TURNING IDENTICAL ITEMS • DISMANTLING PEN KITS FOR REPAIR

# Woodturning

THE WORLD'S LEADING MAGAZINE FOR WOODTURNERS

We report from the 2015 Utah Woodturning & AAW Symposiums

Techniques for turning a vase in two parts

### PROJECTS TO MAKE

- Traditional humming top
- Lace bobbins
- Painted vase
- Ash bowls

Important considerations for turning with Richard Raffan

What you need to know about assembly of multiple pieces

Decorating a hollow form using a range of embellishments

#### SC3 Geared Scroll Chuck Package





#### Includes

SC3 Geared Scroll Chuck (Thread options below)

62313 50 mm Jaw Set

JS25N 25 mm Jaw Set

6025 Mini Step Jaw Set

10006 Woodworm Screw 61016 Pinion Key

**Thread Options:** 

61004 3/4" x 16 TPI

61002 1"x8TPI

61005 M33 x 3.5

## **SC4** Professional Geared Scroll Chuck Package





#### Includes:

SC4 Professional Geared Scroll

62313 50 mm Standard Jaw Set

JSPIN Pin Jaw Set

62833 Standard Woodworm Screw

3326 8 mm Ball Hex Key

5326 8 mm Ball Hex Key

2825 Universal Spanner

Chuck Insert (See website

for full range of inserts)

#### **New Woodturning Chuck Jaw Range**

As part of the design process involved in creating this brand new range, we looked in depth at the ranges of jaws available to today's woodturners. Our aim was to create a new range which allowed for all the flexibility currently on offer whilst also engineering out superfluous features and, where possible, condensing the attributes of some jaw designs to increase their usefulness. The result is a comprehensive range of 14 intelligently designed

sets of chuck jaws, some of which are brand new designs exclusive to Record Power.

This range offers woodturners a definitive collection of jaws to cover virtually any woodturning task and represents unbeatable value for money.

Brand New Exclusive Range

Fully compatible with Nova brand chucks



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62317 130 mm Dovetail Jaws £54.99



62322 75 mm Heavy Bowl and Gripper Jaws £59.99



62323 Long Nose Jaws £59.99



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62336 Mini Spigot Jaws with 13 mm Bore £39.99



62337 Pen Jaws £29.99



62572 2 Inch (50 mm) Faceplate Ring £29.99



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Prices valid until 31.08.2015. EBOE





For full details of the brand new range of chucks and jaws please visit the Record Power website or request your free copy of the Spring / Summer 2015 promotional catalogue.



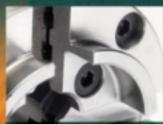
### Introducing the Brand New Range of **Woodturning Chucks and Jaws**

We are extremely proud to introduce the brand new range of Record Power woodturning chucks and jaws. This exclusive new range has been developed using Record Power's extensive experience and knowledge of woodturning in conjunction with a group of highly experienced professional and hobby woodturners, to bring

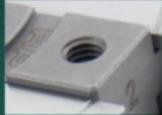
you the ultimate in quality, versatility and value. Incorporating the best elements of our previous ranges, we have also listened closely to our valued customers over the years and have taken note of their feedback, suggestions and requests to guide our design approach.



**Precision Engineered Gears** Super Geared True-Lock" technology ensures high levels of accuracy to provide smooth and solid operation.



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# Strange journeys in turning



he creative process is a strange thing. There isn't a day that goes by where I do not think about making something in one way or another. OK, I do not always get to make

that thing, but the mental exercise is always rewarding. As I mentally work out what can be done and how, it is surprising how often I think about the offshoots of decoration, shape, sizes and problem solving should things go belly up. Yes, that is covered when I think about things too.

It's really very funny that you can mentally work out many options to solve something, some of which are undoubtedly good and the others shall we say are on a sliding scale to downright dangerous. But, when you come to create that project, rarely are you able to recall with clarity all the things that were mentally worked out. A note pad and pen are always handy and allow you to jot down all that can be remembered as soon as possible. A friend of mine carries one with him everywhere he goes. If I need to remember something immediately, I will make a note on my phone if it is really important, then transfer it to my 'thoughts' book back home. With my age ever increasing, it seems I am making more use of the note taking aspect on my phone and in books than a few years back. I no doubt will need glasses soon as well. Hmmm!

The note taking and my sketch and thought books are valuable to me as I can see a progression of thoughts and yes, the random barmy ones as well, but it is very interesting to see that there are definitely trends in my thinking. I am on record as stating that I am always drawn to ancient cultures, trade routes, religions and love seeing the impact these have on the development and adaptation of ideas and designs. That process continues today. Every shape we create, its subsequent usage, decorative effects applied and so on has a rich history of development. Planning is essential and note taking helps when we think of things. Photographs and drawings help with this too, but remember, our journey in making things and problem solving is nothing more than a journey in personal



An excerpt from the Editor's sketchbook: the development of shape

development, but what a fun journey it is.

It can be frustrating, definitely annoying at times, and even though I make the most elaborate plans and track a direct linear route to get to an end result or destination and end up being where or with what I intended, the most fun I have seems to be when things don't go to plan and when things don't work out as I anticipated at the start of that journey. Some of my nicest works

and also holidays have proven that to me time and time again. Perhaps that is where I grow and develop the most too?

Let me know what you have been making, but also your strangest journey in turning – especially if you ended up creating and exploring routes you did not anticipate.

Have fun,



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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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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#### **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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1525mm (60in)

# 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

# Ruth and David Waterbury: AAW 2015 Honorary Lifetime Members



'Atlantic Pot' by David Elisworth, 1996, in spalled elm (Ulmus procera) with spalled sugar maple (Acer saccharum) inlays, 240 × 210mm, gifted to Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Provenance: The Waterbury Collection

his year, the American Association of Woodturners (AAW) Honorary Lifetime Member award went to Ruth and David Waterbury, who have contributed significantly to the field of woodturning. Longtime supporters of the AAW and other wood-centred organisations as well as the wood art movement in general, they have passionately collected, generously donated and tirelessly advocated for wood within the context of craft and the greater art world. Over the years, their extensive involvement in promoting wood has resulted in their recognition as ambassadors and champions of the field.

#### Accidental discovery

Ruth and David's involvement with wood began in 1984 during a trip to Hawaii, when they unexpectedly ended up seeing Ron Kent's translucent Norfolk Island pine (Araucaria heterophylla) vessels. Ron's work captivated and mesmerised their sensibilities: not only did they end up buying a piece, but this was the beginning of what would grow into a significant and long-lasting friendship.

Over the past 31 years, Ruth and David have amassed an extensive, world-class, museum-quality collection of wood art



Ruth and David Waterbury

objects and sculptures. Their collecting journey culminated in an exhibition and accompanying book, Conversations with Wood: The Collection of Rieth and David Waterbury. Debuting at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA) in July, 2011, the exhibition has since travelled to several other venues. The book features superb photography of 552 works by 132 artists, as well as engaging essays by Glenn Adamson, Patricia Kane, Albert LeCoff, Christopher Monkhouse and Ruth and David Waterbury.

#### Contributions to the field

Perhaps even more important than the works acquired over the years, however, have been the remarkable friendships developed along the way. Ruth and David have created wonderful ties with artists, collectors, gallery owners and museum curators. They have also thoroughly enjoyed having artists visit their home, travelling to see artists' studios, taking in gallery shows and wood exhibitions, participating in AAW symposiums and viewing works in the Instant Gallery.

Ruth and David also have focused on sharing their love of wood with others and have worked tirelessly with curators and museum directors to help get the word out about contemporary wood art. Through ongoing discussions concerning the importance of carrying or increasing the



\*Duet Vase\* by Michelle Holzapfel, 2001, in cherry (Prunus serotina) burl, 330 × 130 × 180mm, gifted to Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Provenance: The Waterbury Collection

presence of contemporary wood objects in art galleries and museums, the Waterburys are building the future for wood.

Moreover, they have actively participated in the Collectors of Wood Art and were among the original members of the organisation in 1997. David and Ruth served as CWA's first co-treasurers and both held a variety of board positions over the years.

The Waterburys have attended most of the AAW Symposiums since 1993 and in addition to their involvement in the wood world, they have devoted a great deal of time and funding to other charitable and advocacy interests, both locally and nationally.

They have made great contributions to the AAW and to the advancement of the world of wood. Their pulpable passion for collecting; their generous support of artists and contributions to museums; their work as founding members and working officers for the Collectors of Wood Art and their central role in raising the visibility of wood art make them well deserving of this year's Award.

Judy Chernoff and Jeff Bernstien

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

#### Ray Key wins award for services to turning

de would like to congratulate Ray Key on recently being awarded The British Empire Medal for services to the craft of woodturning in the recent Queen's birthday honours list. Ray purchased his first lathe in 1965 and in 1973, became a full-time turner. He then went on to become the founding Chairman of The Association of Woodturners of Great Britain (AWGB) in 1987; he was made a Life Member in 1997 and was appointed President in 1988. Two other rare honours Ray has received include a Life Membership of The Association of American Woodturners in 2001 and in 2002, he was made Freeman by Presentation of The Worshipful Company of Turners. Here's to many more years of turning!



Ray Key at his lathe

#### National Forest Wood Fair

alling all bodgers, woodturners, woodcarvers and axemen! Make your way to the National Forest Wood Fair and enjoy a great day out for everyone who loves trees, timber and making beautiful things from wood.

Held on Monday 31 August in the Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire, this event regularly attracts over 100 exhibitors and demonstrators, plus crowds of over 5,000 from all over the country.

Buy planks and blocks of timber, browse second-hand tool stalls and see expert demonstrations by woodturners and craftspeople. Top Windsor chair-maker Peter Wood will be on hand to talk about his work and demonstrate his world championship pole-lathe turning skills and master craftsman Mike Painter will present a woodcarving masterclass.

