings, along with complete fabrication specs and list of materials. On behalf of the chapter, Rick Auge, chapter president, applied for and received an AAW Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) to pay for the workstation materials and construction. Today, Tom has joined the MWA's hands-on classes,

is developing his skills and is a burgeoning woodturner!

The MWA chapter has plans to share the detailed CAD drawings and fabrication instructions with others on the American Association of Woodturners website at www.woodturner.org.

# Structured woodturning programmes inspire youth in Waxhaw

For the past seven years, the Waxhaw Woodturners (WW), an AAW chapter with 19 members in Waxhaw, North Carolina, sponsored a series of structured 'Turning to the Future' woodturning courses tailored for youth ages 12-21. First and foremost, class safety is a top priority and students are required to wear full faceshields while working at the lathe. Additionally, the shop vacuum system is turned on during each class to minimise dust inhalation.

The WW's introductory class involves successful completion of two projects: a honey dipper and a spinning top. Subsequent classes require each student to complete four projects, including a bowl, bud vase, goblet and lidded box. The WW curriculum has been designed to help students build fundamental woodturning skills, including

proper use of the spindle, roughing and bowl gouges, as well as the parting tool and skew.

Sometimes adults participate along with the kids, and often, the youth complete the projects more skilfully than the adults – perhaps due to old adult habits that need a bit of correction.

All youths who have successfully completed the Turning to the Future series of woodturning courses are eligible to work independently in the chapter's weekly 'Open Shop', supervised by an adult instructor. Some students have become so enthusiastic about woodturning that they attend Open Shop when returning home from college during semester breaks. The chapter views this eagerness as a sign that they are providing youth the appropriate mix of instruction and encouragement through the Turning to the Future programme.

"The exciting part is watching the students' creativity improve during and after the structured class times," said Moe Gingerich, instructor for WW's youth programme. "The Educational Opportunity Grants from the AAW have been the key to our successful programme. In fact, we could not have implemented this school without the assistance of the AAW," she continues.



Waxhaw Turning to the Future students build fundamental woodturning skills through completion of projects including a honey dipper, spinning top, bowl, bud vase, goblet and lidded box

Contact: AAW Tel: (001) 877 595 9094 Web: www.woodturner.org

# West Midlands Woodturners celebrate 25 years

est Midlands Woodturners celebrated their 25th anniversary at the end of 2014. A special day was held with cake and other goodies.

#### The past

Early in 1989, a seminar was held at Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove in the West Midlands, hosted by Reg Sherwin. Among the attendees were a group of five, including Graham Lovett who is the current president of WMWT. Over lunch, the group discussed the idea of forming a woodturning group. As the five were mainly from the Birmingham and Dudley area of the West Midlands, it was to focus its activities in Birmingham. One of the five volunteered to be the contact/chairman and so the seed was sown from which the West Midlands Woodturners was born.

#### The present

The club meets for a full day on the third Sunday of the month. The meetings alternate between a demonstration by a professional turner and hands-on days.

At all meetings, there is a Chairman's Challenge with three groups: novice, intermediate and advanced. The challenge pieces are announced for the full year to give members plenty of time to plan. This has proved a popular part of the meetings with around 20 entries each month. There is also a display of general work each month where members are encouraged to show recent finished pieces and work in progress.

A recent innovation has been the decision to set up the camera/projection equipment at hands-on meetings. The club's present membership of around 60 has a wide range of experience, from the absolute beginner to members who have won competitions organised by the Society of Ornamental Turners and the Worshipful Company of Turners.

Several members have had work selected for the AWGB touring exhibitions and one



Tom Badger's 1,000 piece segmented vase

of the club's younger members is hoping to turn professional and be accepted onto the Register of Professional Turners (RPT).

#### The future

For the future, the aim is to continue to increase membership and help and encourage members, visitors and the public to try new things and develop new skills in the field of woodturning and its related disciplines.

The club plans to continue its attendance at outside shows to promote WMWT and the art of woodturning on a broad front with seven outside days planned, so far, for 2015.

New members and visitors are always welcome and there is no charge for the first two visits – one demo and one hands-on. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided free of charge throughout the day.

The club usually meet on the third Sunday of each month, but visitors are requested to check the website to confirm dates and times.



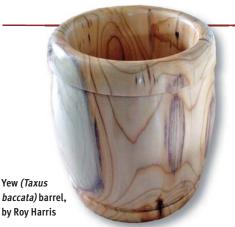
Contact: John Hooper Club meetings: Water Orton Primary School, Vicarage Lane, Water Orton B46 1SE

Tel: 01213 548 464

Web: www.wmwoodturners.org.uk



Oak (Quercus robur) hollow form with ceramic collar, 270 × 100mm, by Ianlyn





Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) bowl with textured exterior, by dunkhooper

# Overcoming personal turning challenges

Dear Mark,

Please accept my gratitude for the inspiration that you have given me to advance my skills as a woodturner. Your personal challenge last year motivated me to pick up my own personal challenge, one that I had desired to do for many years.

I have always wanted to explore lidded box turning. My results up to this time have not been good despite watching numerous YouTube videos, so I moved ahead and challenged myself to make two different box designs a week and use three different woods doing so. That is six boxes a week. A stiff challenge but for the last two months I have been able to keep up the development pace of lidded boxes and still maintain a rigorous turning schedule for items that are donated to many charitable causes. I do not sell anything.

Again, thank you for the inspiration and encouragement. I will go now and just make something – on the lathe, of course.

Brent Ross, President – Las Vegas Woodturners Association

# Toolshow 2015

oolshow 2015 is once again building on the massive success of previous events and aims to be the largest toolshow in the country. Held at the American Express Community Stadium near Brighton, once again, you can expect to enjoy free parking, free entry, a wide range of free demos, the best show deals and pitch-side masterclasses.

All the biggest names in the woodworking industry will be present, waiting to show you their new products, answer any questions and offer you some fantastic deals on products. The event organisers are periodically releasing updates on masterclasses and any new exhibitors who have joined. This is an event not to be missed, so visit the website today and be sure to sign up so you don't miss a thing!

When: 25–26 July, 2015

Where: American Express Community Stadium,

Village Way, Brighton BN1 9BL

Contact: PR Industrial Tel: 01273 774 455

Web: www.prindustrial.co.uk

# Seminar day with Seamus Cassidy



 ${\bf Seamus\ Cassidy\ with\ award\text{-}winning\ piece\ 'Jugular'}$ 

helmer Valley Woodturners will be holding a day with artistic woodturner, Seamus Cassidy on 23 August, 2015.

Seamus' work varies from functional pieces to artistic sculptural pieces with many being created from native woods. His award-winning piece 'Jugular' was the 'Featured Artist' piece in issue 269. The event is open to all interested woodturners and woodworkers, not just AWGB members, and the hall has full disabled access. The application form can be downloaded from the club's website.

When: 23 August, 2015

Where: Mountnessing Village Hall, Roman Road, Mountnessing, Brentwood, Essex CM15 OUH

**Tickets:** £16 – including refreshments and buffet lunch – 10am-5pm

Contact: Louise Biggs Tel: 01245 400 728

**Email:** lbiggs@anthemion-furniture.co.uk **Web:** www.chelmerwood.co.uk

# Handmade at Kew

his new international consumer event for contemporary crafts will take place at the prestigious UNESCO world heritage site, Kew Gardens in October.

The show is a chance to buy directly from individual makers and galleries and discover the stories behind the work of talented craftspeople. Over 150 designer-makers will showcase work across a variety of disciplines, including: ceramics, jewellery, fashion and textiles, glass, paper, furniture and metalwork.

When: 8-11 October, 2015

Where: Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond,

Surrey TW9 3AB

Contact: Handmade in Britain

Tel: 020 7286 5110

Web: www.handmadeinbritain.co.uk



Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) platter with silver gilt cream, by georg

Apple (Malus sylvestris) root vase, 280mm high × 180mm wide, by Pete in Welland





Pot of Gold mk VIII, 120mm high × 180mm dia. finished with Verdigris and gold gilt cream, by edbanger

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# Lidded box with a carved handle

Neil Scobie revisits one of his old designs to bring us this challenging turned box project



bout 30 years ago, I made two of these lidded boxes, but never again until now. I always thought it would be a good project for woodturners to make as it is not too difficult, but has a few challenges in the turning process and the carving of the handles. I almost always turn lidded boxes on end grain so I do not have to worry about movement in the fit of the lid. However, for this project, an end grain box will not really work with the handle, so my choice is to use a side grain blank of quartersawn timber. This means that the grain will run vertically in the turned box when you look from the end grain. In the turning process, you may encounter some movement in the timber due to stresses built up in the blank. If it does move, all you need to do is to re-turn or reshape the fit of the lid, on either the

box section or the lid. The timber I have chosen is quartersawn Australian red cedar (*Toona ciliata*), but you could use any timber of your choosing.

## NEIL SCOBIE



Neil is a full-time woodworker who makes custom-made furniture and woodturned and carved art pieces for private clients and selected galleries. He also writes for a number of

woodworking magazines. Neil lives in New South Wales, Australia.

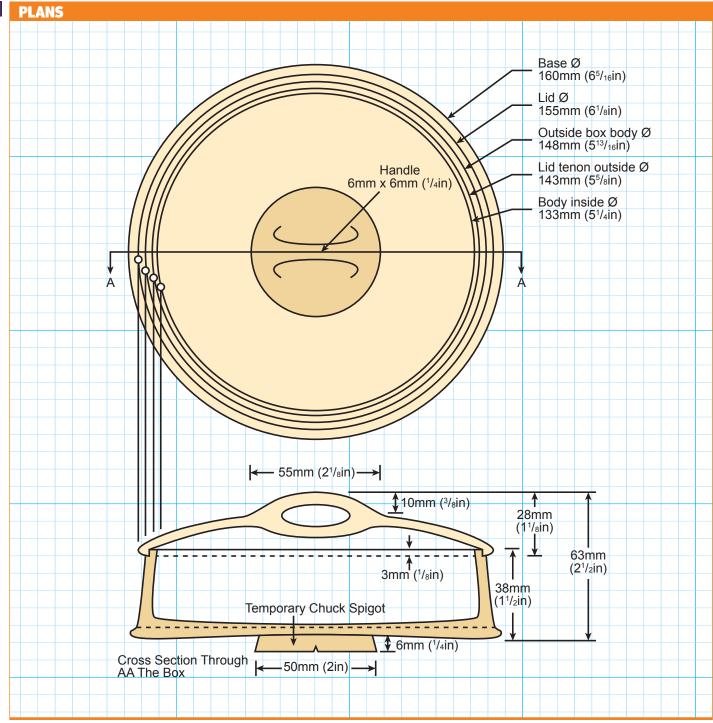
neilscobie@bigpond.com www.neilandlizscobie.com

#### **EOUIPMENT USED**

Small deep fluted gouge Small spindle gouge Parting tool Round skew chisel Carving burrs for the handle Scroll chuck Dividers Various grits of abrasives '0000' steel wool Masking tape Soft pencil - 4B or 6B No.7, 8mm carving tool Rotary carving tool – 6mm diameter with a rounded end and a straight shank Livos Kunos oil sealer PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask and extraction

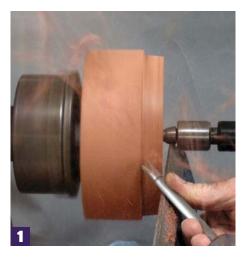






Bandsaw the blank, then open the jaws of your scroll chuck a little before placing the blank against the jaws with the tailstock centre pressing in the centre. Or, place the blank between centres to turn a chuck spigot. A screw centre is not an option here as you don't want a hole in either the top or base of the blank. To trim up the sides, use a small bowl gouge to trim the waste off and turn on centre. Generally, I turn from the outside towards the middle to save chip-out on the corners of the blank

2 Turning from the outside towards the centre, trim up the base and make a spigot to suit your scroll chuck. This will be on the base side of the box





















Use a round skew chisel to turn a slight dovetail shape on the spigot to suit the jaws of the scroll chuck. This will only be a temporary spigot and will be turned off at the very end

Turn the blank around and hold the base spigot in the scroll chuck. Now you can remove the tailstock and turn a spigot on the top side of the lid side of the blank. This spigot will be reshaped into the handle later. Cut from the centre towards the rim – you will be cutting with the grain because of the slope of the domed lid

Here you can see the finished top of the lid shape with the scroll chuck spigot

The next step is to turn the side profile of the box, using either a spindle gouge or a small bowl gouge. Turn from around the middle section towards the top and the bottom beads. The beads should protrude around 3-4mm above the side wall

To get the definition between the side wall and the beads, you will need to roll a spindle gouge over on its side so you can cut right into the corner of the bead. You can cut both ways into the corner. This process should be carried out on the lid bead and the bottom bead

To part off the lid of the box, you should take two cuts to give the tool side clearance. Because you are cutting a deep parting cut, you will need to hold the parting tool securely and stop when you have about 15mm left to saw off by hand

Place the lid spigot in a scroll chuck and use dividers to mark the diameter of the step on the inside of the lid. Check the drawing for sizes. If you are using the dividers with the lathe spinning, make sure you engage the left-hand side of the dividers first where it is supported by the toolrest

The next step is to use a skew chisel to cut the step in the inside of the lid. This should be about 2-3mm deep and be parallel to the axis of the lid

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- Use quartersawn timber to prevent warping on cross grain boxes
- 2. If the lid does warp a little, re-turn it before the final turning of the box tenon
- Select a good piece of timber to start with so you will be pleased with the end result
- Sneak up on the fit of the tenon, regular checks on the fit will prevent making it too loose
- When carving under the handle don't make the end corners too small a radius as it will make sanding much harder



1 Use a small bowl gouge to shape the inside dome to allow for the undercutting of the handle on the top of the lid. Depending on how deep you want to make the handle, allow enough depth in the dome to leave about 4mm thickness after the handle carving is finished

12 You can then completely sand the underside of the lid up to 400 grit, making sure all marks have been removed

Here you can see the completed underside of the lid

Now place the base spigot in the scroll chuck and turn out the inside part of the box. This is the same process as turning the inside of a bowl. Cut from the rim towards the middle to cut with the grain. You should be looking for a base thickness of about 5 or 6mm to allow for the slight undercut of the base. The wall thickness should also be 5 or 6mm. You can have a rounded or a square internal corner, depending on your preference

# "Push the lid onto the tenon of the base ready to turn the top handle section"

15 Once the inside is finished, take trim cuts off the outside in case the blank has warped out of round in the process of hollowing the inside. You may also need to trim the tenon so the lid is a tight fit. Fully sand the base section with 180 grit to start, working up to 400 grit followed by '0000' steel wool to polish the surface of the box

Push the lid onto the tenon of the base ready to turn the top handle section. If the lid is a little loose, just wrap the join with a couple of runs of masking tape. You should now be able to trim the top surface of the lid and the raised section of the handle. Leave a small section around the tailstock centre. You can then fully sand the top of the lid up to the small tailstock spigot as it is best to do this while the lid is spinning

17 While the box is spinning, use a soft pencil, such as a 4B or 6B to mark a circle where the lid hollow is contained

18 Now draw in the handle carving area.
Refer back to the drawing at this stage to see the measurements

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- **6.** When making the base tenon to fit the lid keep the sides parallel
- The tenon slot in the lid should also be parallel, for a fit

































The carving can be done with hand carving tools quite successfully as long as you are carving with the grain. Basically, you need to carve down the hill towards the lowest point from all sides. A small gouge like a No.7, 8mm will do the job

2 O I think it is much easier to use rotary tools for the handle carving as you do not need to worry about grain direction and it is much quicker. You can use any number of rotary tools to drive burrs for carving, such as a Dremel, Foredom, Archer or the high-speed versions. The burr best suited would be one about 6mm in diameter with a rounded end and a straight shank. You can use the burr while the box is held in a vice so you can support the handpiece in both hands

2 1 Make yourself comfortable sitting down and support your hand on your leg while carving out under the handle; this way is maybe a little better because you can keep rotating the box and work around the handle

2 To sand the carved area, a small disc sander is the best way to go. I am using a Wecheer handpiece that hooks onto a rotary carving unit. The abrasive is held onto the small soft leather disc by double-sided tape. This is cheap to buy and quick to change to the next grit. Look for the sponge double-sided tape, which is about 3mm thick

23 To sand under the handle of the box, hold the chuck in a vice and hold the bottom spigot in the chuck so you have both hands free to pull a thin strip of cloth-backed abrasive backwards and forwards. Work down to 400 grit until all the scratches have been removed. Note that the lid has been taped on so it will not come off while sanding. Hand-sand with the grain to remove any scratches left by the rotary sander. Sand to 400 grit followed by '0000' steel wool. Check the fit of your lid, if it is too tight, place it back on the lathe and take a trim cut off the tenon or maybe just a quick sand with a piece of 320 grit abrasive

24 Make a jam fit chuck to place the bottom half of the box onto so that you can turn off the bottom spigot. Use a small deep fluted gouge, cutting towards the centre. The base should have a slight hollow towards the centre

25 Sand the base completely and the box should now be ready for finishing. I used four coats of Livos Kunos on this box with a light sand with '0000' steel wool between coats. You can easily change the shape of the box, maybe make it without the overhanging beads on the lid and base, or you could make the carved lid with curved lines

26 Your finished box should look something like this •



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# Hollow forms – part 1

**Andy Coates** discusses the key considerations for making hollow forms and also takes a look at the Hope Easy Arm

Hollowing Rig

n this article, I am going to make a hollow vessel. The hollow vessel, or hollow form as it's often called. seems to be at the top of the list of 'must try' projects for many turners. For some strange reason, many of us begin our first attempt by first finding a huge lump of wood, which is probably beyond the capabilities of our lathe, and then spending the next few days hacking at it and sweating a lot. Oh for the gift of hindsight! My advice for newcomers is that the hollow vessel is best dealt with in bullet form – see sidebar on page 21.

A far better approach is to start small and work up. No matter which course you take there will come a time when your body begins to complain at the stresses you are putting on it with all that torque, stress and leaning over the lathe bed that deep hollowing involves. If you also suffer from a physical disability, such as arthritis, then the process can be even more painful and stressful, so here, I am going to introduce and review the Hope Easy Arm Hollowing Rig, which is designed to relieve some of the stresses and strains. I've had mine since it first came out and the model available now is slightly different, but the principles are just the same.

There are a few things to keep in mind when deciding to buy such a piece of kit: firstly, it WILL NOT make you a better woodturner, and secondly, it WILL NOT stop you cutting through the side of a vessel. It can only make the process less physically demanding, but with the addition of the laser guide attachment, it can help towards saving those annoying breakouts.