For those a little more adventurous, anyone aged 8-80 can try tree climbing and shimmy



Tree climbing is just one of the many events for you to enjoy at the National Forest Wood Fair

up into the canopy of an ancient oak (Quercus robur) tree using ropes and a harness.

The Forest Food Festival is packed with delicious locally-sourced food and drink, and once replenished, make sure you find the time to browse the tempting array of beautiful things made out of wood – perfect for gifts or treats for home and garden. When: Monday 31 August, 2015 Where: Beacon Hill Country Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 8SP

Tickets: adults – £9; concessions – £6; family – £25

Contact: The National Forest Wood Fair Web: www.nationalforestwoodfair.co.uk



#### More turned beer mugs

Hi Mark,

I read with interest Terry McDonald's article in the March issue on beer mugs and also Darren Da'Val's letter in the June issue. Please find enclosed a photo of my version of the beer mug. The one on the right is in greenheart (Chlorocandium rodiei) and the one on the left is in English oak (Quercus robur).

Yours, Alan Pitt

Alan's turned beer mugs in greenheart (Chlorocardium rodiei) and English oak (Quercus robur)

### Cutting twists



Andrew's twisted stem candlesticks

#### Mark,

I have been reading Woodfurning magazine for several years now and every now and then, I have a go at something I have seen featured. I was particularly interested in Richard Findley's article on cutting twists in last September's issue and turned a 40mm diameter spindle, marked it out and started cutting as per Richard's instructions.

Having got started, I then thought about what I could turn it into and a candlestick came to mind.

So, in due course, a candlestick was completed and I then decided to make it a pair by producing another with the opposite hand twist. The wood is not good – a leg from my neighbour's old kitchen table – and I can see several possibilities for improving the shape. Anyway, I was quite pleased with what I had achieved and I hope to improve on the next go.

Regards, Andrew Norris

# Donations needed for young turners in Scotland

Dear Mark.

About 18 months ago, Stuart Mortimer asked me if I would be interested in forming a Youth training scheme in Scotland, specifically in Forfar. I approached the head teacher and technical department of Forfar Academy and they were delighted with the idea as they had five Graduate lathes. After initial funding from the local Council, we bought new chucks for the lathes and the club was formed. We have 20 trainees, who are now members of the AWGB until they are 18, when they can apply for adult membership. The AWGB have now recognised us as a club, and we have two evening sessions with the trainees split in

half, although some of them like coming both days! We have also been shortlisted for a Community Award. We would like to be selfsufficient in time and the local market allow us to sell items we have made, with the funds going into the club account.

The main reason I am contacting you is that we would like to have a library of books and DVDs for the children to look at and read and I am hoping you could ask your many readers if they would consider donating some items. If they are like me, they will have quite a few gathering dust! Anyone interested in donating can phone me on 01307 466 297 or email me: fordypnj@btinternet.com.

Best regards, Peter Fordyce

# 5th German International Woodturning Exhibition



The busy exhibition setting

he fifth German International Woodturning Exhibition took place on 16 and 17 May, 2015 at the Heidmarkhalle, a 2,000m<sup>2</sup> conference centre in Bad Fallingbostel, Germany.

About 2,000 visitors from 15 countries

- some from as far afield as Mallorca and northern Norway – attended the exhibition, which was well organised on behalf of the German DFT (Drechsler-Forum-Treffen
   Woodturning Forum Meeting), which, I
- Woodturning Forum Meeting), which, I understand, corresponds to the UK's AWGB



Cedar (Cedrus libani) bowl, 310mm dia. × 150mm, by Lodovico Grippa



Brooches and shawl pins, all turned in cherry (Prunus spp.), from 750-820mm dia. by nicksimpson



Green-turned ash (Fraxinus excelsior) bowl with stitching, by dunkhooper

by the Weser-Elbe Woodturning Club.

It was an exhibition combining technical sales stands from various manufacturers, mainly German of course, but also some of the well-known English companies, with sales of wood – both domestic European wood and exotic woods – and international demonstrators on both trade stands and in a teaching area. Schoolchildren were also demonstrating the use of pole-lathes. Outside the main hall were demonstrations of mobile sawmilling and the opportunity to buy freshly-milled planks. Inside there was also a



Hermann Straeten's 1:144 scale turned Christmas tree

woodturning competition with various classes.

The Germans seem keen on taking woodturning to extremes: not only were there very large, heavy lathes – sometimes capable of turning wood up to 4ft in diameter – but also many examples of miniature turning – little Christmas trees less than 12mm high! As my German host said: "Anyone can make a 250mm bow!!"

As well as functional exhibits in the competition, there were many beautiful artistic exhibits. For example, as well as lovely vases and pictorial pieces, there were humorous items, such as Manfred Diekenbrock's owls shown here.

Another humorous item was a beautiful model of a workshop with wood stored everywhere with completed pieces of work lying about and the woodturner at his water-wheel powered lathe. All at about 1:48 scale – the woodturner is 75mm tall and his natural-edge bowls are tiny!

The next, the sixth, German

International Woodturning Exhibition, will take place in the town of Obernau in the Erzgebirge region of eastern Germany, from 6–7 May, 2017. Incidentally, this town maintains its long-standing woodturning tradition by being the home of the Steinert company, who make both very big lathes and lathes suitable for miniature work. It seems that they cover both extremes of the German woodturning scene.



'Decorative Wall Plate' by Alfred Wiens



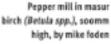
A 1:48 scale model workshop and woodturner, by Hermann Straeten



Jewellery box in masur birch (Betula spp.), by georg



Yew (Taxus baccata) and ebony (Diospyros spp.) hollow form with Hacklerstyle finial, approximately 305mm high, by Jason The Turner





# SEVEN YEARS ?? Really ??









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# Turning multiple identical

This month, **Richard Findley** looks at common problems when trying to turn several items that all look the same





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,

from replacement antique components, walking canes and stair spindles, to decorative bowls. It is the variety of work that he loves. He also offers demonstrations and a range of woodturning supplies.

richard@turnersworkshop.co.uk www.turnersworkshop.co.uk Follow on Instagram: richard\_findley

hen I travel around to clubs, up and down the country, the thing people always say to me is 'how do you get all of these looking the same?' or 'I can make one of anything, but don't give me any more!' As a production turner, a large part of my job is to produce sets of items, such as table legs, stair spindles, drawer pulls or finials. Here, I'll look at the reasons why people struggle to produce multiple identical items, and hopefully demystify the art of copy turning.

There are several key areas that people find problematic when copy turning:

- · Self-belief
- Observation skills
- Positioning of details
- Cutting consistent diameters
- \* Repeatedly turning good shapes

#### A common scenario

A friend knows that you are a woodturner and approaches you with a stair spindle that was broken after some DIY, a party or house move: 'I broke two of these and can't find replacements anywhere. Could you make me some new ones, and maybe a couple of spares, just in case?' You agree out of friendship and perhaps as a matter of pride, but when you get into the workshop and eventually give it a try, being unable to put it off any longer, you find that the details don't line up, your spindles are thicker or thinner in some places than the original and some of the shapes don't look quite right, but no matter how many times you put it back onto the lathe, it just doesn't quite seem to match! So, what do you do to overcome this problem?

#### The solution

Very experienced turners can do certain things 'by eye' but years of experience and certain basic cuts make this much easier. The good news is, you don't need years of experience to replicate original work, you just need to be methodical in your approach, study the original item and take your time. You will never produce accurate copies with guesswork and estimations.

#### Where to start

Often, knowing where to start is one of the most difficult parts of a job. Sometimes the thought of a challenging job can be a little overwhelming. When multiples are required I would always start by making a copy template. These have several names - story stick, story board or drawing rod - and can vary in complexity from just lines on the edge of a piece of board to a detailed drawing with measurements and notes scribbled all over. I usually use thin MDF - 3-6mm is an ideal thickness - cut it a little longer than you need and about 50mm wider than half the thickness of the work, so a 50mm diameter spindle needs a piece of board around 75mm wide. Carefully measure the overall length of the work and mark it on the template, then, working from one end, mark the positions of each detail, measuring carefully as you go.

With the positions of each detail set, measure the diameters and mark them on the template. You can then 'join the dots' by drawing in each shape between the positioning lines and diameter marks. I only ever draw out half of the shape on the board.

#### Observation skills

As you take measurements and draw out the shape, you should really take in the details of the original. It sounds obvious but sometimes you can look at things without actually seeing them properly. Examples that immediately spring to mind are that some coves are not an even 'U' shape - often, if the fillets either side are different diameters - something else to look out for - a cove will be slightly lopsided, which is natural but needs replicating in your copy. Has the original been heavily sanded, with some details rounded off? If so, do the same on your copy. Are ball shapes true spheres? If you make yours true but the originals aren't, yours won't look right!





#### MYTH BUSTERS:

Myth - 'Always keep details crisp and shapes perfectly true'

Demonstrators and professionals often talk about ensuring your details are crisp, shapes are clean and true and sanding is carefully carried out. On new work, this is something to strive for, but when replicating original work, you need to observe how the original maker – or mass-production copy lathe – worked and try to do the same, otherwise your replica won't match. If the original is heavily sanded and has some details softened in the process, then do the same. If a detail is a bit of a weird oddball shape that you would never deliberately turn, just do it, otherwise your new turning will look just that – new!

#### Still feeling overwhelmed?

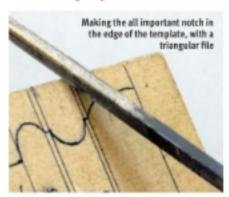
So, you have your copy template drawn out, you have your timber prepared, but you are still feeling rather hesitant and unsure about how to proceed. Can you actually do it? Of course you can! You just need some self-belief! Copy turning isn't actually as difficult as it first appears. Like so many things in life, if you don't believe you can do it, then you have failed before you even begin. I hope that this article will help to give you the confidence you need to make that set of legs or spindles that have been lying discarded in the corner of your workshop for months.

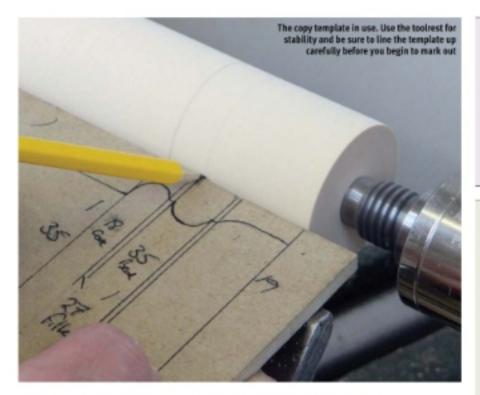
Often the complexity of some of the original work can be off-putting. My suggestion is to break down the shapes into smaller bite-sized pieces, and you will find that the shapes are all versions of the three core shapes in all of turning: beads, coves or straight lines – and you can turn all of those, right? It's just about putting those three basic shapes together, combining them to make the shapes that are apparently more complex, then putting them in the correct places.

#### Marking out

The next stage is to rough out the spindle to the largest required diameter. A spindle roughing gouge and a set of callipers will quickly see this done. Then the copy template comes into play.

On the template you have marked the positions of each detail with a pencil line. On the edge of the board, at each of these points you need to make a little notch. The easiest way is with a small triangular file, but you can do it with a sharp chisel or knife if you find it easier. This notch is very important, because as the timber spins, you will present the template to the wood and you can then place a sharp pencil in each of the notches and produce a clean line on the wood, marking the position of each detail.





#### I only have one replacement leg to make, do I need to make a copy template?

The choice is yours here. I don't usually make a copy template for single copies, but always would if there was more than three to make. For a single copy, you can hold the original in front of the roughed out blank, mounted on the lathe, and eye the details across. However, when doing this, make sure you stand directly in line with the detail, otherwise it will throw it out of position.



#### MYTH BUSTERS:

Myth – 'You need to cut out the shape on a template to get a perfect match'

You can do this, and for making perfect spheres, I cut out curved templates to the correct radius. However, on a complex spindle template, cutting out all of the details changes the job into a challenging scrollsaw project, and if your scrollsawing skills aren't up to scratch, then the template is already useless! The choice is yours, but in my opinion, your efforts would be better spent practising turning the shapes than scrollsawing templates



The only type of template that I cut out the profile is for turning spheres

#### TOP TIP: Stabilise the template

Use the toolrest to stabilise the template as you make your marks and make sure you carefully line up the template with the end of the spindle or place it against the turned pommel – whichever is relevant to the work – but make sure you do the same each time or you won't get a matching set!

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKING OUT

As many of you will know, my background is in joinery and, in my experience, marking out is a vitally important stage in all. woodworking disciplines. To make a good joint, you need to first mark it out correctly, then all you have to be able to do is cut along those lines to produce the required shapes to allow the joint to fit together. Your sawing and paring skills can be second to none, but if you mark out the joint wrongly in the first place, it's all for nothing. This carries through to copy turning too. Your turning can be first rate, but if you mark out the timber incorrectly, you won't be able to make a matching set. Get your marking out sorted, with a copy template, and all you have to be able to do is turn a bead or cove between your lines

### Matching diameters and fixing detail positions

With the marking out done, now is the time to set your major diameters. This stage is known as 'blocking out' and is done using a parting tool and callipers. My preference is for my 10mm beading & parting tool and Vernier callipers, but the exact choice of tools is entirely up to you.

Work along the spindle sizing each detail, in particular fillets and beads, along with the ends of tapered sections. This not only sets diameters but also helps to fix the position of each detail. It is vital that your parting tool is sharp for this operation. If not, then you will find that it often won't cut straight into the wood, instead cutting at a slight angle, which will throw off the positions of the details. Using a straight-sided parting tool, like my beading & parting tool, is useful here as you have a line of sight along the tool to ensure the cut is straight and perpendicular to the wood.

My preference is Vernier callipers for blocking out as they have a measuring scale on them, making the operation repeatable and accurate – they also have a locking screw to fix their position. For larger work over around 65mm, they become less accurate because of the length of the measuring legs, so spring



callipers are needed. These are more fiddly to set as they need holding up against a ruler, and are more prone to readjusting themselves during turning, so regular checks against the ruler are a good idea. There is little more frustrating than callipers that keep creeping in use!

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: CALLIPER PREPARATION AND USE



The tips of callipers need to be prepared for use with a file

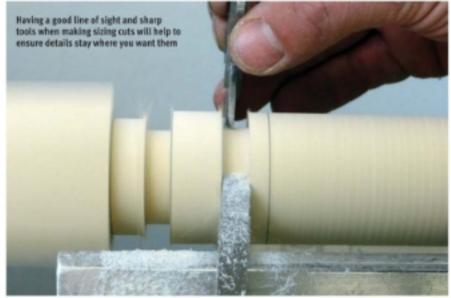
Whichever sort of calliper you choose, there are a few things to be aware of. Firstly, straight from the box, they are unsuitable for use, especially with the lathe running. The tips of both sorts of calliper need softening with a file. Spring callipers should be well rounded and Verniers should just have the ends rounded, being careful not to damage the measuring surfaces.

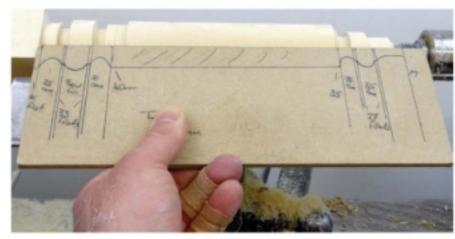
In use, they should be held lightly against the rear of the spinning wood. No pressure beyond the weight of the calliper should be applied to the wood. As the wood approaches the correct size, the calliper will just drop over the wood. If you don't feel confident doing this, then stop the lathe to check sizes

#### Shaping

Having blocked out the details and set the diameters, the next step is shaping. To ensure you have all of your spindles matching, you can turn all of the spindles up to this stage before you start the shaping phase; this ensures you are following the same steps each time, and keeping each step fresh in your memory. It also allows you to check your progress at this halfway point, giving a chance to make some alterations if needed, before final shaping begins. With experience this becomes less necessary, as you become more certain of the cuts you are making and that you will get the results you set out to achieve, but will be helpful if this is the first time you have attempted a matching set of







The spindle blocked out. It should be clear at this stage what details need cutting in which positions

spindles. It should be clear to you where each detail goes on the spindle by now, but keeping the original to hand is always a good idea, no matter how experienced you are! When shaping you can use whichever tools you feel most comfortable with to achieve the results that you set out to achieve. That said, the actual shapes you make need to be correct and the only way to achieve this is with lots of practice!

# Hollow forms – part 2

In the second part of this article, Andy Coates decorates the hollow form made in the previous issue and suggests different approaches

#### 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 Suffolk. He mostly 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,

cobwebcrafts@btinternet.com www.cobwebcrafts.co.uk

n part one of this project, I turned a hollow vessel. Hopefully you will now either have a nearly finished vessel ready to decorate, be ready to turn it and then follow the steps here to decorate and complete. However, before we begin, a few words on decorating your work might be in order.

I think the woodturning world has largely come to terms with decorating turned objects, and in my opinion, this is a positive. Wood with interesting features, such as heavy spalting, burr or wild grain tends to be less suitable for decorating, but I wouldn't completely discount it as a prospect for a

decorative work does pay dividends is on very plain, bland timbers, such as sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) and beech (Fagus sylvatica). Decorating forms made from these species can add interest and value, and at the same time, add a new dimension to

I often hear turners say that they would not consider decorative techniques because

> they are 'not artistic', don't know what media are suitable or have no idea where to begin. Well I have news for you: you do not need to be 'artistic' and all the rest is simply a matter of having a willingness to learn, experiment and fail. The pay off will come, and when it does, you'll feel like you've earned it. A trip to an art supplies store is a good starting

point. Wander around and look at the vast array of media, treatments, paints and embellishments available to 'artists'. Will it work on wood? Often the label will tell you; if it doesn't, then look for artists who are already using the media to see if they use it on wood. Failing that, buy a sample and give it a try.

Pictured left is a small selection from my 'play box', including metal leaf in an assortment of colours and types, gesso, earth pigments, inks, dyes, acrylic medium, spray paints, 3D relief medium, glazes and the all important UV protection varnish. Natural sponges, stencil and artist's brushes and a colour wheel to help with colour matching are all useful additions to your decorating arsenal. Add some metallic pastes, liming, ebonising and coloured waxes and you will have a kit of materials that will keep you occupied for a long time.

The most important thing to remember is to use the media sensibly and take all necessary precautions when using wet media near the lathe. At some point you will be pleasantly surprised, but whatever you decide, enjoy the process.





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# Traditional humming top

Stuart King turns a traditional humming top toy from boxwood







Stuart says that the countryside, trades and traditions of those who shaped it over centuries have always fascinated him and influenced his work. He has spent a lifetime researching, recording and collecting anything about the rural past and today is a well-known artist craftsman, demonstrator, international lecturer and photo-journalist. He still

actively records traditional crafts, local landscape and history via photography and video and still occasionally appears on TV.

stuart@stuartking.co.uk www.stuartking.co.uk



A pair of Victorian ivory tops



19th-century top turned from coquilla nut, possibly French

pinning tops go back a long way into prehistory, and they have been made from a large variety of materials including ceramic and gourds, nuts, bone, ivory and, of course, wood. There are twirling tops, whipping tops, throwing tops and supported tops. Tops have been found in Egypt that were made as long ago as 2000 BC, that's at least 4,000 years of spinning tops!