As is often the case with me, the turned object, when completed, will serve as a canvas for some decoration and this will be dealt with in next month's article. It will be

something you probably haven't done before and something which I hope will open up a new avenue of exploration for your turned forms.

Decorating turned wood is still an emotive issue for many, and for those who don't like it, that's fine, just turn the object and stop, but for those wanting to add interest to both the object and their hobby, it can be a fantastic avenue for expression and experimentation. It's true to say that it can be a frustrating avenue, results can vary wildly, but even the failures teach us something and that's an important part of the activity. And in the case of woodturning, remember that only about 70 years ago, turning the type of objects we do today was considered 'a bit out there'. But now on to the hollowing.



#### **ANDY COATES**



Andy is on the Register of Professional Turners (RPT) and is Chairman of the AWGB. He is a professional woodturner and has a workshop and gallery in Beccles, Suffolk.

Andy predominantly makes one-off pieces, but like any jobbing woodturner, is just as likely to be found doing small batch runs, antique restorations or any number of strange commissions. He also demonstrates and teaches turning.

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 $\blacktriangleleft$ 

## **INFORMATION & PLANS** 50mm (2in) **EQUIPMENT USED** ∕ 5mm (<sup>7</sup>/₃₂in) Wall Thickness 10mm long-ground bowl gouge 10mm long-ground spindle gouge 10mm beading & parting tool 50mm (2in) 2mm parting tool Hope 6mm Pro-Carbide tool Henry Taylor 'Little Sister' hollowing tool Shear scraper lacobs chuck with 8mm twist drill bit or listed alternatives -120mm (4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>in) Hope Easy Arm Hollowing Rig Hope Laser Guide Attachment Abrasives from 180-240 grit PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask and extraction **TIMBER REQUIREMENTS** 80mm (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in) Unseasoned sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) blank: 140 × 140 × 180mm 35mm - 40mm (1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in - 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in)

The first step is to prepare your – preferably – freshly cut sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) blank. Note: seasoned blanks are difficult to hollow for novices. Check for any splits or cracks, discard those, then mark across centres and mount between centres for truing up. I use a steb centre and a revolving cup centre. Using the wing of a long-ground 19mm bowl gouge, bring the blank into true with the lathe running at 800-1,000rpm

Take extra care when forming the tenon for the chuck. Deep hollowing puts a great deal of stress on the blank so the hold needs to be as good as you can make it. The handbook for your scroll chuck will give you the optimum dimensions

The tenon should be of the correct diameter for your chuck as well as the correct depth, so it doesn't 'bottom out', which also ensures that the top surfaces of the jaws meet the wood at the side of the tenon. This also establishes maximum holding. When turning green wood, check the hold periodically as wet fibres compress and can cause the hold to slacken

Using the 10mm long-ground bowl gouge, true up the face surface so it is clean and flat. Begin to shape, working from the corner towards the centre of the face. You will form a shallow rim about 60mm in diameter, so end the curve at this mark























5 The widest part of the body, the equator, should be about 50mm back from the face of the blank. Mark it in pencil and begin forming a slightly raised rim, which will be chamfered later. Aim for a pleasing curve between the equator and the side of the rim. Once the shape is formed, refine the surface using the wing of a freshly sharpened 10mm long-ground spindle gouge, using a shear pull cut

To start forming the return curve, rub the bevel of the gouge on the pencil line at the equator and pick up the cut. Applying a little pressure to the bevel and directing the gouge with close body control will help form a clean curve into the wood

When the cut gets too deep for the tool, reverse the gouge and remove waste wood. Return to the previous cut direction and continue to form the curve. This should flow nicely from the equator. Because deep hollowing involves a great deal of stress on the workpiece the shaping is stopped before completion to allow for some support. You need to envisage where the shape will ultimately end within the remaining waste wood

Susing a depth gauge, or home-made version with a stick and a dowel, measure the depth of this envisaged end point

When deep hollowing, it helps to remove the wood at dead centre prior to commencing hollowing. There are a number of options for achieving this: you can use a simple twist drill or a Forstner bit in a Jacobs chuck: a twist drill welded to a bar and fitted with a handle, or a machinist's MT twist drill. Whichever you use it is vital to reduce lathe speed - 500rpm - and to remove the drill bit often to remove the swarf. At this point, you could begin to hollow in the conventional fashion using the deep hollowing tool of your choice, but we are using the Hope Easy Arm Hollowing Rig here. The rig comes with a base, stand and articulated arm. A kicker plate is provided for using the rig on smaller lathes. There are options available for flat bed and round bed lathes

Once the rig is fastened down securely, setting up is simply a matter of adjusting the collar on the stand to ensure the tool used is cutting at the centre height of the workpiece. Here I have fitted the rig with the Hope 6mm Pro-Carbide tool. The angle is about 40°. Centre height is set and the toolrest is set to support the hollowing tool

1 I decided that I'd try out the optional Laser Guide attachment for this project. As my rig is the original, it needs the retro-fit version, which consists of a clamping collar, up stand and crossbar with laser attachment. Note: the current version has a pre-drilled site hole for the upright in the rig's tool holding bar



1 Fitting takes only a minute or two and you're then ready to set the laser up.

The laser comes with a dedicated low-voltage power supply with radio plug connectors

To set the laser up you first need to decide on a wall thickness. I've set it up for 5mm here. If this is your first hollow vessel, aim for a thinner wall. Draw two lines 5mm apart on a piece of paper or card and place directly under the cutter, with the cutting edge on one of the lines. Adjust the laser arm until the laser beam hits the line directly opposite the cutter edge. Lock the cams down and you're all set

Standing upright, hold the articulated arm at the first joint and on the shaft of the tool and take a first tentative cut. Bring the tool onto the edge of the pre-drilled hole and work towards the outside of the workpiece. You will quickly get used to how the tool cuts and how the articulation operates

15 Working in the opening, keep an eye on the laser beam's placement. When you begin it will be on the top of the workpiece – imagine it travelling through the wood. The beam is always 5mm away from the cutting edge of the tool, which is an advantage. As the wall gets to the required 5mm thickness, the beam will travel ever closer to the outer edge of the wood until it 'drops off' the workpiece. I placed a board below to make this clear. Once you reach the wall thickness, stop cutting

Return to the centre and remove some waste to allow movement of the tool and begin to increase the depth of the hole. The laser beam will return to the outer surface of the workpiece. Work away until the beam drops off again and continue

The jig's tool holder takes any 16mm or 19mm shafted tool – reducer supplied – so you can use any unhandled DHT. I fitted a selection of tools to try and all performed well in the rig. I tried the Big Brother system, the Sorby RS2000, a Kelton hollower and a Henry Taylor shear scraper for cleaning up the tool marks. All worked incredibly well in the rig. Remember to adjust the rig height for tools of different shaft sizes, as this impacts on the cutter placement in the workpiece

Continue working to remove the interior waste, from the centre hole out towards the wall of the vessel. Stop the lathe to remove the waste that will gather in the interior. You can do this manually with the lathe stopped or use a vacuum cleaner to draw the shavings out. It is vital that you do this frequently

Once the depth reaches the point at which you stopped shaping the exterior, you need to alter the interior curve to provide for the completion of the exterior shaping





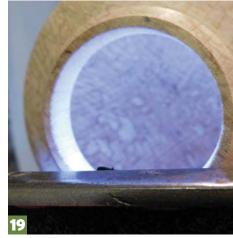
















### **MINI TEST**

# Hope Easy Arm Hollowing Rig



The Hope Easy Arm Hollowing Rig, once assembled

n unpacking the kit, the first thing that struck me was the weight of the rig. It's heavy, solid, and this invariably means it is likely to be stable and capable of absorbing vibrations. Setting up on the DB1200 was as simple as could be. The only problem I had was finding a deep enough socket to fit the locking nut, but a different lathe might allow for using an adjustable spanner, as I found on my Oneway lathe. Setting the tool holder height was a breeze and the rig was soon ready to go. When I first used the rig, I didn't have the laser guide attachment, but having used it with and without I found no appreciable difference or obstruction to use. Becoming accustomed to using the articulated arm took about five minutes as you get used to how it moves and behaves, but this posed no problem at all. It was important to me that the rig was capable of holding a range of cutters and scrapers because I already had them and wanted to be able to continue using them. I only had one it wouldn't take: a 5ft BCT DHT with a square shaft, but I can live without using that in the rig.

#### In use

In use the rig is fluid and easy to control. I did feel that, for me, the hollowing process was slower than I can achieve with just a tool, but I suspect that with repeated use, I would speed up and eventually match, if not increase, the speed at which I usually hollow, and I suspect that this is only because I have turned hundreds of forms manually. The biggest difference it made for me was the very one I required of the jig: it dramatically reduced the physical strain of deep hollowing. The process is almost physically effortless. The tool is always supported and glides easily on the articulated arm and toolrest. I was also less inclined to lean over the bed of the lathe, which in itself can lead to fatigue in the legs and hips. I have tried the rig on two large lathes and a small tabletop lathe with a kicker plate supplied - fitted and it works equally well on all three. It will fit any lathe between 125-305mm centre height, so finding a lathe it won't fit on will be difficult.

#### Verdict

I don't have any criticisms of the rig. It does exactly what it is meant to do and does it well. It's certainly a welcome addition and will no doubt see an awful lot of use over the years. It's certainly made well enough to see me out!

#### **DETAILS**

Price: £198 (plus postage)
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2 O If this proves difficult, you can briefly return to the outside of the form – ensuring the rig and DHT are set back out of the way – and finalise the exterior shape before proceeding to complete the interior hollowing. When hollowing is completed, you can fit a shear scraper set at about 45° and clean up the interior walls. Note: I have made a shallow parting cut to mark the actual base of the form

2 1 The exterior can now be abraded. Due to the nature of the decorating techniques I will be using on this piece, I only abrade from 180-240 grit as this provides a clean surface but leaves a little 'key' to the surface

# TIPS FOR MAKING HOLLOW FORMS FOR THE FIRST TIME

- 1. Start small
- Avoid fissured, cracked, or 'character' wood with voids
- **3.** Start with a larger entry hole
- Do not overburden your lathe or available tools
- **5.** Stick to the recommended workable depth for the tools used
- **6.** Check work hold repeatedly throughout the process
- Remember that the tool needs space to work in. Make clearing cuts and then refine towards the wall
- **8.** Clear the shavings frequently, with the lathe stopped
- Stand back and look at the shape often. Aim for flowing curves and good proportion
- 10. As abilities improve, you can increase the size of the forms you turn and reduce the diameter of the entry hole if required. But remember, only woodturners care about this element!
- Be prepared for failure: accept it, learn from it and start again. It will come in the end
- **12.** Look at other art and craft forms for inspiration
- Make notes about ideas and refer to them every now and again, adding information as it occurs

#### **NEXT MONTH...**

In part 2, we will return to this form and try out some decorating techniques. If you want to preprepare a form for this, then keep in mind that it may warp or move during the interim period. If you have used wet wood, you could pack the form with damp shavings, wrap in a plastic bag and store in a cool place until required. There is no guarantee that it will survive but in my experience, they tend to be fine for a few weeks. Check it every so often and damp down the shavings if required •

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Richard is a registered UK professional woodturner living and working in Leicestershire. He discovered woodturning while working for his father as a joiner. Richard makes all kinds of work to commission,

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hroughout this series, I have been offering tips and pointers to help solve common turning problems. Almost every month I find myself writing something along the lines of: "don't forget to sharpen your tools, as this will help to solve your problem." It doesn't matter if your problem is catches, torn grain, uneven surface finish or tool control issues, all of them can be helped and reduced by having sharp tools.

The problem is that there are just as many problems for turners to face with sharpening as there is in any other area of turning.

#### These problems include:

- Sharpening method
- Bevel angle
- Tool profile
- · Secondary bevels
- Knowing when to sharpen
- Knowing if the tool is sharp enough

# Sharpening method

As with so many things in turning, there is a wide choice of machines and jigs to sharpen and shape your turning tools. There are dry grinders, wetstone grinders, belt sharpeners and hones. Which is best? I'm sorry to say that this is yet another example of asking 10 turners and receiving 10 different answers. Some will tell you that all you need is a cheap grinder and some practice; others will tell you to buy the cheap grinder and upgrade the stones; some will say you need a top-of-therange grinder with expensive CBN wheels. Many turners will tell you that wetstone grinders are far too slow for turning, nearly as many will absolutely swear by them.

Belt sharpening systems are probably the 'new kids' but are gaining in popularity. Those that own them tell me they wonder how they managed before, but they are an expensive option if you already have one of the other setups.

The fact of the matter is that all of these systems have their pros and cons, but all will do a good job for you, with a little practice. As I have said before, I would always recommend trying before you buy if at all possible, either with a friend, at a club or in a store.

# Do I need a jig?

Well, you don't need a jig, but it may well make life a little easier. The main thing to understand about jigs is that they won't magically give you a perfect tool grind – you still need to learn how to sharpen and what profile is best for you. In fact, I have seen some terrible grinds produced on jigs, so it is still possible to ruin a perfectly good tool with a jig. What a jig will do, without a doubt, is to smooth and shorten the learning curve of sharpening considerably, as well as lighten your wallet – as if we need any more help to do that!



# ■ My sharpening setup

While I can't tell you which system is going to be best for you, I can explain the setup that I use. I have a 200mm slow-running grinder, fitted with a 120 grit white wheel. I then use an adjustable platform to help me to regulate the angle of my bevel. This platform can then be adjusted to support the tool and give me consistent bevel angles on each of my tools.

For spindle gouges, I will start at the tip, with the tool flat on the platform, then as I roll the tool to grind the wing, I will ride it up the wheel. This gives me a lovely 'fingernail' profile and allows good control of the exact profile. This does take practice but works



My method for sharpening spindle gouges is to start at the tip ...

well. Because my bowl gouges have a much steeper angle, it isn't possible to ride them up the stone as I do for the spindle gouge, so for these I keep them flat on the platform at all times. As I roll the tool I also swing the handle to the side, which creates the long grind profile.

With both techniques, I keep the pressure on the stone to a minimum, only using the weight of the tool against the stone, rather than forcing it to do anything it doesn't want to do. This will also minimise the risk of bluing the tool edge, which is less of a problem with HSS but still not desirable.



... then roll the tool as I ride it up the stone



My sharpening setup, a 200mm slow-running grinder with a 120 grit white wheel and an adjustable platform fitted



Sharpening my bowl gouge, keeping it flat on the platform and rolling while I swing the handle to one side

## **Bevel angles**

Bevel angles are yet another minefield for woodturners. If it's any consolation, nearly all areas of woodworking have similar discussions about the best angles for their tools, from angles for various plane irons, different chisels for various purposes and just how those are achieved. The thing to remember is that, to a point, the exact angle you use isn't that important. If a turner tells you to use a 35° angle, it won't make any difference if yours is 38° or 32°, or somewhere in between, take any advice as guidance rather than as gospel. As a guide, here are the approximate bevel angles that I use:

- Spindle roughing gouge 35°
- Spindle gouge 35°
- Skew chisel/beading & parting tool 25° each bevel, 50° combined bevel
- Bowl gouge 60°

# Why those angles? Over the years, I have tried all sorts of

Over the years, I have tried all sorts of variations and have finally settled on these angles as the best for my style of work. Many people will quote 45° as the optimum angle for a bevel, and this is certainly a good place to start, but I found that, for spindle work this is too blunt or steep, not allowing full access to many details and requiring additional

effort to make the tool cut. If the angle gets much longer than 35° – at one point I found my spindle gouge got to around 25° – it becomes rather delicate and easily damaged, which led me to settle on 35°. There is always some compromise between a sharp edge and its longevity.

Many will tell you that 35° is far too long a bevel for a spindle roughing gouge, but I like it for two reasons: first, it allows me to achieve a good level of finish from the tool and second, it allows me to quickly sharpen the tool without adjusting my grinder platform, as it's the same angle as my spindle gouge!

For a while I tried to sharpen my beading & parting tool – which I use as a hybrid skew chisel and parting tool – with the same setting on my grinder platform, giving each bevel a 35° grind, but I found this combined angle to be restrictive when cutting fine, tight details. Rather than adjust my platform, however, I hold a steel ruler on the platform at a marked point, which has the effect of lengthening the angle to one more suitable for me. This allows me to sharpen all my spindle turning tools with a single grinder setup.

My bowl gouge has a 60° bevel, which many will tell you is too blunt, but I have found it to be the best all-round angle for my style of turning. It allows excellent access to the inside of nearly all bowl shapes, gives a clean cut and is very controllable in use. Somewhere in the range of 45° to 65° will be ideal for you, experiment to find what suits you best.



My method for sharpening my beading & parting tool to a longer angle without adjusting my platform

# Measuring bevel angles

Many turners won't even know the angle that their tools are ground to. As a demonstrator, it is a question that I am regularly asked, so I make a point of knowing the answer. A very simple jig will easily show you your bevel angle and help you to maintain the perfect angle for you, once you have found it.

I use a piece of MDF and draw a straight baseline along the lower part of it. Using a standard school protractor I mark a line at 35° and another at 60° – the two angles I use most. To find out your existing angle if you don't know it, use a sliding bevel and protractor to measure it.

# Tool profile

While the bevel angle is less important and varies between turners, the profile that you achieve from the grinder, particularly on your gouges, is vitally important, and will make the difference between the tool working and not. If your tool is too pointed it will not cut well, be too rounded at the tip and you may struggle to cut fine detail.

It may surprise you to learn that there is a profile that your gouge naturally wants to be. You can find this by turning a gouge over, so the flute faces downwards, and touching the top of the profile against the wheel. You should see that a white reflective area is produced; this highlights the natural shape that the tool should be ground to. This will vary depending upon the shape of the flute of the gouge, but should be clear to see. All you need to do is grind away this white reflective area to be left with a perfectly ground gouge.



My MDF jig for checking my bevel angles



Touching the top of the gouge to the grinding wheel shows you a perfect profile that the tool 'wants' to be

# Different tool profiles

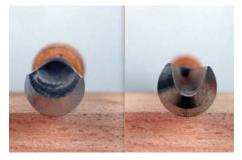
Skews, parting tools and spindle roughing gouges are all pretty straightforward to sharpen, they each lie flat on a platform and are moved gently from side to side in the case of the skew and parting tool or rolled smoothly around the edge for a spindle roughing gouge. The exact 'skew' angle of a skew chisel is down to personal choice. I prefer a straighter angle, others like a very acute angle, some even like a curved edge. Spindle roughing gouges are generally ground straight across, when viewed from above, with a single bevel. Spindle and bowl gouges are where it gets interesting, though.