Most spinning tops were just simple toys to be whipped with a cord or twirled between forefinger and thumb, but there was a more sophisticated variety, the 'humming' top. These were much more elaborate in construction and were definitely the aristocracy of spinners, and the materials were upper-crust too.

Ivory, bone, coquilla nut and boxwood (Buxus sempervirens) were the favoured materials, all having the denseness that allowed a fine finish and exquisite detail.

These humming tops started to appear towards the end of the 18th century and were bought as intriguing and valued souvenirs after visiting spas and historic cities.

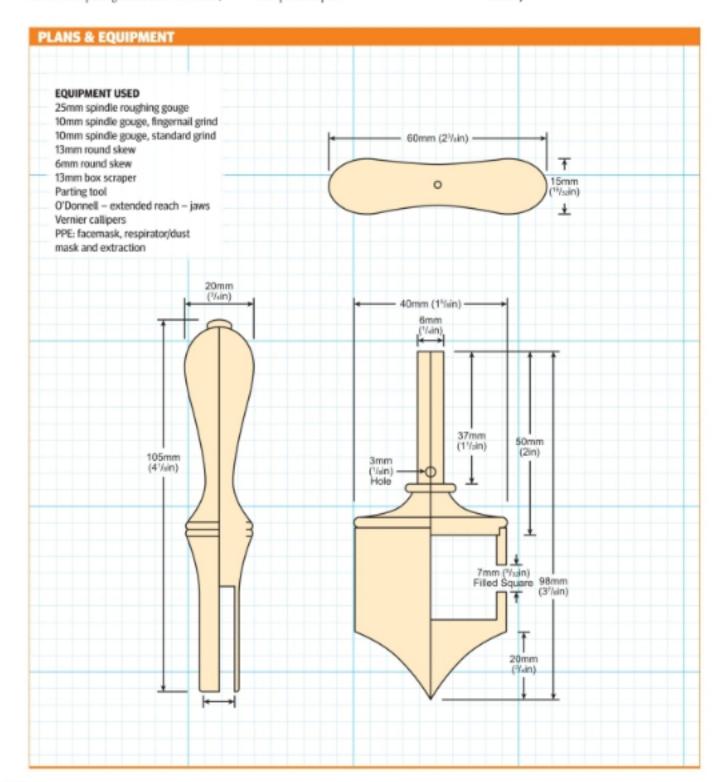
This project is for a traditional 'supported' humming top turned in boxwood. I cannot guarantee that your top will whistle or hum - there is no formulae that I am aware of that will ensure this. You will observe from the illustrations of the antique examples that all have an opening that creates the sound,

and that these vary from square, circular and slotted indicating that the shape of this aperture is unimportant. There are no essential measurements, so just do your own thing.

The order of turning the two-section top is not 'set in stone' and can be varied from that set out below. Similarly, my choice of tooling may be different from your own. You will also notice that I have chosen to use a more simplified handle to those depicted with the antique examples.



Two antique examples of miniature tops, in bone and ivery

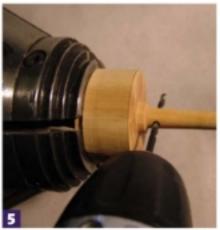






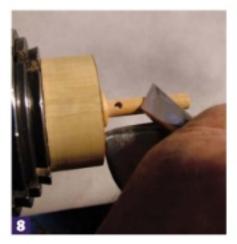












The first step is to mount the timber between the lathe centres. Boxwood is often far from being round and this blank is distinctly oval

2 This top is to be turned in two pieces. After roughing out to a cylinder, create two 40mm spigots: one to the centre and the other at the chuck end

3 Use your favourite parting tool to sever the blank, mine is an antique 4.5mm re-ground mortise chisel

A Now mount the right-hand section in the O'Donnell – extended – jaws with the 38mm inserts fitted; this will be the uppermost section and will ensure that the grain will run through the entire top. The two cylinders could also be of different, contrasting woods. Use a standard 10mm spindle gouge to remove most of the waste leaving a shaft of approximately 6mm diameter. Gently plunge a 6mm skew in a 'parting-off' fashion where the shaft junction and the upper body meet to tidy this area up

5 The completed top is spun by winding a thin cord around the shaft and pulling it. To facilitate this, drill a 3mm hole at the lower end

A spigot is required to insert the upper section of the top into the hollowed-out section of the lower half, just as you might make a lid for a box. This can be easily achieved using a 6mm skew chisel

Juse the 10mm spindle gouge to shape the slope of the upper section, then use a 6mm skew to create a small bead. Boxwood is such a fine, dense timber that a final light cut with a sharp tool will produce a finish that requires only minimal sanding

Because the drill bit was likely to leave a ragged finish where it exited the shaft, this was deliberately turned oversize but it now needs to be turned down to a final 6mm. Use a 13mm round skew for this

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- I regard this as an advanced project and the tools shown are my chosen preference. As with most turning operations, there are often many alternative tools and methods that can be used to achieve the same results
- Use the tools that you feel comfortable with for this project; do not feel that you have to slavishly follow my approach to the last letter but rather as a guide. If you wish to try a tool that you are unfamiliar with, then experiment with it using a waste piece of wood first – after all, this is how we learn and develop

You can now incise some simple decorative lines using the tip of the skew

1 A little friction polish on the top is all that is required to impart a rich lustre

1 You are nearly at the halfway stage with the parting-off now completed

12 Secure the second blank in the O'Donnell
– extender – jaws. Measure the upper
spigot using Vernier callipers and transfer this
measurement to the face of the blank via the
point closest to you. When you're doing this,
ensure that this point is slightly dragging and
at no time allow the furthest point to make
contact with the wood

13 Using a suitable tool – I used a 6mm round skew – a recess was created to accommodate the upper section; this often takes a number of attempts before a good fit is obtained. Start by making the recess slightly undersize and then adjust little by little until you succeed

#### "A little friction polish is all that is required to impart a rich lustre"

14 Time to drill another hole, this time one of 7mm diameter into the solid body to approximately 6mm deep

15 The hollowing out is mostly achieved using a 10mm spindle gouge with a fingernail profile. This is a very efficient tool but care must be exercised never to use the tool with the flute vertical – this will catch! My illustration shows the gouge in the 'pull-cut' position

Turn the opening to a wall thickness of approximately 2mm and square up at the bottom using a 13mm box scraper. I imagine that a thin wall helps create resonance, therefore 'whistle and hum', but I cannot quote the physics behind it!

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 3. Although I will always encourage experimenting with any timbers that take your fancy, for this project do bear in mind that your material must be well seasoned. Any residual moisture is likely to cause warping or splitting upon drying therefore reducing the top to a wobble or worse!
- A dense hardwood would be preferable; this will provide for a potentially good final finish

































17 As stated earlier it appears to make no difference, judging from antique examples, what shape the aperture is. I opened out the round hole into a square using a flat needle file

18 Before the final shaping, the depth plus just a little more needs to be marked on the work

19 Now to complete the side section with some simple decoration, sand and polish and then proceed to taper the bottom of the top – although we started turning 'top to bottom'! Taper the base with the standard spindle gouge

20 Complete the final delicate parting cut with the 13mm round skew

2 1 This style of top is referred to as a 'supported top' because the shaft is held in a handle and then released during the spinning process. I chose to make a simple upright handle from a round blank. Secure the blank within the O'Donnell – extender – jaws and drill out using a 7mm drill bit held in a Jacobs chuck set in the tailstock

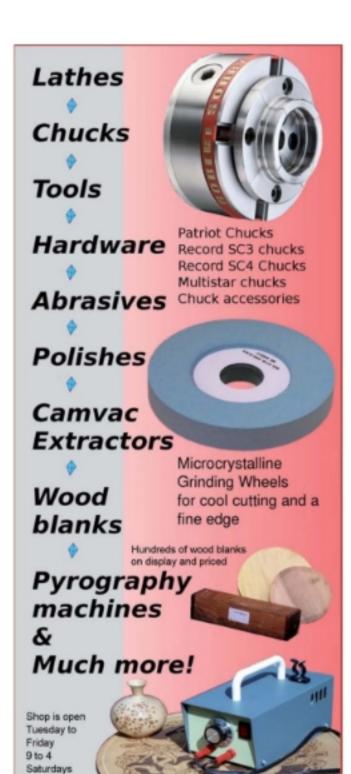
22 Remove the waste. I used my 70-yearold 25mm spindle roughing gouge

23 This is a simple spindle turning exercise with the main shape created using the 10mm standard spindle gouge

After general shaping, complete the final using the same round 13mm skew, then sand and polish. The completed components include a simple handle for the pull cord. I have not covered this because if you can turn the first two items, this is a doddle! The pull cord is threaded through the hole in the shaft and wound by rotating the body; I used a thin nylon cord from my grandson's kite. Insert the shaft into the handle, hold vertically, then pull and release

25 Your top should whistle and hum, but if it doesn't, contact an astrophysicist for the required equation, not me!





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#### 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 at the 2009 AWGB

Woodturning Seminar and is available for commissions.

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

hile my wife and I were on holiday in Dorset on the south coast of England, in June 2009, I heard about an ancient ash (Fraxinus excelsior) tree in private grounds in nearby Somerset and I am indebted to the owner for letting me see, and take photographs of it. It is thought to be the oldest ash tree in England and possibly in the whole of the British Isles. Its immense girth, around 9 metres, testifies to its great age, which has been estimated at somewhere between 250 and 500 years. Even at 250 years it would be very old for an ash tree, and at 500 it would be ancient indeed. Whatever its age, it is obviously a dignified great-grandmother



This tree in Somerset is thought to be the oldest ash in England

of a tree and looks as though it has spread its skirts and settled down to a well earned rest. Superb in its parkland setting, its gnarled and twisted limbs are supported on wooden blocks and despite its contortions and the damage that its great age makes inevitable, there's no doubt that it is receiving good care in its dotage.