With both types of gouge, it is important to recognise that there is considerably more steel at the tip than there is at the wing of the tool. This means that, when sharpening, you should spend longer on the tip than on the wings, otherwise you will remove too much metal from the wing. If this happens, the wings become concave when viewed from the side and a kind of hook shape is formed at the tip of the tool, rendering it virtually useless. When viewed from the side, the profile of the

tool should be slightly convex on both a bowl gouge and a spindle gouge. This not only makes it cut well, but allows you to use both tools for a full range of cuts, including push, pull and shear cuts.



Skews and parting tools are simple to sharpen, just by laying them on the platform and gently moving them across the stone

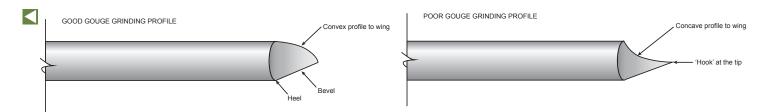


By looking at the end of the gouges, you can see that there is far more steel at the tip of the tool than on the wings



Side view of my spindle and bowl gouges, showing the convex wing profile and secondary bevels





This drawing shows what happens if you grind too much steel from the wing of a gouge

# Secondary bevels

There is often talk of micro bevels and secondary bevels, and having tried all sorts of variations, I find that, having ground the main bevel as described earlier, I will almost always remove the heel of a gouge, and round the heel of a skew and beading & parting tool, as you can see in many of the photos throughout this article. When you first sharpen a tool, the heel is surprisingly harsh to the touch, being quite a sharp angle. This heel will rub on the work and will often cause crush marks, chatter marks or ridges, even if you try

your best to avoid them. By softening this harsh angle, the tool becomes much more friendly to the wood, no longer wanting to crush fibres or chatter; it will glide as it is supposed to and allow you to achieve a smoother cut.

The best thing about it is that it costs nothing to try the method, so what are you waiting for? If you grind the heel away and you find no benefit, then as you continue to sharpen the tool normally, the secondary grind is removed and nothing is lost.

# To hone or not to hone? That is the question!

Just to add to the confusion, some professionals can be seen frequently honing their tools with diamond files, explaining that it gives a far superior edge. Others tell you that they never do, preferring to use the tool straight from the grinder, and have never felt the need to hone.

Personally, for 99% of my turning, I use the tool straight from my 120 grit white grinding wheel. I do, however, keep a good quality double-sided diamond credit card close to hand. Not only is it very useful for assorted sharpening tasks around the workshop, such as sharpening drill bits, knives and scissors, but also if I have a difficult bit of grain that needs a super sharp edge, I can use the fine side of the diamond card to improve the edge and help solve the problem. Being diamond, it will of course also sharpen the carbide tips that are increasingly popular for turning tools.



Honing a skew with a diamond credit card

#### **MYTH BUSTERS:**

Myth – 'I'm worried that every time I sharpen my gouge I'm losing metal, what do I do?'

Yes, you do technically shorten your tool each time you sharpen it, but if you are doing it properly, you should only really be cleaning the bevel, which takes a tiny fraction from the tool. Look at the bevel before you sharpen the tool – it will be dirty looking. All you need to do is remove that dirt, right up to the cutting edge, then your gouge will be good to go again. Clean the bevel, don't grind your tool away!

# So how do I know when to sharpen?

As a rule, if you have any doubt that your tool isn't as sharp as it could be, sharpen it. If the finish you are achieving isn't up to standard, sharpen it. If you just had a catch, sharpen it. If you are struggling to maintain a cut around a curve, sharpen it. If you can't pick up a cut, sharpen it. If you feel like you're having to apply too much pressure to the tool to make it cut, sharpen it.

A turning tool will probably cut more shavings in a day than many other woodworking tools will produce in a lifetime, so when you relate this to the amount of time you spend sharpening, it begins to make sense that you will need to sharpen your turning tools a lot more often than other tools.

# I 'sharpened' my tool on the grinder but it still isn't cutting properly!

Take a look at a tool, end on and inspect the edge; if it is blunt you will be able to see a slightly white or reflective spot or spots along the edge. If you have your jig or sharpening platform set correctly, the whole bevel will be ground, right up to the edge and will be able to remove these white areas. If you don't position the tool correctly and the wheel or belt doesn't properly grind the whole bevel, it can miss the very edge, leaving the tool in exactly the same position as it was before the trip to the grinder. To ensure you grind the whole of the bevel on all of your tools, look for sparks to be dancing at the edge of the tool as you sharpen it. This is a sure sign that the tool will be sharp and ready for use.

#### **MYTH BUSTERS:**

Myth – 'You need a perfectly smooth bevel, without facets, to be able to turn well'

This is certainly something to aim for, and shows that you have good technique and are well practised at the grinder. That said, I know of a couple of very skilled turners whose tools look decidedly 'agricultural' and are far from this perfect image, but they are still able to produce the most fantastic work. So don't get too hung up on perfect single bevels



When you sharpen correctly, right to the cutting edge, you should see sparks dance over the edge

#### **HEALTH & SAFETY:**

It goes almost without saying that all guards should be correctly fitted to grinding machines as wheels can explode with dramatic and dangerous effects. In use, eye protection is a minimum requirement, a full-face shield is better. Breathing protection is also advisable as the dust produced by the grinding action – a mix of steel and the material from the wheel – can be inhaled and isn't terribly good for your lungs! When sharpening, I wear the same PPE as for turning: an air-fed, full head and face shield •

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 1. Have a light touch when grinding
- 2. Try different tools, bevel angles and grind profiles at club hands-on nights, to find one that works for you
- 3. Remember, manufacturer's grinds are almost always useless for turning and will need reshaping before they can be used
- 4. Several manufacturers produce profile templates to help you achieve the perfect grind, alternatively, take a photo of a successful grind to remind you of how it should look
- 5. Dress the wheel whenever it begins to look dirty I use a T-bar diamond dresser, which quickly renews the surface this needs a light touch too!
- **6.** There are a number of proprietary grinding platforms available, but they are also relatively easy to make in wood. There are instructions in Keith Rowley's book, *Woodturning: A Foundation Course*



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# Aladdin's Cave-and Coffee!

You know, it's amazing what you learn from your customers - if you listen, carefully. We know folk travel from all corners of the globe, to come and see us. Yet it never occurred to us that, after our "facilities", it is our coffee that folk find sets us apart from our peers. Maybe it's the fact that the coffee (or tea, or chocolate) is free. We recognise the pattern: 'relief'; browsing over 3000 square feet of showroom; refill the liquids; shopping - and maybe "one for the road".

Our clients often present us with great new products ideas too, as do our Open House demonstrators. Without them we might not have found some of our "good finds". Those include the superb Carter & Son Toolworks gouges made from M42 steel that holds a superbly keen razor-sharp edge for longer than any steel tool you've ever tried. And those beautiful, solid aircraft grade aluminium handles that the tools are mounted in. Strong, comfortable, secure, robust but so achingly beautiful that tool nuts - like us - fall in love with them on sight. For more information, call us, but if you're really serious - and these are serious tools - then come over and take a test drive.

Then there's my new favourite finishing oil: Steinert® Drechsleroel. I've been using it to good effect in finishing some of my workpieces made from the stunning Chilean Laurel Burr that we stock. It makes the fabulous gold to cream spectrum of hues really pop. It covers well, is easily absorbed and makes no discernible change to the timber colour. Being toy safe too, its range of applications is much wider than other oils. Here's a tip too: whilst



applying and burnishing it with a safety cloth gives a great satin gleam, you can enhance the tactile qualities of the workpiece surface by using Chestnut Nyweb to apply the second and subsequent coats prior to burnishing. Not only does your work look great, it feels great too (remember silk stockings ...?)

Happily, we also contribute to our client's knowledge, experience and success. One of the easiest ways of doing that it to introduce them to the superb Wolverine sharpening system produced by Oneway from Canada. Here's a

system that, without exaggeration (would I?), can make any turner capable of perfect sharpening every time. Repeatable sharpness in the minimum of time with the minimum of effort. Using a good jig minimises the amount of metal you remove at each sharpening, so not only does your turning improve but your tools last longer - which saves you money.

So there we are: not just the folk who bring all sorts of woodturning exotica to your attention - and to your door - but also purveyors of tea, coffee and wisdom. We offer the benefit of our experience when we talk to, and guide, our customers

(I'm tempted to say 'long experience' but that's self-evident if you take a glance at the picture below - and yes, Florence, I'm the one on the right!) For those who know me well, note that the photo shows me making a credible attempt at a smile, but if you want the real thing then you can always have the pleasure of talking to Jen instead. She's the one that does the sweet smile, polite chat and all the things that Old Grumpy just finds too difficult these days. And have I told you about my backache ... ...?



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vase

Deep

### **BOB CHAPMAN**



After teaching chemistry for many years, Bob took early retirement to become a professional woodturner, and is a member of the Register of Professional Turners. He was a demonstrator

hawthorn

at the 2009 AWGB Woodturning Seminar and is available for commissions.

bob@bobchapman.co.uk www.bobchapman.co.uk

hen small, the hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) is a fast-growing, tough, bushy tree, tolerant of most soils and weather conditions. It is these qualities, together with its thorns, which make it an ideal plant for hedging and it is quite common to find hawthorns growing in straight lines marking current or ancient field boundaries, as in the photo here.

Although certainly not the most imposing of our native trees, the hawthorn may live as long as 400 years and is surrounded by folklore and legend. According to Celtic myth, it is much beloved of fairies who often

inhabit the trees, and sprigs of hawthorn, oak (*Quercus robur*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), tied together will, the Celts believed, protect you from fairies.

Hawthorn is also widely known simply as 'May' and is, I think, the only English tree named after the spring month in which it flowers. Travelling around the country in May when the trees are in bloom reveals just how extensive hawthorn coverage is, sometimes with white blossom so thick it looks more like snow.

The timber of the hawthorn has a marked tendency to crack quite deeply as it dries out. It is dense and fine grained, with a delicate pale pinkish brown, almost coral colour. It turns very well and will take fine detail - I call it 'poor man's boxwood', which it resembles somewhat but at a much lower cost and, like boxwood (Buxus sempervirens), it will take a screw thread well. Traditionally the wood was used for making engravers' blocks where its tight grain allowed fine detail to be cut into it. Hawthorn was also used for making the handles of small kitchen and domestic items, and the root was used for boxes and combs where, again, the dense grain allowed the necessary fine work.



An old hawthorn field boundary, backed up with a drystone wall to keep livestock out of the road



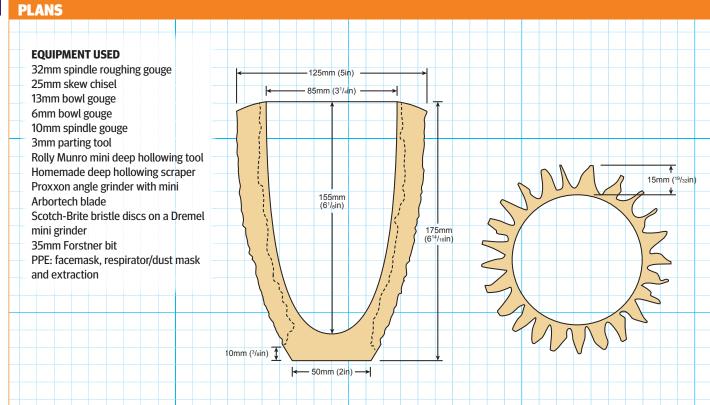
There are many traditional legends about the hawthorn



The hawthorn's white blossom appears in May



 $\triangleleft$ 



# Making a deep fluted hawthorn vase

For this project, I had a freshly felled hawthorn log about 1.2m long and with an irregular cross-section which would allow, at most, a 125mm diameter circle. Unfortunately, the log had developed a long, deep crack along the whole of its length. Usually when this happens, the log is set aside for cutting up into smaller pieces, working around the cracks. These then find use for making small items – boxes, Singapore balls, fruit, etc. Here, though, I wanted to make a larger item for this feature, and I began to think how I might disguise that enormous crack. This fluted vase is my solution to the problem, but I like it so much that I will certainly use the same design again.

1 Cut a section about 225mm long and then remove the worst of any irregularities on the bandsaw. Mount the log between centres, making sure it is secure and rotate it several times by hand to ensure it clears the toolrest

2Turn the log to round. Note that the left hand holds the chisel quite loosely, there is no need to hold the chisel down on the rest. The left hand is used solely to guide the chisel along the rest. Note also the position of the forefinger under the chisel and in contact with the rest, but not between the chisel and the rest. This contact with the rest enables you to keep the chisel moving in a more or less straight line, pushed along the rest by your thumb and producing a reasonably straight surface on the wood

#### **CRACKING**

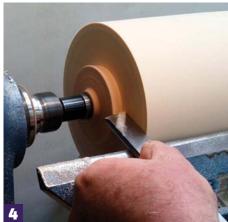
The problem of wood cracking as it dries is a perennial one for woodturners and there are no certain remedies for it. The almost universal answer is to paint the ends with something to reduce water loss. The aim is to slow down the ensuing shrinkage to a rate that allows the timber to adjust gradually to the stresses and strains that would lead to cracking. Keeping the timber in a cool place will also help.

Molten wax is probably the best known end sealer, but it has the disadvantage that it tends to sit on top of the wet surface of freshly felled timber without really sealing it. I've had success with wax by reheating the waxed surface with a blowtorch until it becomes dry enough and hot enough for the wax to really penetrate. I have some laburnum (Laburnum anagyroides) logs treated this way some years ago that have dried with no sign of cracking. A simpler alternative is to use PVA adhesive, bought inexpensively from builder's merchants who sell it as a cement additive. It doesn't matter if the end of the log is still wet because the PVA, being water-based, will still penetrate and seal it. I usually brush on two coats, allowing the first to dry before applying the second. It's not foolproof though, as the hawthorn shows

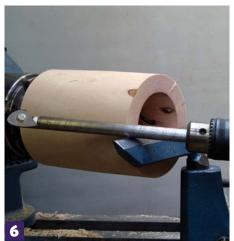






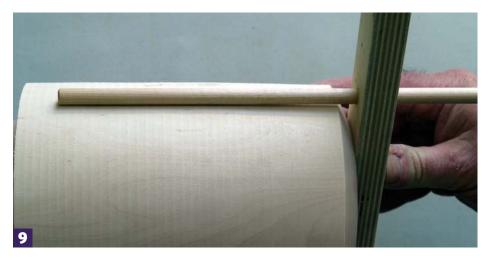












3 After roughing to a cylinder, the crack was even more obvious. Always inspect cracked wood carefully before continuing. In this instance, the crack did not penetrate far into the log and there was obviously no danger of it flying apart while being turned

Luse a skew chisel to form a dovetail spigot to fit the jaws of the four-jaw chuck

☐ With the log held securely in the four-jaw Chuck, the other end can be cleaned up before hollowing. Hollowing a vase, with its large opening, is easier than a closed hollow form. Much of the waste may be removed rapidly with a suitable Forstner cutter or drill bit, and here, I used a 35mm Forstner bit to bore into the end of the log. Unfortunately I don't have an extension for this particular cutter so, having gone in as far as possible, the hole was enlarged with a spindle gouge enough to allow the drill further into the piece. This method of 'bore a little, enlarge a little', was continued until the Forstner bit could reach the required depth. Further hollowing is then carried out with a Rolly Munro deep hollowing tool. Because the neck of the vase is wide enough to clearly see the tool cutting, and how much is being removed, the inside shape of the vase can be roughed out fairly quickly

of I find that no matter how carefully you work with the Munro tool, some ridges are bound to be formed on the inner surface and these are best removed with the aid of a scraper. This one is homemade using a 16mm bar held in a custom handle. The handle can be rotated until the scraper cutter is at about 45° and fine cuts can be taken along the inner walls by starting in the bottom and drawing the cutter gently towards you

It would be very dangerous to put your hand inside a narrow vase like this with the lathe running, so it is necessary to find a way of sanding down to the bottom. I used a simple dowel with some foam rubber glued to one end. A saw cut down the end of the dowel allows strips of abrasive to be held by pushing one end in the slot and simply wrapping it around the foam

Start with 80 and work down to 400 grit before sealing with cellulose sanding sealer. When dry, rub the sealer down with '0000' steel wool, with the lathe off. Then give it a second coat and rub down again

The top edge of the vase was angled down towards the outside with a bowl gouge while the thickness of the walls was enough to keep the whole piece rigid. The work carried out on the inside will almost certainly have increased the depth of the vase a little. Use a homemade depth gauge to measure the depth and compare it with the overall length



Although the interior diameter of the vase could not be increased without exposing the crack, the wall thickness can be adjusted, if desired, by removing material from the outside. In this instance, the wall thickness happened to be about 20mm and, as it looked an appropriate thickness for the piece it was left as it was. Use a parting tool to cut in to the base diameter and a bowl gouge to shape the outside in a flowing curve from the rim down to the base

11 Working from the crack, the lathe's indexing system was used to divide the circumference of the vase into 24 segments. This would ensure that the crack would be in one of the 'valleys' of the final vase

With the lathe off, use a Proxxon long neck angle grinder, fitted with an Arbortech 50mm TCT mini cutter to carve the 'valleys' into the vase. Work carefully and don't even try to get a smooth surface. The irregularity of the cuts is an integral part of the design. Start by cutting in to the full depth of the valley, approximately 15mm and then widen it out, bringing it up to the ridge between valleys. This was made easy for me because the blade only protrudes 15mm beyond the central boss of the grinder, and the boss acted as a convenient depth stop so I couldn't go too deep. If your angle grinder is larger, take care not to go through into the interior of the vase. I actually went round the vase two or three times doing final little touches here and there to get it looking right. The valleys can be continued right to the bottom of the vase but I decided to leave an approximately 10mm section whole, all the way round. The angle grinder raises all sorts of tiny splinters and 'fuzzy bits' on the surfaces it leaves, and these need to be removed to give the piece a finished appearance. I suppose some very careful work with abrasives would eventually do the job, but it is much quicker to use Scotch-Brite radial bristle discs on a Dremel tool. They reach into all those difficult to get at places and do a brilliant job in seconds

13 With the sanding finished, give the outside two coats of cellulose sanding sealer, but the only between-coats treatment is rubbing down with a soft lint-free cloth. Steel wool would leave little bits of steel all over the piece. A brush is best to get into all the nooks and crannies