Ash is one of Britain's most common trees and excellent, though less venerable, examples are to be found everywhere. A short walk from my home in Bingley in West Yorkshire, much further north than Dorset, this fine ash tree has, for many years, offered shade to the barges toiling up the flight of



This ash is on the canal path in West Yorkshire

locks on the Leeds-Liverpool canal. A little further afield, in the Yorkshire Dules, a smaller example clings for dear life to a rocky outcrop. Its precarious position has caused its growth to be stunted but it is a good illustration of the tenacity and toughness of the species.

Ash timber is best known for being tough and resilient, and ash was once the most economically valuable of all European trees. Its timber has many uses and it is widely used for any application where strength and resistance to shock are needed, most commonly in handles for tools, such as axes, hammers, picks, spades and so on. It has also found use for making snooker and pool cues, baseball bats, hockey sticks, bows and skis, which must all withstand collision or bending forces without fracturing. Ash was used in the chassis frames of Morgan cars, and in the construction of the de Havilland

Mosquito fighter bomber of World War II, the so-called 'wooden wonder'.

The grain and figure of ash can be very attractive, especially in 'olive ash', which is not a distinct species but is so called because its darker colour and contorted figure resemble that of olive wood. Ash is now finding wider use as a decorative timber for turning and for furniture making, as well as for shop and office fittings.



Ash is a tenacious species, as demonstrated by this tree in the Yorkshire Dales



Ash's strength and resistance to shock makes is suitable for tool handles

#### Ash bowls



I decided to make four bowls from one square of ash



The profiles were drawn more or less full size at approximately 130mm × 50mm

#### "Making four identical objects, no matter what they are, is never easy, whereas four different designs give plenty of scope to experiment"

While demonstrating at the North of England Woodworking Show at Harrogate in 2009, I found some squares of ash that had a beautiful ripple figure. They were not cheap, but, I thought, worth the money. The wood is beautiful and turned very easily.

The first decision I had to make was whether to turn a single bowl out of the piece or cut it up and make a number of smaller bowls. The square was 260 × 260 × 50mm-thick and although these are reasonable dimensions for a bowl, by cutting it in half both ways I would end up with four pieces whose thickness was deeper in proportion to their maximum diameter, and that is what I decided to do.

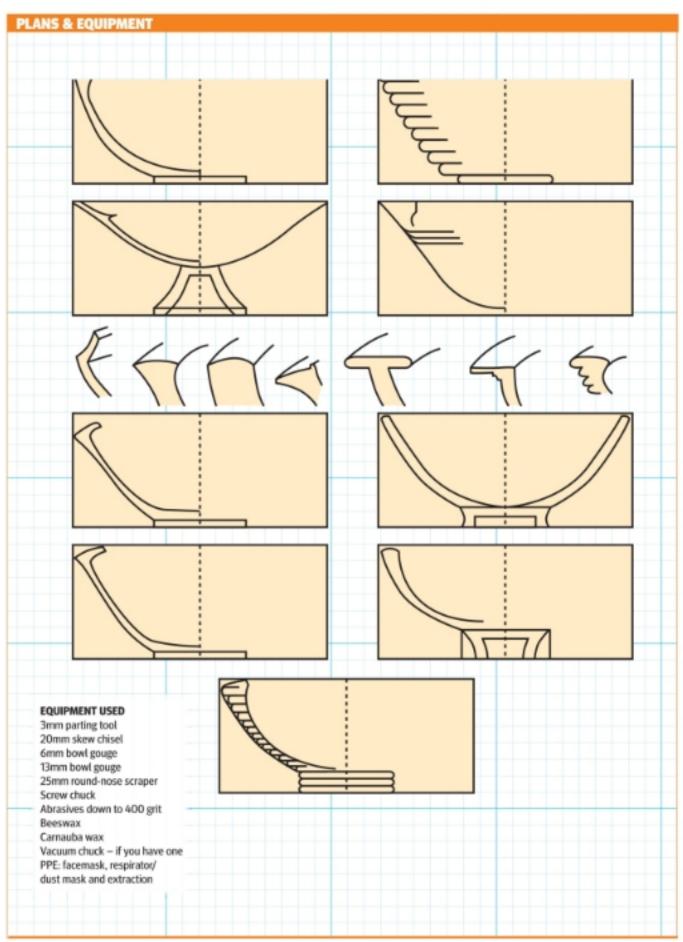
Should I make a set of four identical bowls or make four different ones? Making four identical objects, no matter what they are, is never easy, whereas four different designs give plenty of scope to experiment. After a few minutes spent sketching possible designs, I decided that four different bowls would be far less demanding and far more interesting.

I sketched a couple of full-size profiles roughly on the side of the square to double check how they might fit. They were approximately 130 × 50mm. This helped me realise a small oversight, which I will come back to a little later.

Each of the four bowls was made in much the same way. What follows is a description of making the bowl design shown at the bottom of the diagram, but it applies equally well to the others.

#### **CHUCK SCREWS**

As supplied, most screws are much longer than mine and if used 'as is' they may be inconveniently long. No matter what length the screw is, it will dictate the minimum depth of the bowl, which must be hollowed at least as far as the bottom of the screw hole. A longer screw obviously requires a deeper hole and this will demand a thicker piece of wood, or the use of spacers to take up the length of the screw. Spacers move the workpiece further from the support of the headstock, increasing the risk of vibration. If you have more than one of these chuck screws, then cut them to different lengths to suit different workpieces



Cut the square into four pieces and drill an 8mm hole approximately 25mm deep in the centre of each one to accommodate the large screw that fits in the chuck. Most chucks are supplied with a screw like this and the hole size may need to be changed to suit your particular screw. The assembly is commonly called a 'screw chuck'

2 Usualty I begin by mounting the blank on the screw, truing up the blank and forming a spigot to hold it by when it is reversed for hollowing. However, in this case, I wanted to incorporate the whole thickness of the ash into the bowl shape, and not waste any forming a spigot. This was the oversight, and to overcome it, some small blocks of scrap wood were glued to the underside of the bowl blanks using a good quality adhesive. The spigots could then be formed in this scrap wood leaving the whole thickness of the ash for the bowl

3 With the bowl blank screwed securely onto the screw chuck, true up the sides of the blank with a 13mm bowl gouge. Mark the centre of the blank by bringing up the tailstock centre and winding the point into the wood

After marking your diameter, use a 3mm parting tool to cut a groove to the required depth in the scrap block. This should be a little less than the maximum depth of the jaws so that the spigot will have maximum strength but will not 'bottom' in the jaws. Use a small bowl gouge to remove the corners of the scrap block and turn it to round. Remove the waste down to the level of the ash blank

In order to make the diameter of the foot about one-third of the diameter of the bowl, a little more of the scrap block has to be removed before cutting into the ash with the parting tool and removing the waste with the bowl gouge. This is continued until the foot of the bowl has been roughly formed

6 Using the 13mm bowl gouge, remove waste wood between the foot and the rim of the bowl. Aim for a smooth curve with no bumps, hollows or sudden changes of direction

With the underside of the bowl shaped, use a 3mm bead forming tool to cut a series of decorative beads across it. Start at the corner where the bowl meets the foot and work outwards so that any 'part beads' will occur in places where they can be turned away later

O Using abrasive, gently sand between and over the beads, taking care not to flatten them. Work down to about 400 grit. Brush on sanding sealer and, when dry, sand lightly with the 400 grit paper. Polish the bowl by rubbing it over with a stick of beeswax followed by carnauba wax. Do not overdo the waxing and don't let the wax accumulate in the grooves







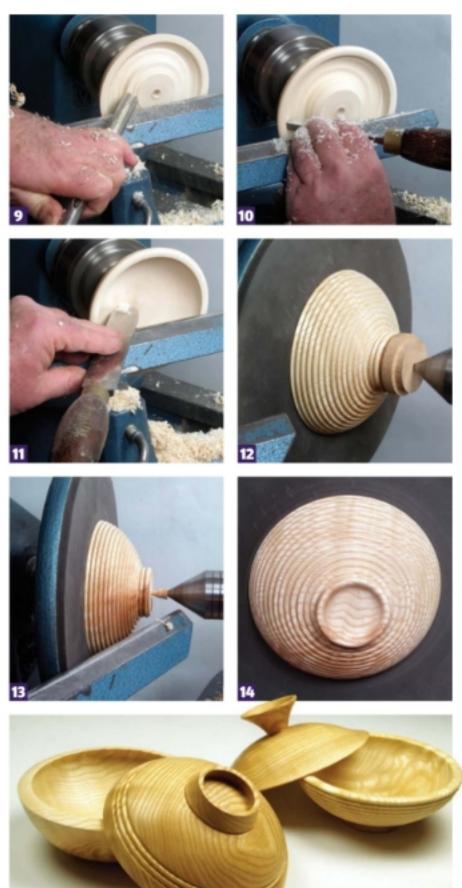












Reverse the bowl in the chuck and true the front face up with a bowl gouge. If there is a 'part bead', cut it back to the next full bead. Decide on the wall thickness and use the point of a skew chisel to form a small 'starter groove' for the bowl gouge. Holding the gouge on its side, push the tip into the starter groove immediately and, still pushing gently forward, rotate the gouge anticlockwise to bring the flute to the 2 o'clock position, and swing the handle slowly back towards the body. These actions cause the cutting edge of the tool to curve forwards and towards the centre, removing wood and starting to hollow the bowl. Keep the bevel of the gouge in contact with the freshly cut surface, otherwise you'll lose control of the direction and depth of cut