The vase is parted off with a little waste to spare at the base. To finish the base the vase is sandwiched between a rubber faced wooden driving plate held in the jaws of the chuck and the live centre in the tailstock. Use a small 10mm bowl gouge with a swept-back grind to tidy up the base and make sure it is concave, so it will sit properly. After removing it from the lathe the final central 'pip' is cut off with a sharp knife and the bottom sanded by hand













#### **HANDY HINTS**

- Always protect yourself with safety glasses or full-face protection, especially when dealing with cracked wood
- Never put your hand or arm inside a deep vessel with the lathe switched on
- Sanding sealer makes an excellent final finish for work like this. It is not necessary to put other finishes on top
- 4. If you don't have an indexing system, wrap a strip of paper around the vase and mark the circumference. Remove it and use a rule to measure the length. Set callipers at 1/24 of this length and use them to step off 24 equal divisions around the vase. Using this method, you can have as many divisions as you like
- 5. Unplug the lathe while doing the carving, because switching the lathe on is something of a reflex action and is easily done when you actually meant to switch the angle grinder off. The consequence could be disastrous

15 The finished vase. The crack is hidden in one of the valley bottoms and is concealed quite well, but if I were doing it again, I confess I'd look for a piece of wood without a crack •

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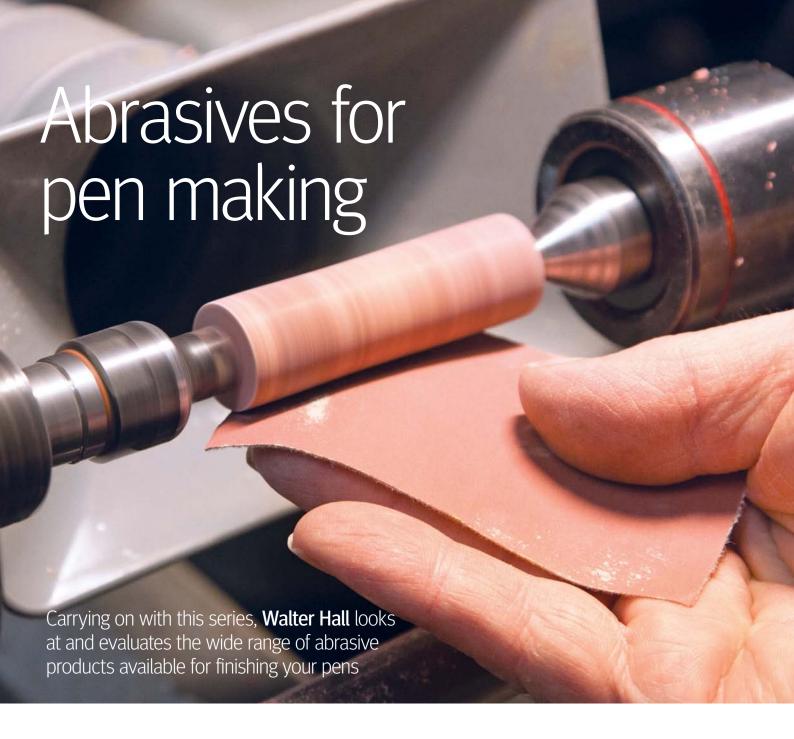
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### **WALTER HALL**



Walter Hall is a woodturner who has specialised in making pens and pencils for more than 20 years. Based on the beautiful Northumberland coast in the UK, Walter sells his bespoke pens and pencils

through local craft centres and via his website.

walter@walterspens.co.uk www.walterspens.co.uk

n this article, I will explain the different types of abrasives used in pen making, ranging from the comparatively coarsebacked abrasives used for preparing blanks for finishing through to the finest burnishing creams, polishes and abrasive-loaded waxes used for final polishing.

## Why do we use abrasives?

First, however, are some general comments about all abrasives and how and why we use them. All abrasives work on the same principle. They scratch the surface of the material and bring it to a finish as fine as the particles of abrasive. The finer the abrasive, the finer the scratches and the finer the finish, but even the finest polishes work by scratching the surface and when viewed through a lens or microscope, the polished surface will exhibit tiny scratches that are invisible to the naked eye.

Our aim as pen makers is to produce an attractive surface on the finished product: we may want a high gloss, a satin finish or even a matt finish that mimics the appearance of unfinished wood, but whatever finish we require, it will be accomplished with some form of abrasive.

## Using abrasives



Micromesh is available in pads or sheets in grits up to 12,000. Used wet or dry, it can produce a glass-like finish

The basic rule is to work through the abrasives from the coarsest required to produce an even finish through to the finest needed to achieve the finished result, usually as a two-stage process: first creating a smooth surface to which the finish is applied and



then polishing the finish itself to the level of gloss required. Throughout this process, it is important not to miss out any stages. 240 grit abrasive will not remove the scratches created by 80 grit, so it is necessary to use both 120 grit and 180 grit or, as a compromise, 150 grit between the two, otherwise the coarser scratches will remain visible and no amount of further processing with finer abrasives will remove them and may in fact accentuate them.

#### Working through the grits

Do also be careful not to go backwards, especially in the final stages of polishing. It may, for example, be tempting to apply a polish or burnishing cream after finishing with say 12,000 grit Micromesh but there is a risk that the liquid abrasive may be coarser than the Micromesh and thus dull, rather than enhance, the shine. There is no effective way of measuring the comparative fineness of backed and liquid abrasives other than using expensive equipment to measure the reflectivity of a finished surface and I do not know of any studies that provide comparative data for woodturning products, so it is perhaps wisest to try the products you intend to use on a test piece to see which produces the result that is most pleasing to your eye.

#### Working with the material

In addition to proper progression through the grits, there are some other tricks you can use to deceive the eye into not seeing the scratches or maximising the gloss.

The first of these is to vary the direction of the scratches. If all the scratches are annular or are parallel to the axis of the blank, then they will be much more visible than if they run in random directions, as the light reflected will be diffused by the random scratch direction and thus give the impression of a smoother surface. This is, of course, the same principle that is used by random orbital sanders in flat woodworking or by rotary sanders used with the lathe running in bowl turning. Another tip for wooden blanks is to sand along the grain and then the visibility of the scratches is reduced as they are disguised by the figure of the timber. However, be careful with burrs and highly figured timbers where the grain direction is not consistent and random scratches would produce a better result. Another approach to randomising the direction of scratches is to use a powered sanding disc with the work revolving on the lathe. This requires a light touch but can with care produce good results.

Before I go on to discuss various types of abrasive, I will add one further caveat: if you are a follower of internet forums and social media, you will encounter lots of people giving advice that this, that or the other new abrasive is the only thing to use, often countered by others asserting that they have used something else for years and the new stuff is rubbish. For the most part, this is nothing more than opinion and can be safely ignored. There is no one 'best' abrasive for any given situation and although some work better than others in certain circumstances,

as I shall explain, the only thing that really matters is whether the abrasive you are using produces the results you require. While I am not suggesting that you use them in pen making, kitchen scouring powder and toothpaste are abrasives and will produce exactly the same results as the most expensive formulations of an equivalent grit grade. What follows is restricted to fact: I do not recommend any one type of abrasive over another but suggest you try the various types for yourself and decide which one you prefer.



Sanding with the lathe running should be followed by hand sanding along the grain



Cleaning away sanding dust between grits prevents scratching from any remaining coarser grit particles

## Abrasives for surface preparation

Aluminium oxide abrasives on a flexible cloth backing have long been the first choice for woodturners but hook-and-loop and other padded backing materials are now available and offer advantages in terms of flexibility and the conduction of heat. Additionally, some modern products have additives that help to resist clogging and extend the life of the product.

Some options to consider are J-Flex a traditional flexible cloth-backed aluminium oxide abrasive and Rhynogrip - a modern hook-and-loop backed aluminium oxide with anti-clog lubrication.

Silicone carbide abrasives, more normally



Rhynogrip abrasives have a flexible hook-and-loop backing and come in grits from 80-1,200

used in the vehicle re-finishing trades, are also suitable for use with acrylic and man-made materials, especially if wet sanding techniques are used but because of the dark colour they can cause staining, especially of lighter timbers, so are not generally recommended for use with wood.

Mesh abrasives such as Abranet were designed to facilitate the fast removal of waste using power sanders equipped with vacuum extraction but have become popular with many pen makers because they are long lasting, easily cleaned if clogging occurs and sufficiently flexible to cope with the small workpiece diameters experienced in pen making.



Silicone carbide abrasives are useful for wet sanding man-made materials



The open weave of Abranet is designed for use with vacuum sanding systems but many turners find it is a flexible, long lasting abrasive that is easily cleaned



Strips of cloth-backed, aluminium oxide paper are a popular choice but remember to write the grit grade on the backing to avoid confusion

## Abrasives for polishing



finishing of acrylics and hard finishes



Compounds for buffing wheels come in a variety of grades from coarse to very fine. A separate buffing wheel should be used for each grade

The following types of abrasives and polishes are suitable for finishing either man-made materials or hard finishes. Not all finishes require polishing with abrasives. Wax finishes and friction polishes, for example, require no further processing once applied.

#### **Backed abrasives**

The finer grades of silicone carbide abrasives as described under surface preparation are also suitable for fine finishing, but the most popular form of backed abrasive currently used by pen makers is Micromesh.

Micromesh abrasives are made from very evenly sized abrasive crystals that are flexibly bonded to a backing material. They produce a very fine scratch pattern and are available in 1,500-12,000 grit. They come as either flexible sheets or on a padded backing and like silicone carbide abrasives, they can be used wet or dry.

#### Liquids and creams

There is a wide variety of liquid or cream polishes that may be used. Burnishing creams such as those by Chestnut or Mylands are specifically designed for use by turners, but



Products designed for car bodywork finishing and repair can be good alternatives to burnishing creams



Buffing can produce a high gloss finish on acrylics, hard finishes and stabilised wood

products designed for the fibreglass and autofinishing trades can be equally effective.

Products designed for metal polishing or removing scratches from car bodywork may also be used - examples include T-cut, Autosol and Brasso. DIY car polishes - as opposed to waxes - can also produce good results. Plastic polishes such as Xerapol, designed for removing scratches from motorcycle visors and aircraft screens, are another option.

#### Polishing compounds

Polishing compounds, used with a polishing mop system, such as the Beall or Chestnut systems, are an alternative to finishing on the lathe and can work well if a good system is established working through a range of compounds from coarse to fine.

#### Abrasive loaded waxes

Wax with an added abrasive may be used to give a final polish and a protective coating. Dr Kirk's 'Micro Magic' Micro Polishing Wax comes in three different grades and can be used to polish a timber blank or hard finish from about 600 grit to a high gloss.

## **MINI TEST**

## Dr. Kirk's 'Micro Magic' Micro Polishing Wax



r. Kirk's Micro Magic is a micro crystalline wax and fine abrasive based sanding system designed for use on turned acrylic, polyester and stabilised woods. The manufacturer claims that it eliminates the need for wet sanding and will outperform micro abrasive sheet system and back their claim with a money back guarantee. I tested the product on a stabilised boxelder (Acer negundo) burr blank and an acrylic blank. Initially, I sanded to 600 grit before using the three grades of abrasive wax in order and while this produced a satisfactory finish, it was not of as high a gloss as I could have achieved using Micromesh or a buffing system.

A second attempt, this time sanding to 1,500 grit before using the wax, produced a much better result comparable with that produced with Micromesh, but I was still able to improve upon it with a final buffing on a buffing wheel with fine compound.

#### Verdict

In conclusion, while the manufacturer's claims for the product may be a little ambitious, when used in conjunction with other finishing products, it can be a useful addition to the pen maker's workshop.



The finish achieved on an acrylic blank

#### **DETAILS**

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## A final word on technique

It can be tempting to assume that high speeds and high pressure will produce better or quicker results, but this is not necessarily the case. Excessive speed and pressure will generate heat, which can damage the bond between abrasive and backing or cause damage to the finish or surface. With timber blanks it can even produce cracking or checking of the wood. Whether sanding or polishing, a better result will be achieved by using moderate speeds and a light touch.





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Colorado Springs, CO USA

# Making a scorched ash vase

**Sue Harker** uses a blowtorch to scorch an ash vase

## **SUE HARKER**



Sue is a member of the RPT and AWGB, teaches woodturning, demonstrates all over the country, writes for *Woodturning* magazine and has produced three DVDs.

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or this project I have used a piece of ash (Fraxinus excelsior). There are large areas of open grain that will burn easier than the close grain fibres, creating a contoured surface on the finished vase. Although I have chosen to burn this vase, you could of course leave the vase as natural timber or use a highly figured piece of timber instead. Alternatively, for a completely different effect, you could apply colour and carve the surface or ebonise the surface and fill the grain with decorative wax or gilt cream. In fact, it could be decorated in almost any way you choose. I have chosen to scorch the surface using a craft blowtorch. The blowtorch produces a small but intense flame that can be directed specifically to selected areas. If you choose to, you could burn only the open grain of the ash leaving the close grain almost unaffected, which will give a completely different effect to the piece.

## Design

When designing any project, I do a lot of sketches to help visualise the finished item. This vase has been designed to have a wide squat neck, which is fitted to the body of the vase using a recess in the vase body and a spigot the same size cut on the neck.

The joint at the neck of the vase has become more visible due to the burning process. The timber surrounding the join has burned more easily than the main body creating a more visible joint, which I feel doesn't detract from the beauty and form of the vase; however, if you do not like this feature, a return curve

could be cut above the spigot which will sit over the joint and disguise it.

## Mounting on the lathe and hollowing

Due to the dimensions of this vase, a specialist hollowing tool is required along with some robust jaws attached to your chuck. I have chosen to use a heavy-duty

hollowing tool with interchangeable and adjustable tips, which offers plenty of support and control when in use.

The chuck has been fitted with shark jaws, which require a long parallel spigot. The jaws grip into this spigot, giving a very secure hold for the hollowing process.

Hollowing a larger vessel, like this, is approached in the same way as a small vessel. Drill a hole to the required depth and start hollowing from the centre hole outwards.



Turn the required wall thickness for the first 25mm of the vase. When that has been achieved, move to the next 25mm, again working from the centre towards the outside wall. Continue in this manner until the entire vessel is hollowed to your required wall thickness. A pair of vessel callipers can help with assessing the uniformity of the wall.

To prevent the tool from binding, remove the shavings at very regular intervals. There are several methods of doing this, for example, using a small vacuum to suck the shaving from the vase, blowing them out using a compressed air gun or a long piece of tubing, scooping them out with a toothbrush or similar implement, to name a few. All these methods are used with the lathe stationary.

## Burning the surface

When using a naked flame on timber, several safety precautions need to be taken. Always follow the manufacturer's recommended safe practice when using your blowtorch. I would recommend you undertake this process outside in the open air and have a damp cloth and bucket of water close by. Try to avoid applying the flame to one specific area for prolonged periods of time as this will cause the timber to ignite. If this does happen,



The parallel chucking spigot for the shark jaws

use the damp cloth to smother the flames. Leaving the vase on your chuck will give you something to hold on to, keeping your hands a sufficient distance from the flame.

#### **EQUIPMENT USED**

Spindle roughing gouge
3mm parting tool
1.5mm fluted parting tool
10mm fingernail profile spindle gouge
12mm fingernail profile spindle gouge

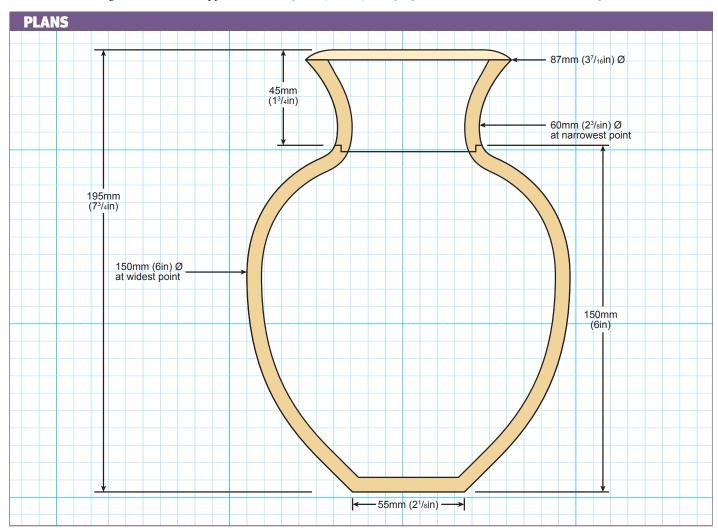


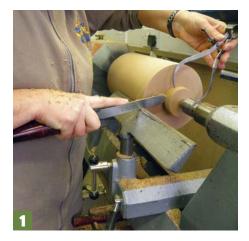
The chuck was fitted with shark jaws

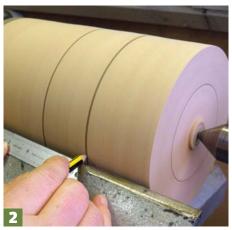
RS200 & RS300 hollowing tools Jacobs chuck 120, 180, 240, 320 & 400 grit abrasives Craft blowtorch Wire brush PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask and extraction

#### **TIMBER REQUIREMENTS**

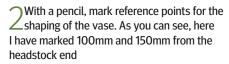
Ash *(Fraxinus excelsior)* 150 × 150 × 255mm long







The first step is to mount a piece of ash measuring 150 × 150 × 255mm long between centres on your lathe and turn into the round. Cut a chucking spigot the correct diameter and length to fit shark jaws or similar: here I am using a 3mm parting tool and spring callipers to cut the spigot. Notice how my forearm is supporting the tool handle offering extra stability to the tool for the long reach needed to cut the spigot



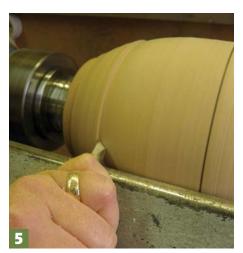




From the 150mm reference point you've made, reduce the neck section down to a diameter of approximately 100mm

Use a 12mm fingernail profile spindle gouge to shape the top of the vase, starting from the 100mm reference mark leading into the base of the neck

5 Next, start working from the widest point and shape the bottom section of the vase towards the foot. Leave the narrowest section at approximately 100mm diameter thickness to offer extra support for hollowing the vase. This will be removed when the final shaping is carried out





Use the 12mm fingernail profile spindle gouge to cut the cove of the neck and shape the rim

The next step is to create a flat where the neck of the vase meets the vase body to a diameter of 70mm

Using a parting tool, cut a spigot the correct size for your jaws for remounting the neck once it's parted off from the main body of the vase

You can then draw reference marks for realigning the vase when the hollowing process has been completed

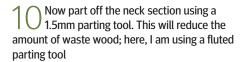












11 Attach a large drill bit into a Jacobs chuck and, with the speed of the lathe reduced to approximately 500rpm, drill a hole down the centre of the vase to the required depth

1 Using your preferred hollowing tool, hollow the vase and create an even wall thickness as you progress; here, I am using a scraper tip to remove waste quickly

Remove the shavings at regular intervals; this will prevent the tool from binding

14 The next step is to refine the internal shape and surface finish. A large teardrop cutter presented to the timber at a 45° angle will create a fine shearing cut

## "Use vessel callipers to assess the wall thickness as you progress"

15 Use vessel callipers to assess the wall thickness as you progress

16 When the vase is sufficiently hollowed, cut a recess the correct size to receive the neck

Mount the neck section on your lathe using the chucking spigot cut earlier and hollow the inside of the piece to the same wall thickness as the vase body. Refine the spigot being used to fit into the body of the neck and check for fit

Mount the vase back on the lathe and run some CA adhesive around the recess. Align the orientation reference marks and bring the taildrive up to secure the two pieces together. Leave the taildrive in position until the glue has dried































19 When the glue has cured, remove the chucking spigot and hollow the remainder of the neck

The next step, using an RS200 with a teardrop scraper attached, is to shear scrape the inside of the neck and blend the joint into the required shape

2 1 Refine the shape of the bottom of the vase which was left intentionally large and define the foot. Sand the finished vase. Starting with 120 grit, work through grits 180, 240, 320 and finish with 400

2 Use a blowtorch to scorch the timber, leaving the internal rim of the vase as natural wood. Remember the safety precautions previously outlined for using a flame on wooden surfaces

Remove the burned fibres from the open grain with a wire brush leaving a contoured surface

24 Use a fluted parting tool to part off the vase; this will ensure you encounter a minimum of grain tear-out

25 You can then mount a sanding arbor in your jaws and turn the lathe on. Offer the vase base gently to the rotating arbor to remove the pip left from parting off and smooth the surface, working through your usual grits

The final step is to apply your desired finish to the vase. I applied several coats of oil and buffed to a shine with carnauba wax to achieve a gloss finish. The completed scorched vase in ash should look something like this

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 1. If you are uncomfortable or nervous about using one hand to cut the chucking spigot with a long distance overhang of the toolrest, then use two hands and keep stopping the lathe to check the spigot size
- 2. When removing a piece of work from your chuck that will need to be remounted, you need to mark the timber opposite jaw number one so that realignment in the same jaws can be achieved allowing for a more accurate hold
- **3.** If using shark jaws to mount the vase for hollowing, you will need to have a perfectly parallel spigot. This will ensure maximum grip is achieved
- 4. When fitting the neck into the body, cut a stepped recess in the body of the vase for the neck to fit into; this will offer more support to the joint and provide more gluing surface, which will increase the strength of the joint



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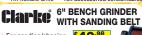
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# Three bowls for you to make

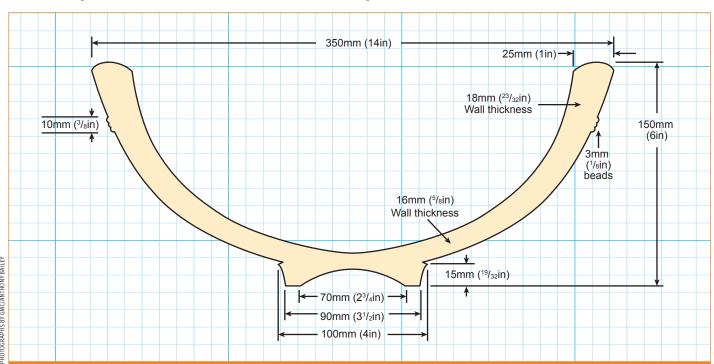
**Mark Baker** shows you how to create three more bowl designs, each using a different timber



## Ash beaded bowl

This bowl made from ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) has some 'olive' colouring to it, which would often mean this piece would be labelled as olive ash (*Olea europea*). For me, the splash of colour seems to visually balance against the normal cream colour of this wood. The olive area occupies about one-third of the

overall shape. A half would look wrong to me, but two-thirds would also work. The beads add visual and tactile detail and can easily be cut using a bead-forming tool or a gouge, point tool or skew on its side in scraping mode. The foot detail just adds lift to the main bowl shape and since this is meant to be used for salads, fruit and such like, the base is just over one-third of the overall width, which helps to provide a stable non-tilt base. The finish is a food-safe oil so it can be easily recoated and will allow you to continue protecting the wood from discolouration.

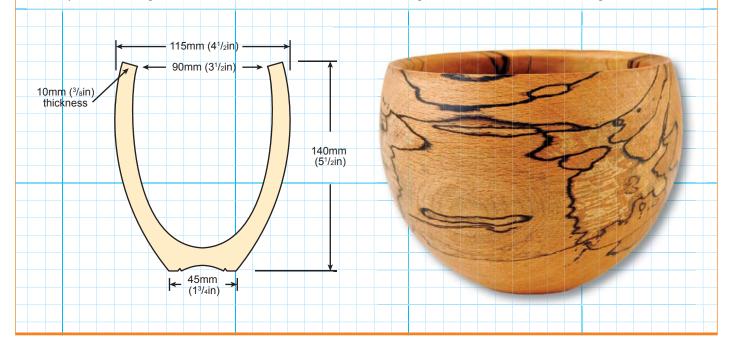


## Spalted beech bowl

I love the shape of this bowl and particularly the way the opening is smaller than the widest diameter of the bowl. In effect, it is a semi-enclosed form and you can see that if the body curve was extended upwards on a larger piece of wood, you would end up with a vase-

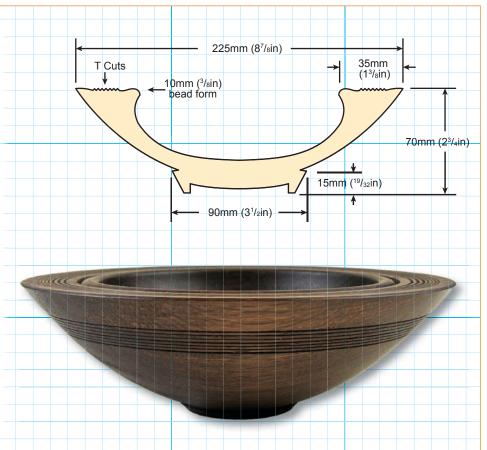
type or hollow form. The recurve shape is a classic and works well for wide and also deep forms, and if the interior curve mimics the external, it is an ideal staple for storing various items. The inner recurve will allow any excess items – food, etc. – to roll back in on itself, so no overspills on

tables and surfaces. You either love or hate spalted timber. I am on the fence regarding liking the colouration – sometimes it is a yes and other times, no. It really depends on how it looks and since no two pieces are the same, I cannot tell until I see the final piece.



## Bog oak bowl

This design is based on a ceremonial bowl I once saw in a museum. The material for this bowl is ancient and surprisingly clear of defects. So, since the timber is ancient and the ceremonial bowl I saw was likewise aged, it made sense to pay homage to both pieces. The internal shape is a standard upsweep curve with a small pedestal-like foot to create lift. The internal shape is a contra-shape to the one outside and undercuts the wide rim to create a cavern-type hollow on the inside. I like vessels where the inside form differs from the outside. The decoration is mainly V-cuts and these can be created with a point tool or the corner of a skew held in scraping mode. The spacings are entirely up to you. One thing I would say is that it is prudent not to have too sharp or crisp an edge on the inside opening, as this can be prone to fracturing and chipping if the bowl is used. A bead-like form creates a soft, tactile edge that is durable and acts as a nice frame for the opening.





Philip Greenwood turns a two-part vase using ordinary tools

**Bob Chapman** turns four bowls in ash as part of his 'local timbers' series

Mark Baker reports from the 2015 Utah Woodturning & AAW Symposiums Neil and Liz Scobie turn and decorate a deep vase

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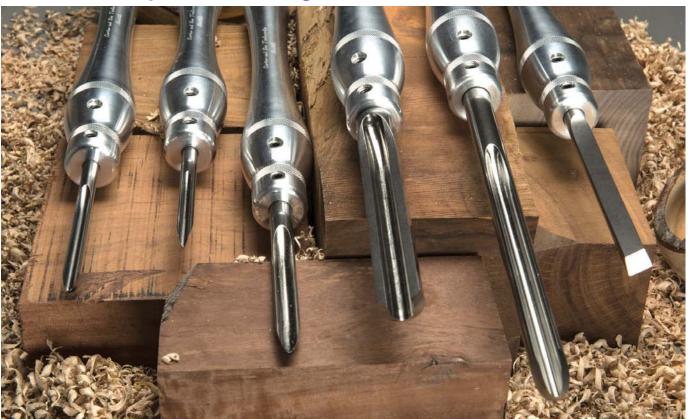
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## The ToolPost

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**Andrew Stevens** in profile

ndrew Stevens is a retired teacher based in Gosport, Hampshire. He turns bowls, platters and hollow

forms. His work can be viewed on his Facebook page - www.facebook.com/ TurnForFun.

#### Taking up turning

Andrew first started turning when he was at school but was unable to get seriously involved as a busy work and home life meant he didn't have the time to start turning. However, an accident 15 years ago brought about a change. "I came off my bicycle on the way to work and broke my collarbone," he explains. "Being off work gave me thinking time and I realised that I had been spending all my time teaching others and little stretching my personal skills, so with my arm in a sling I set about creating a workshop. Later that year my wife and daughter bought me a lathe and I was off. It was great to really get to grips with developing techniques and advancing my understanding. I retired after 35 years of teaching design and technology a couple of years ago and have been able to spend a lot more time in the workshop on the lathe and at the bench."

#### Influences

When asked to name people who have influenced him, Andrew selects the secondary-school woodwork teacher who saw some potential in him and let him 'live' in the school workshop. He also names his wife as she makes him think outside of the box. "She drops ideas into the pot and this has led me to make some unusual and quite demanding projects. At woodyards she is always ahead of me, searching out timber for me to work with.'

Andrew is also inspired by his collection of antique treen, some of his bowls and plates are 300 or more years old: "The skill involved and the shapes of these early pieces made with such primitive equipment is a constant source of inspiration," he says. He also likes to read books about turning. such as Edward Pinto's Treen or Small Woodware Throughout the Ages, in order to learn more about the craft.

When planning a new project, Andrew advises taking time and waiting for



**Woodturner Andrew Stevens** 

inspiration to strike: "Leave your special pieces of timber lying about the workshop. It might be a year or more but it will talk to you and that great project will jump out."

#### Mistakes and challenges

Andrew told us about the 'silliest mistake' he has ever made in the workshop: "I was parting off a ring to try and save wood when making a plate when the tool twisted. Luckily I was wearing my new Trend Airshield

facemask because I still sustained a bloody nose and a black eye when the piece exploded. They say you should learn from your mistakes and I have!"

His greatest challenge came when his daughter asked him to make her a dinner set for their wedding present, as he explains: "I managed to find a huge plank of American white oak (Quercus alba) at a local supplier and used every last bit. Four dinner plates, side plates, pudding bowls and goblets as well



as a salad bowl and various other smaller pieces. I like to make one-off pieces but this batch production involved a whole new skill set and one I would recommend anyone to try out to develop techniques."

## **Essential tools**

Apart from the lathe, Andrew says that he could not be without his Startrite 352 bandsaw: "This is an older model but is so well built and, when coupled with an Axminster Axcaliber premium blade, it does everything I ask of it."

He has also made some equipment: "I made my own vacuum chuck to work with a pump that I managed to pick up at a car-boot sale. I did make the bearing set as well but it was difficult to get on and off, so when I saw one on a trip to the USA, I treated myself. It all works very well and the last project I used it on was to clean up the copper bottom of a bowl before it was fixed in."



Andrew's favourite Crown Pro PM Bowl gouges with his own long grind

Andrew's latest homemade vacuum chuck with a bought bearing set



An organised rack with plastic boxes to store Andrew's range of chuck jaws and glasspaper



#### Traditional skills

Although he embraces modern technology, Andrew believes that traditional skills are still essential and worries that these may be lost. "I taught design and technology in secondary schools for 35 years and we kept up with technology such as CAD, laser cutting and CNC machines. I don't believe in going back to the Dark Ages, but learning hand skills and playing with materials is a really important first step. How can you design without understanding your raw material? Workshops are being lost too

quickly in favour of clean rooms. You can't replace that smile and sense of achievement that a finished project brings."

#### Favourite type of turning

Andrew told us that his favourite turning is bowl turning with burrs. "I really enjoy all aspects of turning but my real passion is to mount a big oak burr on the lathe and core out as many bowls as I dare. You never know what is inside a burr and that is the thrill for me as everything is revealed."

#### **Future plans**

Andrew's future plans include working with a new material: "I bought some lead-free pewter a while ago and I want to start mixing things up with rims, handles and feet mixed with a lovely burr. Not all on the same item I hasten to add!" He also has a bigger project that is still at the 'thinking' stage: "I have bought an 18th-century brass clock chapter ring and after finding the right piece of timber will turn it into a beautiful wall clock. The mix of old and new can look great." We look forward to seeing the results!



#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 1. Enjoy what you do and don't worry about making a mistake
- 2. Push yourself, don't always sit back and take the easy route
- 3. Buy the best tools that you can; they will last longer and save time away from the lathe sharpening
- 4. Get your workshop organised so you don't waste turning time finding things
- **5.** Keep a sketchbook to record your ideas and processes



Andrew's first burr oak (Quercus robur) bowl, 290 × 85mm



#### LIKES

- Meeting and chatting with other woodturners
- My Kelton coring kit and the free bowls that it produces
- The 'wow' moment when a difficult project is brought indoors
- Making shavings
- The pleasure I get from holding a Bert Marsh bowl I found at a boot sale for £2
   what skill that man had

#### **DISLIKES**

- Chucking mounts left on a finished piece
- Dust
- What is not to like about woodturning?!



'Pear Tea Caddy', boxwood (Buxus sempervirens) and ebony (Diospyros spp.) with a gold leaf lining, 190 × 110

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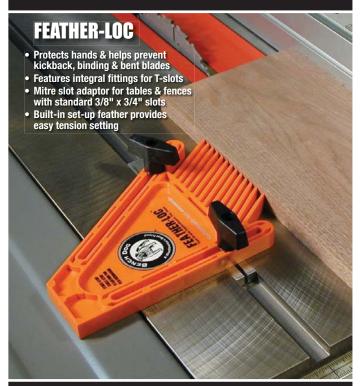
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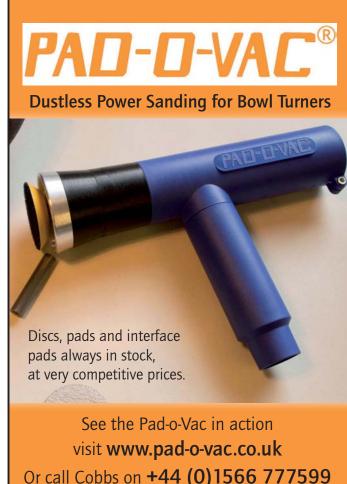
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Lace bobbin display stand

**lan Woodford** turns a small display stand using contrasting woods

his project came about when my wife's friend, a lace maker, wanted a stand to show off her collection of lace bobbins. A member of our local club, Hampshire Woodturners Association, who specialises in making bobbins, provided the necessary bobbin measurements from which I was able to base my design dimensions, the most important being the overall length and the diameter of the long neck on which the cotton is wound.

After a few hours of scribbling various ideas on paper, I came up with this design and then had to choose woods to use. I decided on bubinga (*Guibourtia demeusei*) and also local boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) to provide some contrasting colour accents. Bubinga is a nice wood to work and the subtle grain pattern and colour provide a good background that will accentuate a variety of bobbins.

The turning is mostly a straightforward mix of spindle and faceplate with a total of eight separate elements. There is a little off lathe work to do in the form of cutting grooves in the top carrier and also a little filing to form V-cuts in one of the boxwood elements, but all of this will be explained as we progress. The faceplate work for the base and carrier sections will be done partly on jam chucks and should become clear as we go along. The central column and finial is easy spindle turning.

## IAN WOODFORD

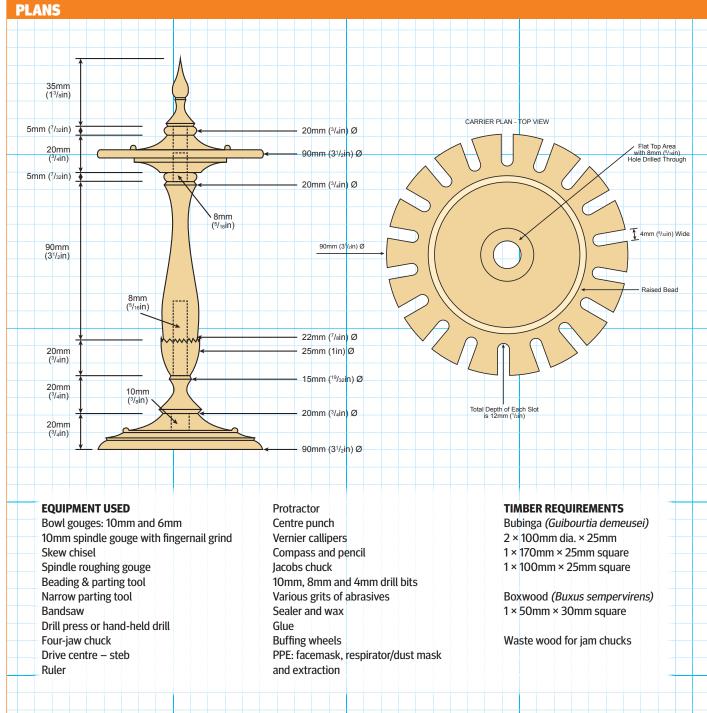


Ian spent his working life selling with a large pharmaceutical company covering a huge area in Australia and also in the UK. He has been turning for many years and since taking early retirement, has developed his skills and enthusiasm. He supplies various craft shops, exhibits at craft shows and

has sold at the prestigious London Pen Show, although he now only makes on a commission basis. Ian belongs to two turning clubs in Hampshire and has demonstrated to members on a number of occasions. He has a dedicated workshop and enjoys new projects and challenges.