1 O While the walls are still reasonably thick and strong, finish the rim of the bowl by converting it to a slight curve using the skew chisel on its side, flat on the rest as a scraper. Use a small 6mm scraper to undercut the rim slightly. This tool has had the usual burr honed off on an oilstone, and the cutting edge is sharp. Hold the tool horizontally, flat on the toolrest with the cutting edge exactly at centre height. Take fine shavings until the depth of the undercut is satisfactory

1 With the undercut completed, take the central lump down in stages. Check the wall thickness frequently to ensure it is fairly constant although some thickening towards the base is acceptable. When hollowing with the gouge is completed, remove any ridges in the surface with a 25mm scraper. Again, the scraper is honed and is used horizontally, then sand, seal and wax the inside of the bowl as before

12 One way in which the bowl may be held in order to remove the spigot is by a process known as 'reverse-chucking'. Use the tailstock centre to push it against a rubber-faced drive plate, centring the bowl using the centre mark formed much earlier

13 With the tailstock in place the bulk of the removed. When as much wood as possible has been turned away, the bowl may be removed from the lathe and the final stub removed with a sharp knife. The bottom of the bowl can then be hand-sanded and polished

14 However, as I have a vacuum system I was able to hold the bowl in place while removing the tailstock altogether, and I finished the bottom of the bowl with a small bowl gouge, sanding and polishing as before

15 A collection of four small ash bowls, each approximately 130mm diameter × 50mm deep. These different designs were made from the same piece of wood; the one described here is on the extreme right ◆



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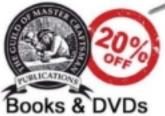
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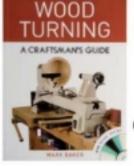
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Our star name will be Mark Baker, International Demonstrator, Woodworker, Woodturner, Writer and Editor of the Woodturing magazine. Mark will be performing three turning masterclasses each day. The masterclasses will be limited seating. There will be three different projects which will be repeated each day. Session One will be on Hollow Forms Made Easy. Session two will be Enhancing Turned Bowls. Session three will be Adding Texture and Decoration to a Turned Project. Each session will last around 90 minutes with a chance for Q&As after each session. A minimal fee will be charged for each session.

There will also be demonstrations from Robert Sorby Demonstrator Nigel Maddox, the ever popular Stickmaster - Colin Hickman and a chance to get "hands-on" at pyrography with Bob Neill. There is penturning with Leslie Churton and Letter

carving in wood and stone fom Andrew Hibberd. This year we have the added attractions of green woodworking from the Discovery Woodland Centre in Sheffield alongside blacksmith Nick Westermann who will be forging woodworking tools



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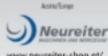


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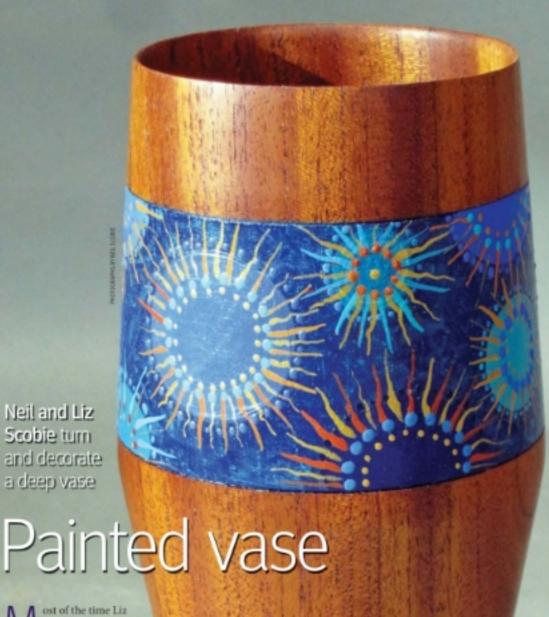
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ost of the time Liz and I make painted platters or bowls, so we thought it might be a good change to make a deeper vase shape that Liz could decorate. When you make pieces like this, you need to talk to the painter or person who is going to embellish the piece to see what shape is best for them. After talking to Liz, she wanted the painted section to be reasonably flat rather than a convex curve so it would be easier to paint. She also wanted two border lines to separate the painted section from the rest of the wood. Another request was for a darker timber rather than lighter. We chose Australian red cedar (Toona ciliata), which we had in stock and is a good timber to work with. When you are deciding on a design to paint, choose something that is simple and achievable. Circles are a good option. To create more interest, paint circles of varying sizes,

colours and shades.

Neil and Liz Scobie turn

a deep vase

#### **NEIL & LIZ SCOBIE**

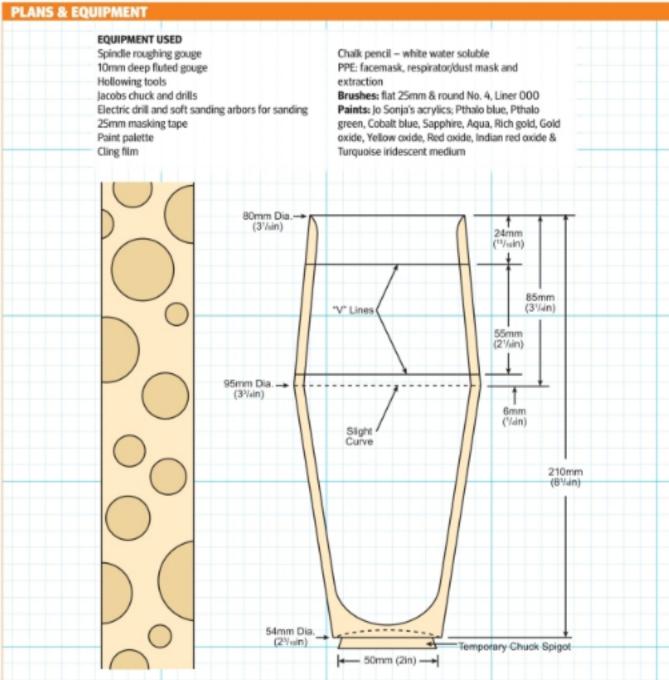


Neil is a full-time woodworker who makes custommade furniture and woodturned and carved art pieces for private

clients and galleries. He also writes for various woodworking magazines. Liz is a textile artist who has been painting and decorating Neil's turned pieces for 23 years.

info@neilandlizscobie.com www.neilandlizscobie.com



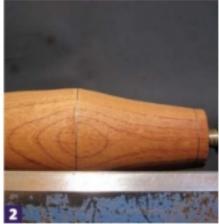


#### Making the vase

The first step is to place your blank of choice between centres and round it off with a spindle roughing gouge. We realise not all of you will have easy access to Australian timbers, so you can just as well use a variety of your choosing instead. When turning, I find the best results are obtained when you point the gouge in the direction you are cutting, using the bottom half of the gouge and rubbing the bevel

2 Next, roughly turn the vase to the given shape and mark the intersection line between the top and bottom sections. You also need to mark where you want the base spigot



















3 You can now use a skew chisel to turn the base spigot. I use a 10mm round skew chisel as it is easy to roll over on its side

4 The shape should now be looking like this, with a slight dovetail shape to suit your scroll chuck jaws

5 Mark lines at the top and bottom of the painted section. I have ground a worn-out old gouge to a tool that is about 1mm wide and 1mm thick and all I do is hold it flat and push it in about 1mm deep. It is a good idea to mark the lines with a pencil first while the piece is spinning, so that it looks in proportion to the rest of the piece

After the lines are cut, sand the outside Surface to about 180 grit. You are now ready to hollow out the inside

Here you can see the finished profile of the vase after turning

Place the spigot of the vase in the scroll chuck and a Jacobs chuck in the tailstock spindle. Select a sawtooth drill bit that will drill out the majority of the waste in the top section, then a smaller diameter drill to drill out the base section. Make sure you leave enough thickness in the base for trimming the drilled hole

Using a normal deep fluted bowl gouge, turn in about one-third of the depth. If you point the flute towards the centre of the vase you will be cutting with the bottom half of the gouge, rubbing the bevel will help keep it tracking in a continuous line. When you cut down a certain depth you will find that the body of the gouge will rub against the right-hand side of the vase, so it is now time to change to another tool

1 o I find that the Rolly Munro hollower is a good tool to turn out the rest of the inside – the shaft is firm enough so that it does not flex when you are cutting down deep into the vase. You can also adjust the cutter shield. Wall thickness should be around 5mm, with maybe 7mm in the base. If you do not have this specific tool, do not worry as any dedicated hollowing tool can be used instead

#### HANDY HINTS

- Choose stable timber so it will not warp when you deep hollow the inside
- You could leave the chuck spigot on until after the painting is complete, just in case you need to sand it while attached and spinning on the lathe
- You will need to make a long padded stick to wrap rags around when applying and wiping off the oil in the deep hollow
- Talk to the decorator about what shaped vase they would prefer

## Hollow forms – part 2

In the second part of this article, Andy Coates decorates the hollow form made in the previous issue and suggests different approaches

#### 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 Suffolk. He mostly 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,

cobwebcrafts@btinternet.com www.cobwebcrafts.co.uk

n part one of this project, I turned a hollow vessel. Hopefully you will now either have a nearly finished vessel ready to decorate, be ready to turn it and then follow the steps here to decorate and complete. However, before we begin, a few words on decorating your work might be in order.