The first step is to prepare the blanks for this project to the dimensions given in the list of timber requirements in the table above, and once prepared, they should look something like these. Once done, it is time to get into the workshop and start turning. With a project like this, I prefer to start from the base and work up, so our first element to tackle is the base of the stand. For cross-grained blanks of small size like this one, I mount them between centres to true up

2 For this turning, use a chuck mounted steb centre and, with tailstock support, true it up with a bowl gouge and then form a tenon with a parting tool to suit your chuck jaws





















Reverse the blank onto your chuck and true the face. Use a tailstock-mounted Jacobs chuck to drill a 10mm diameter hole 15mm into the blank, being careful not to go all the way through. This will eventually take the spigot formed on the first section of the central column

Using a 10mm bowl gouge, start to form the shape of the top surface of the base section. You can have an alternative to the raised bead by making this bead a sunken one, which is slightly easier to do. Once the turning is done, sand through the grits to 400 and then seal with a sanding sealer. Here you can see the top area of the base sanded and sealed. I tend to leave the final finish until all turning is complete and then buff all turned parts

5 To finish the underside of the base, mount a waste blank in the chuck and turn a spigot down to 10mm diameter so you can reverse chuck the base onto it

Here you can see the jam chuck and then the base section reversed onto it and the initial mounting tenon being turned off with a 10mm bowl gouge...

7 ... it is necessary at this stage to have the support of the tailstock centre, which can then be removed to take off the final nib. Sand and seal as before

Apart from the final finish being applied, the base is now complete. The blank for the first part of the central column is now mounted between centres and roughed to round. Working from the tailstock end, form a 10mm tenon, which fits into the base section. You can take this off and test fit to make sure the diameter is correct

O Use a 10mm spindle gouge to form the first section following the given dimensions. Now turn a longer tenon down to 8mm diameter; this will pass through the first boxwood section and then into the main column. Sand and seal. Take the boxwood blank and rough to round, then mount in your chuck making sure it is located centrally. With an 8mm drill bit held in a Jacobs chuck, drill in about 30mm. Form a recess in the end of this blank to a depth of 4 or 5mm and to a width of 20mm. The bottom of the main column will fit in this recess. With the toolrest up close to the side of the blank, mark with a pencil 24 lines around the edge. The lathe indexing system is used to do this. When complete, draw a line around the circumference about 5mm in from the edge

Form serrations around the top using a small file – square or flat – on edge to cut small triangles down to the circular line. There is no need to be exact and these serrations will form a nice contrast against the main bubinga column when assembled



1 When the serrations are complete, you need to refine the shape of this boxwood section. Follow the measurements shown in the plan, but keep the wall thickness of the serrations to no more than 2mm. The turning will also get rid of any small breakout from the filing process. You can then sand, seal and part this section off before moving on to turning the main column

12 You can now mount the main column blank in the chuck and rough to round using tailstock support. Take away the tailstock support and fit the Jacobs chuck. Drill an 8mm hole into the end to a depth of about 25mm. Replace the live centre to give support while turning this section to its final shape. The first part of this process is to turn the end so that it fits snugly into the recess formed in the serrated boxwood section. This photo here shows a test fit being done. You will need to make this fit reasonably snug, as any final sanding will ease this diameter enough for a comfortable fit and without any gaps showing between the two sections

13 The tailstock is in place and the final shape has been completed together with an 8mm tenon formed at the headstock end. Sand, seal and then part off

4 Between the top of the main column and the underneath of the carrier, I like to have a contrasting bead, so mount the remaining length of boxwood and drill an 8mm hole to a depth of about 20mm. Then, turn the bead to a width of 4mm and a diameter of 18mm. You can then sand, seal and part off. Now make another identical one to go between the top of the carrier and the finial. The next section is the carrier, which requires a little off-lathe work, but nothing that is difficult. Slots need to be cut around the perimeter so that the bobbins can be hung yet retained in position by the 'head' of the bobbin. The slots need to be 4mm wide for the 'neck' of the bobbin to slide in. I like the bobbins to be separated a little when in place so that they are not overcrowded. To this end, I've found that 18 slots is ideal and this requires the angle between each slot to be 20°

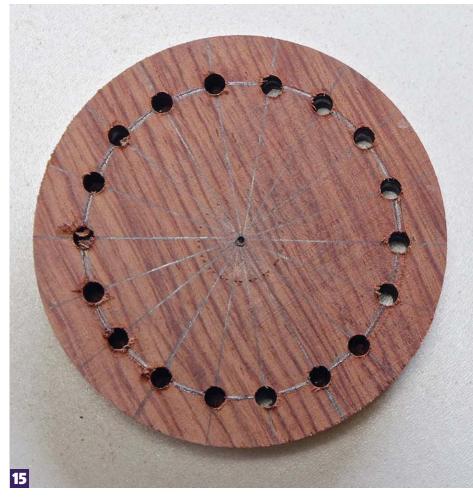
15 Mount this blank between centres as you did for the base and true the outer edge. Take it off the lathe and lay it flat. Using a ruler, draw a line from the centre to the outside edge. Use a protractor to mark out the angle and then draw lines to the centre of the blank, as in the photo. Return the blank to the lathe and true the outer edge so that the overall diameter is 90mm. On one of the lines, make a mark in from the outer edge by 10mm and from this point mark a circle all the way round. The next step is to take it off the lathe again and use a centre punch to mark all the points where this circle intercepts each line. Drill a 4mm hole right through the blank at each point — a pillar drill is ideal for this

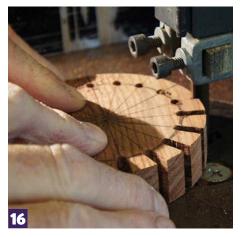




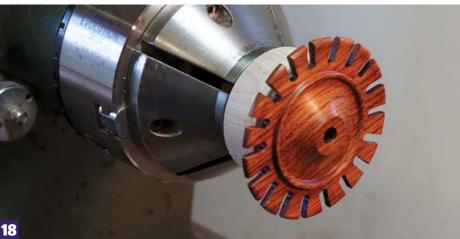


















Take the blank to your bandsaw and very carefully cut from the outer edge of the carrier to each hole so you end up with 4mm wide slots all the way round. It will probably take about three cuts for each slot. Return the blank to the lathe and form a spigot to suit your chuck, then reverse onto the chuck and drill an 8mm hole through the centre

Mount the carrier on a jam chuck and turn its underside with support from the tailstock. Sand, seal and reverse the carrier so that the topside can be turned. It is important that from the outside edge of the carrier to the turned bead there is a gentle inward curve or dishing, which helps to maintain the bobbins in position. Once done, you can sand and seal. For both sides of the carrier, follow the diagram for measurements. For the final finishing cuts and also the bead shaping, remove the tailstock support and use a freshly sharpened gouge to take gentle cuts to complete the top surface. Sand and seal in the usual way

The turning is done but you will probably find that the internal sides of the slots will show some marks from the bandsaw. Fold a piece of 60 grit abrasive and gently sand these marks away. This is best done while still on the iam chuck

The final element is the finial, so mount the remaining blank of bubinga and, following the diagram's measurements, turn to a finish and with an 8mm tenon long enough to go through the turned bead and into the carrier. The photo here shows that I needed to increase the length of this tenon by about 5mm before parting off

All the turning is now finished and all that remains to be done is to buff the stand using your favourite wax. I use a lathe mounted buffing system and finish with carnauba wax. The final step is to carefully glue all the components together using a whitewood glue, such as Titebond

21 The finished bobbin stand should look something like this and is now ready to receive all your bobbins •

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- When drilling on the lathe into either cross or end grain, I always make a start point with a skew tip flat on its side; this prevents any initial skidding of the drill bit across the wood surface and thus ensures a precisely drilled hole
- When assembling a project with many elements, such as this one, make sure that the grain orientation runs true throughout all elements, otherwise you'll find it will look less attractive



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# In the workshop with... Kristin LeVier



We go into the workshop with sculptural woodturner **Kristin LeVier** and find out more about her unique work

ristin started working with wood over 20 years ago in order to make the furniture she wanted, but couldn't afford. She immediately loved the mixture of design freedom and precision involved in woodworking and has been building her creations ever since.

Kristin began sculpting wood nine years ago, inspired by her two shopmates, Ben Carpenter and Jim Christiansen, and by the innovative and beautiful art coming out of the woodturning community.

She works in Moscow, Idaho, where she is inspired by nature in all its forms, by snow and ice, and by the beautiful rolling hills that surround her.

#### How, when and why did you start turning?

About 22 years ago, in order to make legs for a stool I was building. Until 10 years ago, I only turned every few years when required for furniture projects. Now I am surrounded by woodturners in my studio and use the lathe as often as I can for elements of my sculptures. However, most of my sculpture requires much more time away from the lathe than on it and whenever I get back to turning, I am always re-surprised at how much fun it is.

## What and who are the greatest influences in your work?

I find inspiration everywhere, particularly in nature. I also follow all kinds of 3D creative work: sculpture, architecture, furniture and jewellery making, fashion and ceramic, installation, glass and fibre art. My greatest day-to-day influences are my extremely talented studio mates and mentors, Jim Christiansen and Ben Carpenter, whose beautiful work constantly inspires me. There are so many woodturners today who are making amazing creative art. Just a few of my favourites are Ron Layport, Bill Luce, Pascal Oudet, Louise Hibbert, Graeme Priddle, Janel Jacobson, Alain Mailland and Dixie Biggs.



'Henceforth', 2015, maple (Acer saccharum) and compressed beech (Fagus sylvatica), acrylic paint and silver leaf, 95 × 430 × 90mm

## If you were to offer one sage piece of advice to someone what would it be?

Work to find your individual style. It takes time and involves failure, but it is ultimately worth it in order to make truly authentic work. Copying the work of others is a good way to learn new techniques, but there is real joy in adding your own twists, refinements and embellishments. My favourite compliment is when someone says of my work: 'I've never seen anything like that before'.

## What music and which book are you currently into?

Anything by The Decemberists. I listened to two of their excellent albums compulsively, while making my most ambitious piece to date – 'Undulata' – and have designed pieces in my head to illustrate scenes in some of their beautifully Brothers Grimm-esque narrative songs. I've recently finished one of the best books I've read in many years, *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. I love that the author is as easily distracted by the endless beauty found in nature as I am.

#### What is your silliest mistake?

I am a safety fanatic, so all of my failures have been aesthetic. I often sketch something in 2D that turns out to be a hot mess once I've made it in 3D. I've learned to mock things up, sometimes just with pipe cleaners and polymer clay, in order to get all the angles worked out before I commit to wood.

#### What has been your greatest challenge?

Finding the time to make art. My family is young and I only have school hours to reliably work in my studio. I have learned to become increasingly efficient with this limited time throughout the years.

#### Name one thing on your turning 'to do' list?

To design and make something so compelling that someone wants to manufacture it. How great would that be? I've designed a teapot, the initial idea for which came during a bout of insomnia a few years ago, that I think has a



'Home', 2015, padauk (*Pterocarpus dalbergioides*), compressed maple (*Acer saccharum*), acrylic paint and silver leaf, 150 × 125 × 63mm

lot of potential. I just need to work out some of the details.

## Tell us about the piece you are currently working on?

I am in the design stages of a piece that symbolises a sprout newly emerging into the world from a seed. This unfurling process is sort of where I see myself as an artist right now.

## What is the one piece of equipment or tool you would not be without and why?

My micromotor carver. Carving is like drawing in three dimensions and I love doing it. I carve almost everything that I turn on the lathe at least a little bit.

## If you could change one thing what would it be and why?

My requirement for sleep. If I could be fully mentally and physiologically refreshed by two hours of sleep a night, I could effectively double my productive hours. I could make so much more art and still be fully involved with my family.

#### What is your favourite type of turning?

I guess I have to say spindle turning, because that is what I do most, although I would like to become a competent bowl turner someday.

#### If you had one wish, what would you wish for?

I would wish for the time and health to continue making art for many, many years to

come. I have so many ideas and sketches that I want to turn into art. And with time, I'd be able to teach more people – and children – art and woodworking techniques. I believe that people are much more creative than they think they are. I would also settle for magic elves to clean up my workbench and do finish sanding for me at night – that would certainly be handy!

#### If you could have one piece of equipment, what would it be and why?

A CNC router. I love technology and aspire to become good enough at 3D modelling to be able to programme a CNC router to rough out my sculptures and make furniture components in order to save my time for the turning and carving and finishing work that I prefer. •



'Horn I', 2012, maple (Acer saccharum) and aluminium, 140  $\times$  405  $\times$  100mm



'Ominousa' bowl, 2012, compressed cherry (Prunus serotina) and acrylic paint, 115  $\times$  150  $\times$  150mm



'Undulata', compressed maple (Acer saccharum), acrylic paint and magnet, 180 × 230 × 150mm

#### LIKES

- Inventive woodturners, who work outside
  the box with their art and continually
  develop new techniques and methods. A
  few examples are Gerrit Van Ness, Dewey
  Garret, Derek Weidman and Robert Lyon.
  And the innovative Michael Hosaluk, with his
  brave and steadfast refusal to remain locked
  in one artistic style. His organic pieces –
  like his slug-shaped boxes and work with
  rawhide are absolutely gorgeous
- Using compressed hardwood to create curved or twisted elements without having to deal with steam-bending. Tania Radda's lovely work with this great wood product was what first allowed me to know that there was a way to make the curvy designs that I had in my head
- Reading articles in woodturning magazines. I recently created a non-round vessel using the 'Lost Wood Technique', which I learned about in an article by Art Liestman in American Woodturner.
   I thought I was going to have to make a bunch of jigs and use a router to get the look that I wanted until I saw the article.
   The Lost Wood process was fast, easy and worked flawlessly

#### **DISLIKES**

- The sawdust. It would be so nice to have a dust-free place to work
- Tool catches. They still scare me after all these years

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 1. For saturated transparent colour that lets the wood grain show through, there is no substitute for an airbrush. I wasted years trying unsuccessfully to find alternate methods for doing this because I was scared of learning how to use an airbrush. It's easy and so much fun
- Wear a respirator. Breathing wood dust is hazardous. I wear my respirator every day in the workshop, no matter how hot and sweaty I get
- 3. Take a walk outside to get inspiration, or use Pinterest uk.pinterest.com and search sculpture, wood art, seed pods, jellyfish, etc. There are countless inspiring images that people have collected
- 4. Don't fear perfectionism. If you look at the work of the best lathe artists you know, most will be impeccable. It is worth the time to strive for flawlessness
- **5.** Once you get a body of work that you are proud of, step out of the shop and put the time or money into making a great website to showcase it. It is a way to show what you have made to the world

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# Exploring swinging or arcing techniques

Previously, **Mark Baker** and **Anthony Bailey** have used routing devices that rotate or move side to side. In this article, they explore a swinging or arcing technique

outers only work effectively and safely under some form of control and guidance. Using either the Paul Howard routing jig or homemade setup as we have done in the earlier articles, it has been executed by sliding or rotation on a baseboard in the horizontal axis. The 'free' method, where the router is slid across the baseboard, uses the shield around the cutter to set the cut depth, while the rotation method uses a depth stop to ensure a constant cut arc that does not need the shield to function.

This time we tried a natty accessory – called a base hinge jig – for the Paul Howard router jig device, which simply bolts to the underside of the router jig base and lets it swing from side to side. The hinge jig comprises four fixing blocks: two to fit to your router jig unit and two to a baseboard, through which runs a metal tube on which everything pivots in a fixed arc. Note: you do need to fix the hinge jig to a board, and as with all the previous articles in the series, an indexing plate/unit is required to lock the work securely in place

at specfic positions. The board it is fixed on needs to be clamped to the much larger baseboard used in previous issues. We chose a large but unfinished platter that would benefit from some further decoration. After some positional experimentation, we decided that the router had to be offset to one side directly facing the border that required decoration. Being a fairly flat surface, it wasn't hard to work out the projection required to get a slight graduated depth of cut from the edge to the middle.

#### ■ Setup

This is the hinge jig lying over on its side with the router mounted and baseboard fixed into position. It would be perfectly possible to make up an attachment like this. The device is able to slide backwards and forwards within limits, so it can enter the work at any point

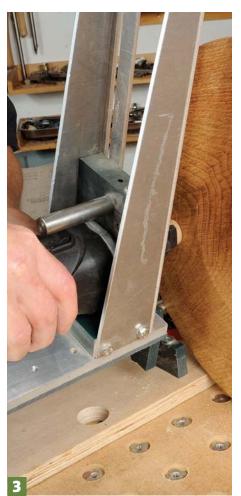
This is a view of the setup from the other side with the router positioned to arc across the platter roughly at centre height. Both the baseboard and the device need to be clamped firmly in place on the lathe bed

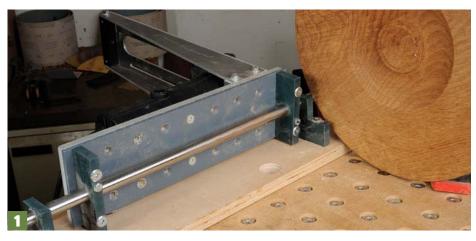
#### The test

We did a test 'rub' to gently graze the platter with the cutter tip; this would allow us to check that the cutter path is correct and doable before we go any further

Here you can see the router on its first pass with a 60° engraving cutter. The shield around the cutter is essential as it sets the cut depth when pressing the router against the platter

5 The cuts start from the rim and go inwards, stopping where the depression in the middle starts. Any loose chippings in the grooves can be wire-brushed out

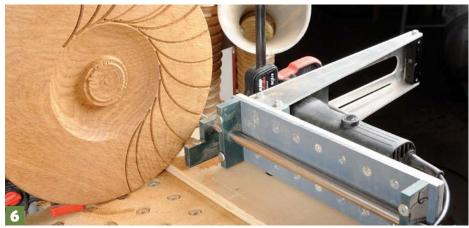












The first series of arcs can be quite enough in themselves, but we decided to try reversing the effect. The router setup was moved to the other side of the baseboard

To achieve the exact repetition proved to be quite easy, using the indexing plate behind the chuck. The effect is a bit like the Spirograph toy of old and creates a more complex looking effect that can be done quite simply

Just turn the centre and outer edge to ensure the decorative arcs are where you want them to start and finish. Also, remember to clean up the grooves properly

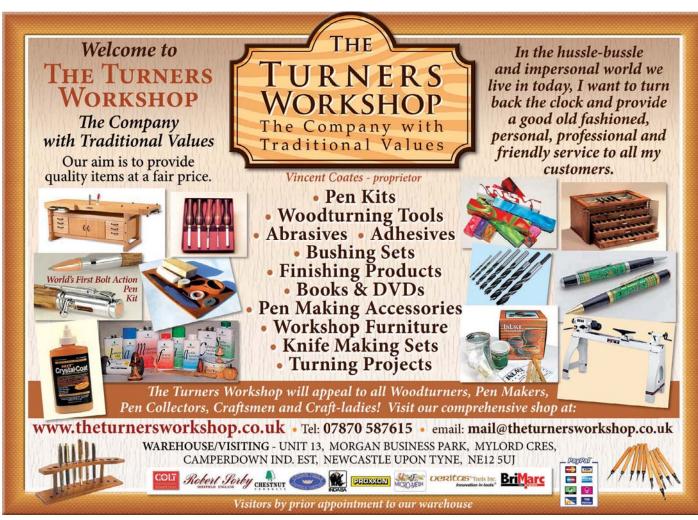


#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 1. While this is a swinging arm setup, don't forget that you can also do straight across grooves without it. As with the hinge jig, these grooves can either be set on, above and below centre of the item being decorated for a different visual result
- **2.** Experiment with the cutter types used. Only a simple point cutter was used for this article, but ogee, ovolo, core cutters and so many more can be used for even greater variety
- 3. Beware of cuts running too close to each other or you might break the detail across the short grain. Using close-grained dense timbers reduces the risk, as does moving the router at a slow, deliberate pace, using sharp cutters











#### KURT HERTZOG



Kurt is a professional woodturner, demonstrator and teacher and writes for various woodturning and woodworking publications in the United States as well as writing for *Woodturning* 

magazine. He is on the Pen Makers' Guild Council and is currently president of the American Association of Woodturners (AAW).

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early every turner, regardless of any particular speciality, has some special little tricks that they've learned over time that help make their tasks easier and more successful. These may be things they learned from a mentor, read about, or they've learned the hard way through trial and error. Their tricks or timesavers are often process or general workshop tips. These help them complete their turnings more easily yet maintain the quality level they desire. Other times, it is a special tool or grind they use to make their results more successful and repeatable. Often, these special grinds are the only way that particular result could be achieved. This month, I'm going to share a few of the tips and tricks I use within my

space constraints. These are helpful items I've learned from others along my journey or developed out of need over the years. We'll cover ideas on grinding, tool shaping and angles, and tools made or altered to perform special tasks.

#### Safety

The tools and their usage I'll be covering are pretty straightforward. As always, use your needed PPE along with your turning best practices. If the tool or grind is new to you, learn to use it by practising on work that is disposable and ease into developing your skills with it. Developing your prowess with any tool can be done in stages without putting yourself into difficult situations or ruining expensive materials. Do not attempt any turning process, learned here or elsewhere, if you feel uncomfortable with it. Seek out additional instruction and a guiding mentor to assist you.

#### Breaking the tool corners

Every tool you buy or make from flat stock usually has extremely sharp corners on the shaft. This is the nature of the stock as delivered for the manufacturing process. While it doesn't hurt the function of the cutting edge, it certainly does make a sharp corner that can catch on the toolrest.

Regardless of the toolrest that you use, other than those with the hardened steel lip, this sharp corner is a detriment to sliding on the rest smoothly. This is especially troublesome should you rotate the tool at all. Scrapers, skews, parting tools, beading & parting tools and other tools created from anything other than round or oval stock will benefit from breaking the tool corners. They are often used rotated to some degree and slid along the rest. Breaking the corners is a once in a lifetime process that takes only a few seconds. It is well worth the effort. Think through the corners that you should 'round'. If it isn't going to be part of the actual finished edge and could ever come in contact with



I use my grinder to soften the sharp corners. One sweep from ferrule to end of tool at about 45°

the toolrest, it is a candidate for breaking the corner. You'll hear the term breaking, rounding, softening and others. All mean the same thing as presented here. It is the removal of the very sharp corner creating a radius edge that will travel over the toolrest far more easily. There are several methods of breaking the corner. It can be done with abrasives by simply sanding the sharp corner at 45° and feathering that angle to the flats on both sides. The method I favour is grinding. It is easily done but does require planning

and some care to ensure you don't create problems along the edge. The corners to be rounded are presented to the grinder at about a 45° angle. I always hand hold the tool using the rest for support. I grind from the ferrule along the edge running off the front end of the tool in one motion. It is a light, swift, continuous grind to remove the sharp corner. Be certain to have a clear path from beginning until the end of your movements. You need to make the grind on the edge in one unbroken sweep. Stopping or pausing

anywhere along the length can grind problem areas. Once the edge is ground, it is further softened with sanding. I grind all of the edges needing softening just for time's sake and then sand to completion. I break the corners of all my new tools prior to their first use. Once the appropriate tool shaft corners have been broken, it can be sharpened to my desired shape and put into my toolkit. The tool will now easily slide up and down the rest at any angle of rotation for the duration of its life in my turning use.



Other than the hardened edge rest in the centre, tools will slide easier on soft rests once the tool edges are broken



Any tool edge that doesn't create the wood contact edge is a candidate for softening



I soften the edges on all of my square cornered tools the moment I purchase or make them

#### Filing and waxing the toolrest



Removing dings and divots in your toolrest are key to smooth turning. Filed at  $45^\circ$  in one stroke, repeated until done, will clean up problems



Even a new rest on the bottom can be improved by filing and waxing. The rest on the top will provide far smoother tool movement

I don't use many cast-iron toolrests in my workshop so I do not need to use this tip often. It is most helpful for me when travelling and using someone else's equipment. Over use, the top edge of cast-iron tools and others other than hardened edge, will get dings and dents. These can be minor or major depending on the tool being used when the stresses – catches – occurred. Any dings and dents will cause problems when trying to move the tool in a smooth continuous motion. How the dings and dents were

created is unimportant. Removing them to provide a smooth flat surface will allow tool travel ease. This can be done nicely with a fine toolmaker's file. Which file? I use a flat mill bastard file. If you use finer, it will take longer. Coarser is not recommended since the coarseness may be imparted to the rest. The key to filing a rest is to have it clear of any obstructions that will cramp your filing stroke. The file is presented flat across the top of the rest at 45° to the angle of the rest. It is one continuous push stroke from the front

corner to the back corner. The file is lifted and positioned at the front corner and repeated. Repeat this and vary the angle of the file slightly as needed to clean up the divots in the rest that could come in contact with the tool when being used. After filing, you can sand lightly if you wish but I find it unnecessary. I clean the filing debris from the toolrest and put a few strokes of canning wax across the top edge. You can use a candle or any other form of hard wax. The wax will help with making the top surface a nice sliding surface.



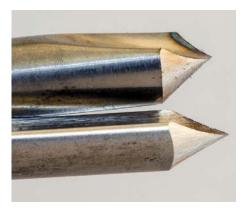
#### ▼ Fine detailing spindle gouge

When I am turning my ornament finials, I need to get into places where my standard spindle gouge won't fit. I have a standard 10mm spindle gouge ground to a very small angle to allow me to get into these spaces. Could I use a skew chisel? Certainly I could and often I do. I have this narrow angle spindle gouge available for two reasons: I use it for cuts that I could easily catch with a skew chisel. The spindle gouge is a bit more forgiving for these cuts and rarely catches for me. These longish cuts into deep 'V's with a surface contour tend to go better with my spindle gouge. The spindle gouge will also work well making coves in these

tight spaces. Even though a skew chisel is capable of cutting shallow coves, it is one of the applications it doesn't excel at. Why use it if it isn't the ideal tool? I'll still use my skew chisel to get the crispest of 'Vs' at the bottom in my turning as well as fitting into places where even my fine detail spindle gouge won't fit. I find that this is the spot where the oval skew performs well. Its very narrow thickness allows for use in these extremely tight spaces. These two tools specifically ground for the application are keys for me to be successful.

What angle is the spindle gouge ground to? I have never measured it. The number is

unimportant. What is important is that it fits into the spaces I'd like it to. If it is too fat, then the angle needs to be changed to allow it to fit. I find that the key to the functionality of this tool is the nose geometry more than the angle providing it fits. By controlling the radius of the nose, you can control the performance of the tool to your liking. With the angle setting per your needs, the nose geometry is softened by spending a bit more time on the nose and feathering that area into the rest of the grind. Because the tool is used only for these precise detailing needs, it doesn't see a lot of use but it is the tool of choice for this need.



My standard spindle gouge, top, is ground to about 45°. My 'go to' detail spindle gouge is ground to fit into smaller spaces



The shallower angle grind makes it easy to cut into tighter spaces without worrying about hitting the top edges



Using my shallow grind spindle gouge alone will let me create my finials from beginning to end

#### Quick tool sharpening

A tip that I'll offer to quickly touch up a tool is a diamond hone. Many of my tools require a trip to the grinder to refresh the edge. Others can be quickly and easily refreshed with a few strokes of the hone. With all of my tools hollow ground, a hone placed across the hollow grind will sharpen the cutting edge while using the other side as a guide. I use this technique for all of my skew chisels, parting tools and other skewlike grinds. Remember that your beading & parting tool, parting tools and bedans are in essence skew chisels. Perhaps sharpened only on one side or in a different aspect ratio but they are skew chisels and can be touched up as such. You can certainly go to the grinder each time you need to sharpen one of these tools but it is far faster to pull a diamond hone from your back pocket and freshen the edge of the tool with a few strokes. The tool will be just as sharp and you'll save a lot of tool steel. You will need to visit the grinder again on occasion but you'll find that your hones will sharpen many, many times in between. This method certainly will work on flat ground tools too. While it will work, the real time saver is when used on hollow ground tools because of the far less steel being honed.





Using the back edge of the hollow grind as support, the front edge is found and contact with both is maintained during honing





#### **Tri-point tools**

Tri-point tools are available from many of the manufacturers. Said to be a favourite of the late Bill Jones, it is wonderful for detailing. While I own commercially made tri-point tools, I've also made my own. This allowed me to tailor the size I'd like as well as have a hollow grind on the faces. By design, the tool is basically a grinding of a round tool stock at each 120° point of the circle. It lends itself to detailing, rolling beads and more. It is used in the traditional sense of rubbing the bevel and providing a clearance angle but because of the grind, it presents the cutting edge in a bit of a different fashion. There is nothing critical about the 120° spacing of each of the grinds. The wood will be impervious to the

fact that your grinding isn't perfectly spaced around the circle. There is a simple method I've discovered that will let you set your initial grinding positions very accurately. I temporarily fasten a hex nut with an inner diameter that will fit on the round shaft of the tool tightly. Using hot melt glue to fasten it in place allows it to be used as a jig for the 120° angles. By putting every other flat on the platform of my grinding rest, I can accurately position each of the three facets on the grinding wheel. Once completed, the bolt is removed by peeling away the hot melt glue and sliding the nut from the tool shaft. I touch up my tool by using a diamond hone as detailed on page 82.



Commercially available, left, and easily made by the workshop handy turner, tri-point tools are wonderful for detailing



I favour mine hollow ground rather than the more common commercially available flat ground because I can use the honing method of sharpening more easily



The tri-point tool is not only capable of V cuts and corner detailing but also rolling beads. Keeping the point clear is critical

#### Round skew

The round skew is another of the tools commonly seen in the homemade arena. It is a simple skew chisel grind on a round piece of tool steel stock, usually on smaller diameter stock. I often make mine from 6mm round tool steel stock. Much like the oval skew whose radius on both corners of the stock allow for easy rolling, the round skew has no flats on the shaft anywhere. It is oblivious to which way

you roll it. Can you easily roll an oval skew or even a traditional rectangular cross section skew chisel? You certainly can. This tool is just one that you can have in your kit that fits into small spaces and is easily controlled in any direction you wish. I use it for fitting into tight spaces as well as general use on very small diameter spindle work.



Round skews are simply a skew grind on round stock.
Using a hollow grind allows for easy sharpening with
a diamond hone



A round skew can be used exactly as any other skew chisel. The size and shape lends itself to smaller detailing and bead work

#### ■ Angled parting tools

This is a trick I learned many years ago from Jimmy Clewes. It is a narrow parting tool that is ground at an angle other than 90° from the shaft. Since the nose of a parting tool cuts and the sides of a parting tool scrapes, you can't cut a 90° corner with a standard parting tool easily. You also have difficulty cutting an angle less than 90°

with the standard grind. By creating a parting tool that has the nose angle ground off perpendicular, you now have a tool that can easily be brought to bear at any angle from greater than 90° to less than 90°. I use this tool for cleaning up the corners of bowl feet or lidded boxes. It isn't used as a standard parting tool for parting off

stock. It is used for these corner cleanup needs with my standard grind parting tool doing the run of the mill work. Where this also pays dividends for me is making pen components such as nibs. I want my interface surface to be concave rather than flat. The angled parting tool allows me to cut this easily.



I have two different grinds for my thin parting tools. The traditional straight across is complemented by one at a different angle



The off-perpendicular angle allows for cutting a true 90° corner or angles less than that. I use it for concave corner interfaces



Whether my nibs are in Corian, other plastics, or wood, I use my off 90° ground parting tool to create the interface surface

#### Convex ground detailer

This is a combination of several different tool ideas. Many turners have created their own special adaptions of tools for use. I don't know exactly where this draws from but it is a handy tool in my kit. It is hollow ground across the face of round tool steel stock so it lends itself to sharpening

via the diamond hone touch up method mentioned above. The balance of the tool is convex ground. The convex grind makes the tool very difficult to have catches with. The cutting edge needs to be controlled into the surface to make it cut. Relaxing that force will have the tool disengage from

the cut. It allows for detailing in the most sensitive of areas since the control is always in your hands. Control it to cut and relax it to disengage. I find it a very helpful tool to work on delicate finials with. It doesn't have a propensity to catch and is capable of very exquisite detail.



Not certain of the lineage or name but this detailer is hollow ground across the face allowing for diamond hone touch up



The balance of the ground edge is a convex grind. It needs to be controlled into cutting and will stop with relaxation of that control



It is a versatile tool that is easy to use in tight spaces and can create fine detail with less concern of catches

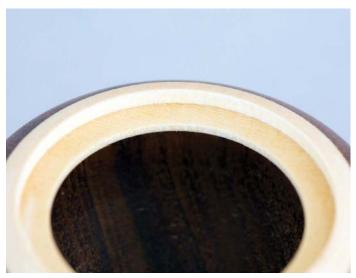
#### Corner cutter

Many manufacturers offer the corner scraper for cleaning up corners in turnings. Often used for lidded boxes, the tool is ground so that only one face can be brought to bear at a time. This allows for a 90° corner to be created with less chance of incident. There are times when the tool as offered is too big to work in the application you are doing. For those needs as well as any other where you wish a bit more dexterity, you can easily use a machinist's cutting tool blank. These are readily available for a very modest cost. Grind it in the same

mentality so that only the end or the side wall will be in contact at any one time. Of course, as a scraper you'll need to relieve the face with a bit of grinding so that only the very top edge contacts your turning. I have one that I use for the bottoms of boxes as well as the inside of the lid. The small size and extreme sharpness allows me a bit more resolution when being used. If needed, you can silver solder the tool bit on the end of a steel blank for additional reach. Light touch and sharp tools will pay dividends.



Modelled after the traditional box corner cutter, this high speed steel tool blank is ground to cut corners. Fastened in handle for safe use



The tool will fit into smaller spaces than the standard box corner cutter, especially the tip and the very bottom corner of small lidded boxes

"Just because the factory offered the tool in one manner doesn't mean that it is the best or the only way to grind it"

#### **Conclusions**

Do you need any of these tips, tools or grinds? There isn't anything noted that is a critical need. You can do what these will do with other tools in other manners. That said, these particular tools and grinds find a home in my kit because they save me time and help me perform that special function quickly, safely and more reliably. I offer them as helpful suggestions you may wish to consider. Nothing I've mentioned is very expensive or difficult to create. As such, you can certainly give them a try without major investment in time or money. You may find as I have that they add value to

your tool selection. Perhaps the biggest takeaway from this issue isn't the tool permutations I've suggested. I think it should be your mindset that your tools are your workhorses. Grind them as you see fit. Just because the factory offered the tool in one manner doesn't mean that it is the best or the only way to grind it. Also, perhaps the various tools that aren't a commercial offering are solely because they aren't big sellers, not because they aren't useful. Take this session as licence to make your tools do what you want of them. Do it safely but don't be afraid to tailor your tools to serve you.



Regardless of your end turning, having your tools – whether store bought or made – ground to work as you wish is the end goal

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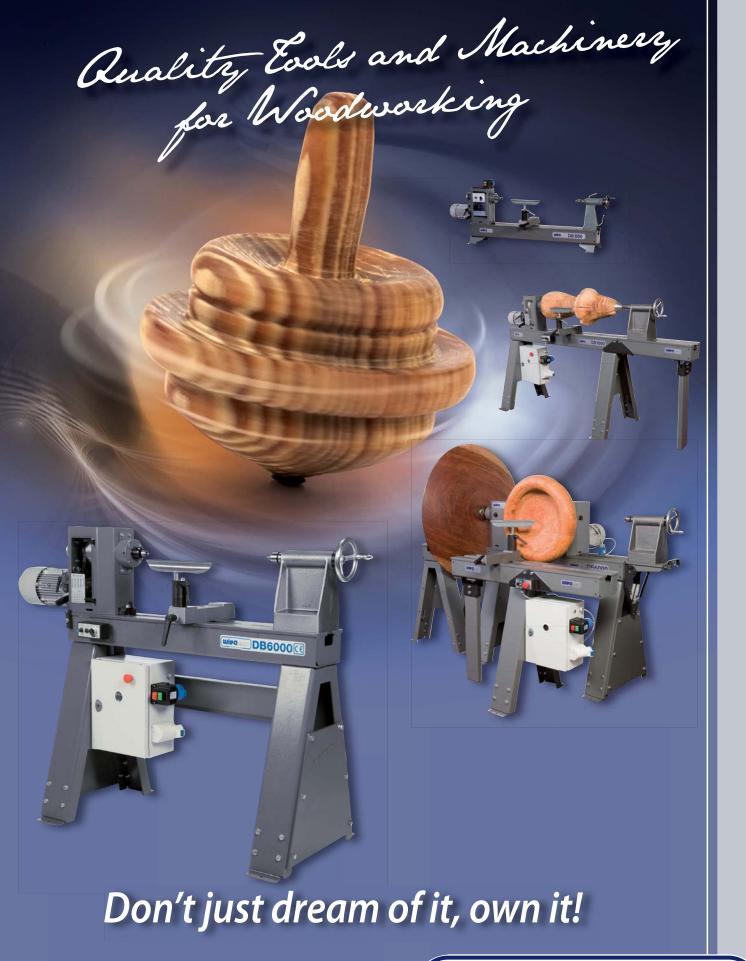
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## Natural-edge bowl



#### PHILIP GREENWOOD



Philip has been turning wood since 1980 and started turning professionally in 1986. He was accepted onto the Register of Professional Turners (RPT) in 2006. He is also a member of the AWGB.