I think the woodturning world has largely come to terms with decorating turned objects, and in my opinion, this is a positive. decorative treatment. Where decorative work does pay dividends is on very plain, bland timbers, such as sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) and beech (Fagus sylvatica). Decorating forms made from these species can add interest and value, and at the same time, add a new dimension to

I often hear turners say that they would not consider decorative techniques because

> they are 'not artistic', don't know what media are suitable or have no idea where to begin, Well I have news for you: you do not need to be 'artistic' and all the rest is simply a matter of having a willingness to learn, experiment and fail. The pay off will come, and when it does, you'll feel like you've earned it. A trip to an art supplies store is a good starting

point. Wander around and look at the vast array of media, treatments, paints and embellishments available to 'artists'. Will it work on wood? Often the label will tell you; if it doesn't, then look for artists who are already using the media to see if they use it on wood. Failing that, buy a sample and give it a try.

Pictured left is a small selection from my 'play box', including metal leaf in an assortment of colours and types, gesso, earth pigments, inks, dyes, acrylic medium, spray paints, 3D relief medium, glazes and the all important UV protection varnish. Natural sponges, stencil and artist's brushes and a colour wheel to help with colour matching are all useful additions to your decorating arsenal. Add some metallic pastes, liming, ebonising and coloured waxes and you will have a kit of materials that will keep you occupied for a long time.

The most important thing to remember is to use the media sensibly and take all necessary precautions when using wet media near the lathe. At some point you will be pleasantly surprised, but whatever you decide, enjoy the process.



A selection of media used for decorating and colouring your turnings



11 To sand the inside I like to use my homemade soft cylinder sander. It has a 6mm steel shaft with a 15mm diameter timber sleeve covered by soft foam and hook-and-loop. The shaft is held in an electric drill and you would have both the drill and the vase spinning. Wrap some 120 grit hook-and-loop-backed abrasive to start with to remove all the turning marks and then work down through the grits until you reach 600

12 The vase is now all sanded and ready to remove the spigot

13 To set up the vase to turn off the chuck spigot, turn a mandrel which the vase will fit over about two-thirds of the way to the bottom. Place some soft foam over the mandrel to protect the sanded inside surface and place the tailstock centre in the centre of the spigot. Turn off the waste leaving about a 10 or 12mm spigot in the middle, then sand the base

14 To remove the small spigot on the vase, use a fine-tooth pullsaw while you back off the tailstock pressure; this will avoid jamming the saw

15 The last process is to carve off the saw marks with a shallow carving gouge, then use the soft sanding pad on the drill or handsand the base. The vase is now ready for the decorating processes

#### Painting

16 You can now mask up around the top and bottom of the panel to be painted. Press the tape into the prepared groove, then tape up the remaining area you don't wish to paint; this will save a lot of time and cleaning up later

17 Fold the tape over the top of the vase; this will allow you to pick it up easily without leaving any unwanted paint marks

18 Using a 25mm flat brush, paint a base coat of Pthalo Blue. If you fail to achieve a solid coat the first time, allow it to dry and apply a second coat

#### HANDY HINTS

- Choose the best quality paintbrushes you can afford and always wash them well with soap after use
- Test your paints with your preferred finish before starting the project to make sure they are compatible
- Choose good quality paints with a high pigment content that won't fade in time
- Allow each coat to dry well between layers of paint; this will help prevent any smudging































19 When working on any design, always consider an interesting background. To achieve this effect, apply a very watereddown coat of a lighter colour, here aqua has been used. Apply with a wide flat brush

2 O Immediately press a layer of clean scrunched-up cling film over the entire painted surface. Press lightly into the creases to transfer the pattern into the paint, then lift off gently and allow to dry naturally. When completely dry, add a second lighter coat of watered down Turquoise iridescent medium. This is an optional layer

2 1 When completely dry, add the circular design. This can be drawn straight onto the painted surface using a chalk pencil — choose one that will wash off easily. If you don't feel confident to hand sketch, enlarge the design provided and, using a light coloured craft carbon paper, trace the pattern onto the painted surface

22 Using a combination of blue and green No.4 brush

23 When the spot background colour is dry, start to add the detailed embellishment. Firstly, with the contrasting autumn tones add small paint strokes radiating out from the spots. A fine liner brush is ideal for this purpose – use a 000 liner or finer

24 When this is dry, add a second layer of radiating lines between the autumntoned lines. Use a rich gold paint

25 The final layer to the embellishment is to highlight the circles with a series of smaller dots. A small metal stylus works well for this, but if you don't have one a bamboo skewer will also do the job

26 To finish, sand off any unwanted paint marks and clean up the groove. You can use folded abrasive paper in the groove. Give a light rub over all the bare wood with 400 grit abrasive and then it is ready to oil. We used four coats of Livos Kunos over the paint as well as the wood. It was rubbed back between coats with '0000' steel wool. The finished painted vase should look something like this.

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- Choose a painted colour scheme that complements your chosen timber colour – the blues work well with red cedar
- This painted pattern could also be used successfully on a turned platter or bowl
- Keeping the design simple will avoid disappointment
- Always allow each layer of paint to dry before adding the next layer

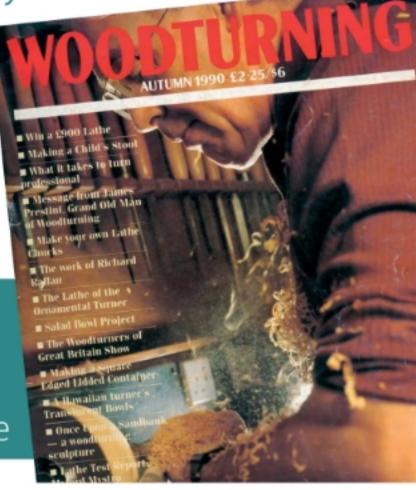
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## Dismantling pen kits for repair

In the next part of this series, Walter Hall looks at a number of useful methods for disassembling common pen kits for repair

#### WALTER HALL



Walter Hall is a woodtumer 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

ne thing for certain if you make pens is that one day you will need to dismantle a pen you have made, either to repair it or to replace worn out components. Pens get dropped or careless owners do the most outlandish things with them, trying to fit the wrong refills or carrying out inappropriate maintenance. Sometimes with wooden pens, the barrels just crack because of a change in temperature or humidity or, wood being wood, for no discernible reason at all. The cheaper platings or mechanisms may wear out before your handiwork on the blank does and finishes can peel, crack or go misty for a list of reasons as long as my arm. Whatever the reason, there will come a time when there is no option but to take a finished writing instrument apart.

#### Tools for dismantling

In the early days of pen making when there were only a handful of pen kit styles available and most people only made pens using the ubiquitous slimline kits, the 'pen dismantling kits' that were, and are still available, were adequate to meet most



The standard pen dismantling kit

maker's requirements for dismantling work. Consisting of two steel rods and a steel cylinder with a central bore to match the external diameter of a slimline mechanism. they served their purpose well enough.

Nowadays, there is an astonishing variety of kits available to the pen turner and the range of tube sizes means that the simple dismantling kit alone is no longer sufficient for our needs. The most useful toolkit for anyone who needs to dismantle pens consists quite simply of a set of engineer's transfer punches. Available in imperial and metric sizes, the imperial is perhaps the better choice as most pen tubes are designed for the American market and thus in imperial dimensions. As you can see from the photo, mine get a lot of use and are starting to look a bit battered. The smallest size especially gets used for all sorts of tasks its maker never intended. As I shall explain here, in certain circumstances, a tube is a more useful tool



A set of engineer's transfer punches

than a punch and over the years, I have collected a selection of various sizes. They have got me out of some tricky dismantling



Various sizes of pen tube

problems so I thoroughly recommend never throwing away a tube that is not immediately required. You will find a use for it one day.

#### Dismantling methods

While not the best option, sometimes gripping, pulling and twisting can be the only way to remove a component. To do so requires care and a restrained and measured amount of force. Fibre jaw inserts for your vice are useful if you need to grip plated components. Unprotected jaws will destroy the plating, so do not be tempted to proceed without adequate protection. If fibre or nylon jaw inserts are not available, then improvise!

Likewise, any grips or pliers used for pen dismantling should have soft jaws. The ones in the photo are designed for plumbers to dismantle plated bathroom or kitchen fittings, but do a good job on pens too if used with care.

To dismantle a slimline pen using either a proprietary dismantler kit or transfer punches, after removing the refill and centre band, the thinner rod, or a suitably sized punch, is passed through the mechanism until it contacts the writing tip and is then tapped gently with a hammer until the tip is freed from the tube.

The pen is then inverted and the mechanism inserted into the bore of the steel cylinder. If you don't have a dismantler kit, then a suitably sized hole drilled in a block of hardwood will do the job just as well. The thicker rod, or a suitable punch, is then used with light hammer blows to drive the mechanism out of the tube.

The same rod or punch is then used to gently tap the clip from the other tube. A builder's gripper glove is useful to help prevent the blank slipping from your grip.

Now you have a set of components that

are ready for the barrels to be refinished as required, or, if the wood is irreparably damaged, the tubes can be returned to the lathe and the old wood turned away ready to start again with a new blank. Do take care to clean up the blanks properly and remove all the old adhesive to avoid problems on reassembly.

Having spent many frustrating hours searching the workshop floor for components that have ricocheted off into far corners or under machinery only to find they have suffered impact damage to the plating as a result of their unscheduled flight, I can highly recommend placing a soft cloth – microfibre car polishing cloths are ideal – into a suitable container and aiming the, soon to be detached, component into a safe receptacle.



Removing a component using a combination of gripping and pulling



These plumber's pliers are ideal for pen dismantling, thanks to their soft jaws



Driving the mechanism out of the tube



Tapping the clip from the other tube, using a builder's gripper glove



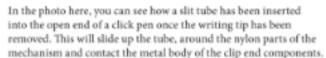
A set of components, ready for the barrels to be refinished as required

#### ■ The split-tube method

With some kits, especially those with click mechanisms, it is not possible to remove the mechanism and associated clips, etc. with a punch without causing damage. There are, however, ways to get around this. If the writing tip can be removed from the other end of the tube, then a tube of suitable dimensions can be used to contact the metal surrounding the mechanism without touching the mechanism itself. Finding exactly the right diameter tube is essential, but a work around is to slit a slightly too large tube along its length so that it can be compressed into the pen tube.