He can be seen working in his workshop in North Yorkshire and has demonstrated at the woodworking show at Harrogate since 2008. He runs courses at his workshop.

philip@woodturningintoart.co.uk www.woodturningintoart.co.uk

like to turn items that are unique and this project is no exception. This piece of branchwood came from a village a few miles away from my workshop. Knowing its provenance means that I can pass this information on to the customer. It is surprising how much timber can come my way through people I know. Yes, you need to ask questions carefully, in terms of its size and how easy it is to access, but if you find out in advance, this can be a great way of

obtaining wood for turning. If you do acquire turning timber, ensure to dry it slowly and keep an eye on it to monitor for any insect attack. If you are drying it in the summer months, when it is becoming a lot warmer and sunnier, try to limit how much heat is on the stack as this could cause the timber to dry too quickly and crack.

When looking for a piece to turn, you need to think about the shape of the piece of branchwood, how will this look when it is fully turned and take note of any knots and bark inclusions along the length. This, along with your lathe capacity, all has to be taken into account when choosing the branch. If I can see it is loose, I will decide beforehand whether or not to remove all the bark prior to turning. If the bark is removed, you can always use a pyrography machine to add contrast to the edge if you wish; this can add a new dimension to the piece.

Always wear a full faceshield or a respirator for both face and dust protection when turning this type of item. The item can be attached to the lathe by several methods, depending on the equipment you may have in your workshop, or the method you feel is the best for yourself and your style of turning. The most important consideration is that the piece is held safely and securely on the lathe.

I will sand this type of work in one of three ways: by hand, by locking the lathe spindle and using a power drill and sanding arbor to sand through the grits, or by holding the sanding arbor in the chuck and offering the item to the sanding arbor while the lathe is switched on and moving the item around.

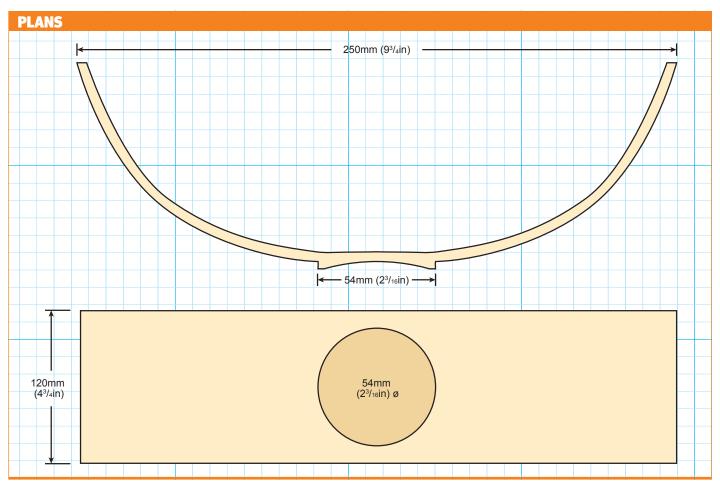
#### **EQUIPMENT USED**

10mm bowl gouge 3mm parting tool 20mm skew chisel 10mm spindle gouge Four-prong drive and revolving centre Sawtooth bit **Drill press** Mallet Plywood disc Anti-slip router matting Fine-tooth saw Sanding arbor Range of abrasives Cellulose sanding sealer Three-part mop system PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask

#### TIMBER REQUIREMENTS

and extraction

Hazel (Carya spp.): 260 × 120mm dia.











The first job is to look for a suitable piece of branchwood for your bowl – I used hazel (Corylus spp.) for mine. You want a piece that is dry and preferably around 12% moisture content. The piece I used had been in my workshop for around three years. You want to finish this completely rather than part turn and finish later, so a dry piece is essential here

The next job is to cut off the ends to remove any few cracks that are present on the end. Here I am using a jig to hold the log safely. Don't be tempted to cut a log without a jig like this, as the bandsaw blade will grab the round log, causing it to rotate and jam the blade

The next step is to find the centre of the log lengthways and widthways, then mark. I use a sawtooth bit in my drill press to drill a small hole until all the bark has been removed; this will give the four-prong centre a better grip. Again, for safety reasons, use a jig to hold the log in place

Place a four-prong drive centre in the headstock and a revolving centre in the tailstock. Drive the four-prong centre into the top with a mallet, then mount on the lathe. Don't tighten the tailstock too much at this point. Line up the toolrest, rotate the log and look for an even gap. Adjust at the tailstock end until an even gap is achieved, then you can fully tighten the tailstock

5 Using a bowl gouge, start at the corner using a pull cut. This will be an intermittent cut for most of the bowl. Take only small cuts. After a few cuts, stop the lathe and check the tightness of the revolving centre

Continue with the bowl gouge and take small cuts. The outside shape should now start to appear and the bowl will now be more balanced. Keep stopping the lathe to move the toolrest closer to the work

Stop the lathe and mark the diameter of the chuck jaws with a pencil; this is the only safe method to use with an item such as this

Our local sparting tool to cut the spigot. A steady flow of shavings will come away and will block your view of the cut, so look at the rear of the bowl to see the progress of the groove. I cut my spigot 5mm deep and just oversize

Using a bowl gouge in shearing cut mode, refine the surface. Here you are looking for fine shavings to come off the gouge, so take several cuts until all the ridges have been removed and you have a good flowing curve with no flat spots. Stop the lathe to move the toolrest closer when you reach the top of the bowl

1 Ouse a spindle gouge to cut the dovetail on the spigot to match the chuck jaws. Take several light cuts until the dovetail is the correct size and clean in the bottom corner

Hold in the chuck jaws, tighten fully, then place the toolrest close to the top of the bowl. Be sure to check for clearance by rotating, lock the toolrest, then bring up the tailstock and lock in position

Start about 40mm from the edge as you want to keep the natural-edge of the top. Work towards the centre, using a push cut, stopping near the centre. You may be able to see a line by my hand; this is the ghost image of the rotating bowl

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- Use a full faceshield and dust mask, or better still use a respirator when turning natural-edge items
- Don't wear loose clothing when using machinery. Also tie back long hair and remove any jewellery
- **3.** Always stop the lathe before moving the toolrest
- **4.** Choose a suitable speed for the lathe and size of timber that you are turning
- **5.** Don't sand an irregular-shaped item while the lathe is running
- Keep your fingers and hands clear of revolving items

































13 Remove more of the waste near the outer edge but ensure to leave the centre part intact; this will provide stability and stop the bowl from flexing. Continue until you have reached a depth of 30mm with the edge around 8mm thick. Again, keep the cuts light

1 4 Using a freshly sharpened gouge, start thinning the edge down by taking light cuts. Continue until you have reached a wall thickness of 4mm from the rim to the bottom. Try not to push the gouge against the side too much or this will cause the walls to flex, thus resulting in vibration

15 Remove the tailstock at this point, which will give you better access to the centre part. You can now remove more waste from the centre but leave some waste remaining at this stage for stability purposes. Move to the part near the edge of the bowl and remove the waste; this will join the first section

16 It is now time to complete the corner section and blend this into the first part. Use very light pressure on the tool, which will avoid any flexing of the bowl. Try to remove any ridges before moving on

#### "Resharpen your gouge if you feel it is not as sharp as it could be"

17 Adjust the toolrest as close as possible; this will reduce overhang of the bowl gouge. Move on to the next section and remove the waste, leaving the final section in the middle for later. Again, finish using small cuts, which will allow you to achieve a clean surface in this section and will therefore minimise sanding later

The last part is the centre section. At this stage, bear in mind that the outer edge may be near your hand or arm, so be careful here. Resharpen your gouge if you feel it is not as sharp as it could be; this can be due to the intermittent cutting

Next, hold a plywood disc in the chuck jaws and place a piece of anti-slip router matting between this and the bowl; this is for two reasons: first, to avoid marking the bowl and second, to provide grip. Bring up the tailstock and place the revolving centre in the hole left from turning the outside of the bowl

Here you can see the anti-slip matting at the side of the bowl. If there is excess matting at the sides, then cut this off to avoid any catches. Remove most of the waste material from around the revolving centre point, but leave a sufficient amount for safety purposes. Take small, light cuts at this stage



2 1 Finish the foot of the bowl with a slight concave in the middle. Blend in the base with the side, using very light cuts. Reduce the centre pip a little more to aid the next stage. If you have a vacuum chuck, you could turn this away fully

2 Use a fine-tooth saw to cut through the last part of the pip. Be careful not to mark the far side with the saw as you cut through. Take some of the pressure off the tailstock support, which will avoid trapping the saw blade

2 I use this jig a lot for sanding odd-shaped items; it is just a drill chuck which holds a sanding arbor. Go through all the abrasive grits, starting at 120 and working through to 400 grit. After each grit, stop and check that all the previous marks have been removed

# "Go through all the abrasive grits, starting at 120 and working through to 400 grit"

To finish the bowl, use a cellulose sanding sealer. Apply a good coat and remove any excess afterwards using a cloth

25 The final step is to use a three-part mop system to finish the bowl. The first mop is loaded with Tripoli, the second mop uses white diamond and the final mop is loaded with carnauba wax, which helps to achieve a high-quality gloss finish

 $26 \text{ The finished natural-edge bowl in hazel} \\ \text{should look something like this} \bullet$ 

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- Remove any timber from the timber stack or workshop which shows any signs of insect infestation
- Dispose of finishing cloths carefully due to the heat that can be produced when drying
- Always ensure to keep your tool sharp at all times. Blunt tools will tear the grain
- 10. Use a jig to saw the log on the bandsaw; this is a great method for preventing the log from moving around
- 11. Try to keep a record of the location of the timber you receive and the date it was cut down
- **12.** Make sure you ask lots about the tree that is offered to you
- 13. Remember that if you are not insured or hold a chainsaw licence, the property owner may sue you if you damage their property while cutting down the tree













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#### CARTER & SON TOOLWORKS' M42 PREMIUM TURNING TOOLS



he range of M42 HSS woodturning tools from Carter & Son Toolworks has recently been further extended by the addition of skew chisels, parting tools and scrapers. The tools are regarded as being superbly sharp with great edge-holding abilities, coupled with a series of matching aircraft-grade aluminium handles, which help to offer superb balance and feel.

The two new skew chisels include one for detail and smaller projects: a 12mm radiused edge skew, either fitted with a 305mm handle to suit the 12mm tang size, or unhandled. The other is for larger, heavy work and this 25mm version will really 'cut the mustard', not to mention the timber! In support of the greater blade width, the 25mm skew is substantially thicker. When handled, it is supplied with a 305mm handle and is also available unhandled. Both skews have 240mm long blades and also feature radiused side edges.

The two new scrapers are each 25mm wide and 10mm-thick and made from super-tough M42 HSS. The two versions now available are a square-ended scraper, for use in boxes and similar such square-ended projects, and a bowl scraper,

which features the now-familiar left-hand curve profile for accurate and blemish-free finishing of internal bowl surfaces. The blades are 240mm long overall and are available either with a 405mm aluminium handle bored to accept the 20mm tang, or unhandled.

The two new parting tools both feature a unique asymmetric cutting tip geometry designed to prevent catches and ensure clean cuts. Both versions have 240mm blades but the narrower version has a 3mm cutting tip width, making it suitable for projects where minimising timber loss in the cut is paramount, while the second has a 1.5mm wide cutting edge. As with the other tools featured, these new parting tools are available fitted with aircraft-grade aluminium handles, 305mm long, or unhandled. The tang diameter in both cases is 12mm.

These latest additions extend the versatility of the range further and ensure that Carter Tools will find a place on the toolrack of any turner who seeks the optimum in tool performance.

**Contact:** The ToolPost **Tel:** 01235 511 101 **Web:** www.toolpost.co.uk

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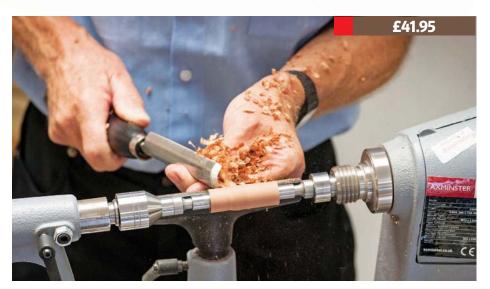
#### **CROWN MIDI REVOLUTION HOLLOWING TOOL**

his hollowing tool from Crown is ideal for hollowing all manner of items, from vases to boxes. The supplied 'Super Ring' cutter features an adjustable brass limiter, which acts as a chipbreaker, thus limiting the depth of cut. In practice, adjusting the angle at which the tool is presented to the work can also vary the depth of cut. This is a very easy-to-use tool requiring little practice to master the techniques involved and can leave a great finish requiring minimal sanding. A shaped scraper cutter is also supplied should the surface require further refinement. Both the cutters are produced from cryogenically treated steel for excellent edge retention. Overall length of the tool is 575mm and the handle measures 355mm.



Contact: Crown Hand Tools
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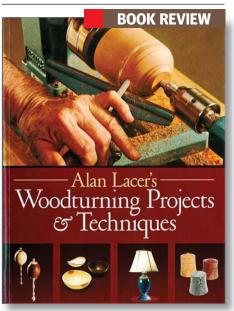
result is improved concentricity and results in less vibration during turning. Because the silver steel mandrel shaft is accommodated within the revolving tailstock centre, length adjustment is unnecessary. If you make a lot of pens, then the time saved by using this mandrel would be considerable. Available in either 1 or 2MT.

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lan is a highly respected turner who is passionate about trying to help people and passing on his knowledge. Alan comments: "This book is a collection of my writings over a 15 year period for American Woodworker magazine." The book comprises an excellent technical section covering tools, sharpening, modifying and using them, chucking methods, timber and also finishes. He also includes 25 projects covering all the core aspects of turning, including bowls, plates, a goblet, Christmas ornaments and handles for turning tools, but he also goes into making things such as heirloom awls, where he shows how to make the metal part and also the turned handle. As well as this you can also expect to see projects covering fishing lures, spheres, a three-legged stool and so much more. There are projects here for those just starting out as well as those who are looking to improve their skills.

Alan has a down-to-earth way of writing: he explains things clearly and includes all the information you need to know so you are not left wondering about something important. The photos are clear and concise and, where necessary, feature annotations that label parts and items clearly. The layout is easy to follow and the illustrations are clear and have a nice hand-drawn look, although they are probably computer generated. However they are generated, they complement what is a really nice book.

. Mark Baker

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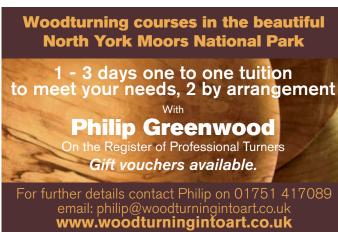
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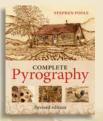
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## Bill Wyko – Spiral Dream

**Bill Wyko** shares this stunning goblet with finial, which is a departure from his usual segmented pieces

his vessel, entitled 'Spiral Dream', was was my first attempt at a spiral goblet. I had turned a few finials but it was time to expand on the technique. I started with a block of bubinga (*Guibourtia demeusei*), measuring approximately  $200 \times 200 \times 510$ mm and cut it into three portions: one for the vessel, one for the lid and one for the finial, which was substantially downsized.

To build a spiral piece like this I begin by turning the finial piece as a round board, then I lay out the various steps it will have. Next, I turn the outside into an onion shape - it's important not to get too narrow where the top of the spirals will be. It may look odd but this step is very important, as it gives you room to remove material later in the process. Ultimately, I turn it to almost a completely finished shape outside. Next, I draw a layout of what I want the spirals to look like. There are many ways to do this, but I do most of it freehand. Now, using a drill, I start to drill to the centre, removing as much unwanted material as possible. Using a rotary tool, I then begin to connect the holes I previously drilled and begin to sneak up on what will be the spirals. At this point, I continue using the rotary tool to get as close as possible to the spirals, leaving just a small amount of material to begin the next stage of removal. I then switch to files and abrasives and continue until I have a completed spiral. When sanding the spirals, it's very important to apply equal pressure to the opposite side of the area you are sanding - if you don't, you'll hear the 'tick' of doom, which is the sound of a broken spiral. If this happens, put your tools down and accept that this is part of the learning process. Relax, glue it if you can and keep going for the practice.

When turning the goblet, I had to pay very close attention to wall thickness. I was trying to achieve a thicker wall top and bottom and a very thin wall at the centre. This was to create the scallops towards the top and bottom and still have very delicate spirals in the centre. The lid was sort of inspired by an airplane propeller in its sweeping curves. In the end, it took me 30 days to create.

Email: bill@audio2000.us Facebook: www.facebook.com/bill.wyko



'Spiral Dream', bubinga (Guibourtia demeusei)



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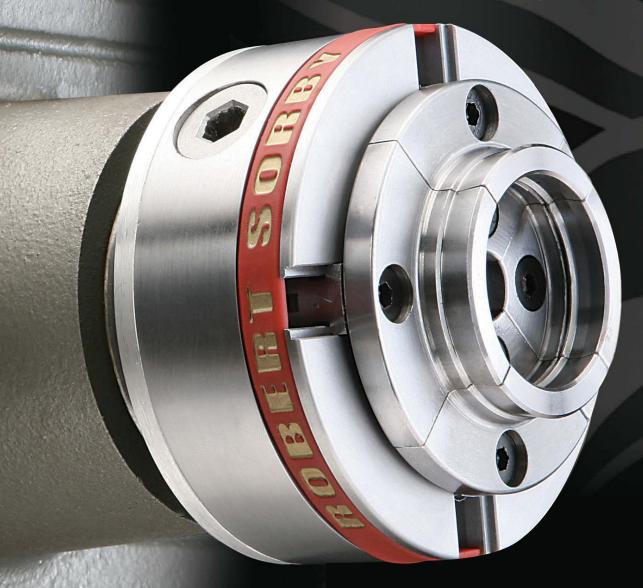
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