Slicing a slightly too large tube along its length can help to match the diameter of your tricky pen



With a suitably sized transfer punch, the split brass tube is then used as a drift to drive the components out of the tube.

The close-up shows how the slit tube slips over the plastic parts but is still able to contact the end of the metal components, thus enabling the parts to be removed without damage to the mechanism.



A slit tube has been inserted into the open end of a click pen once the writing tip has been removed



Using a suitably sized transfer punch to drive the components out of the tube



The slit tube slips over the plastic parts but is still able to contact the end of the metal components

#### Punch & hammer method

Sometimes, as with this sierra click pen, it is just not possible to remove the threaded insert from the tube without removing the mechanism first. In this case, it is not practicable to use the split-tube method so we need to find an alternative.

It is difficult to get a good photo of the inside of the pen tube, but it is just possible to see the outline of the brass components at the top of the pen surrounding the nylon click mechanism. We need to find a way of driving against the brass without damaging the mechanism.

By angling a suitably sized punch so that the end contacts the brass, tapping gently with a hammer and then revolving the blank slightly and repeating, slow iterative progress can be made which will in the end release the mechanism without damage. Don't try to rush it and don't use too much force.

Gentle persistence results in an undamaged mechanism, which can be reused when the pen is refinished and reassembled.

If necessary for whatever repairs are proposed, the components at the other end of the tube can be removed using a punch as close as possible in size to the inside diameter of the brass pen tube. Once again, the builder's glove is brought into play to help grip the barrel.



Here, it is not possible to remove the threaded insert from the tube without removing the mechanism first



The outline of the brass components at the top of the pen surrounding the nylon click mechanism



A suitably sized punch, a hammer and revolving the blank will allow it to release without damage



The undamaged mechanism can be reused and reassembled



The components at the other end of the tube can be removed using a suitably sized punch



To grip the barrel, use the builder's glove as before

## Tip for fountain pens and roller balls

The methods outlined in this article may be used to dismantle most types of pen kit. I cannot remember an occasion in recent times when I have been defeated in my disassembly endeavours. As always, these are only the methods I use and I am sure there may be other techniques of which I am not aware. I am always happy to hear of other methods - we never know so much that we cannot learn from others. One final tip: if you are dismantling a fountain pen or rollerball with a decorative insert in the clip end of the cap, take care not to separate the insert from its seating. It may be wise to use a tube as a drift rather than a punch so as not to be striking directly onto the peg that retains the insert or directly onto the inside of the end of the component. .



With fountain pens or rollerballs with a decorative insert in the clip, take care not to separate the insert from its seating



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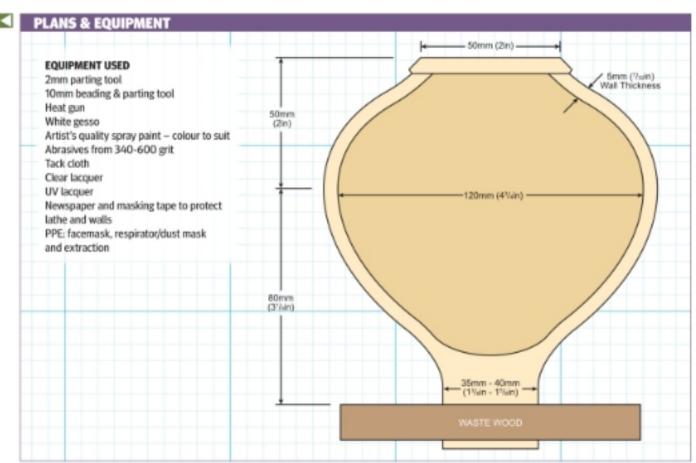
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1 Mount your pre-turned hollow form on the lathe – you are now ready to abrade the surface of the vessel through to 240 grit; this allows the removal of all the tool marks, but leaves a suitable 'key' on the surface for the medium to adhere to. Once abraded, use a tack cloth to remove all the dust

Apply a base coat of artist's gesso. Quality varies significantly and I have found the cheaper brands to be largely unusable for the decorating I do. While you may consider them expensive, they do go a long way and keep well.

#### "Once abraded, use a tack cloth to remove all the dust"

3 Cover the lathe bed and any surrounding surfaces with newspaper or an old dust sheet. Ensure there is no possibility of snagging when you run the lathe later. With the lathe stationary, apply with a soft wide brush and cover the surface well

4 With the lathe running slowly – 100rpm – use the brush to drag the surplus from the opening down to the foot. You are aiming for a smooth surface. You may need to reapply the gesso to cover some areas; if so, repeat the drawing out stage until satisfied

























At this point, if you are patient, you can wait for the gesso to cure overnight. If, however, you are impatient, like me, you can use a heat gun or hairdryer to speed up the process. Use the low setting, rotate the chuck by hand and keep the heat gun moving to ensure you don't 'cook' the gesso – see sidebar overleaf

As soon as your base coat is perfectly dry, with the lathe running, give the surface a light abrade with 400 grit. Gesso dust is very fine, so wear a dust mask. Next, apply more gesso, this time quite heavily, around the opening of the vessel. This is why the shape of this vessel seems so exaggerated – this will help at the next stage

Ensure you have protected all around the lathe, possibly even above the lathe, stand to one side and with the lathe on a slow speed to begin with – 100rpm – turn the lathe on. Let it run for 20 seconds or so and then stop the lathe. Look at the results. If they do not resemble the photo here, then turn the speed up and repeat until it does. As soon as you achieve a pleasing splash pattern, force dry with the heat gun, keeping the gun moving and manually rotating the lathe

As soon as this area is dry, apply more gesso near the base of the vessel and repeat the above steps until a pleasing splash pattern is achieved. You can force the pattern as far up the wall towards the largest diameter by repeatedly adding gesso and turning the lathe on again

Here I am aiming for the pattern to rise about one-third up the wall of the vessel. Once satisfied, force dry once again. Remember to keep the heat gun moving all the time

The next step is to apply yet more gesso on the equator of the vessel. Here you might use the brush to create a random pattern in small blocks

1 Or you might decide to use a tool, or some other material, such as a natural sponge, to create a pattern. You can add detail using all manner of implements. Try a few and see what you get!

12 decided to drag the gesso around the vessel to contrast the direction of the splash pattern

#### ADDING INTEREST

- · Texturing the base
- Colour acrylic, patination waxes, spirit stains, metalised finishes, gouache, etc.
- Personalisation add something to the base with carving or pyrography
- Metal leaf metal leaf catches the light and creates a very appealing look

13 Force dry once again. This time, allow the gesso to cook a little to produce some bubbles. Using a spatula, knock the bubbles down flat and dry again

14 You are now ready to move on to colouring. Note that I also covered the inner edge of the opening

15 Your options for colouring the gesso are many. Almost any colouring medium will work, but here, I chose artists' spray paint

16 Ensure your workshop is ventilated and that there are no naked flames near the lathe. Shake the can as instructed on the label and apply in thin layers, in a sweeping motion

17 Completely cover the vessel, allowing to dry naturally and applying a second coat if needed. Aim for an even coat with all the gesso covered, then allow to dry naturally. Most artist's quality sprays are quick drying

18 Once dry and cured, take 400 grit abrasive and with the lathe running at about 500 rpm, gently abrade the surface

19 Stop the lathe frequently, checking the surface and assessing the results

2 The degree to which you cut through back to the gesso is largely subjective, so keep stopping and checking

#### 'COOKING'

Drying the gesso in this fashion is far from the prescribed method, but it works well for me. One thing I have found is that applying too much heat cooks the gesso. This may or may not be a bad thing for you. When the gesso cooks, bubbles form on the surface; these can produce an interesting pattern in their own right and this may be something you wish to explore. This 'let's see what happens' approach is worth developing in other areas

#### DECORATING

- . Try different media to assess effects
- . Try mixing different media
- . Try using in unconventional ways
- . Stick to a colour palette you like
- Force yourself to use a colour palette you don't like!
- Try using colour palettes to match household decor
- Try to ensure longevity of coloured decoration by using UV protecting lacquers or sprays
- With gesso decoration, try scribing patterns in to the semi-dry surface























- 21 I decided I was happy with the results at this stage but you may wish to take it further, or perhaps not as far
- 2 Next, make a "V" cut at the base of the rim section to accentuate the rim. Use the corner of a freshly sharpened 10mm beading & parting tool
- 2 3 Using a freshly sharpened 2mm parting tool, carefully part the vessel off. You may wish to part through so far and then complete with the lathe off, using a small hand saw. Clean off the base with a craft knife and abrade to a finish

Apply two coats of satin lacquer, cutting back with 600 grit abrasive between dry coats. On top of this, I always apply a coat of anti-UV lacquer to help protect the colouring from fading. Your completed decorated hollow form should look something like this.

#### **5 STEPS TO BETTER TURNING**

- · Tool sharpening
- · Tool presentation
- · Understanding how wood cuts
- . Consciously developing a sense of 'form'
- Practice, practice have a coffee, then practice some more

#### ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES



Using gesso in this fashion is somewhat unusual, but I hope you can see the possibilities it offers the decorative turner. I have played with this medium for quite some time now and most of the effects produced have worked for me. By applying the gesso in a circular direction around the vessel, colouring and then applying again over the top from the base upwards, I was able to produce this 'reed bed' effect. Leaving the inside of the vessel natural provides a pleasing contrast



The vessel here was made using random brush strokes in the gesso and indigo inks



The next vessel has a cove cut back through the decoration to provide a contrasting band of natural wood. The slim band of decoration at the rim forms a frame for the cove



The vessel above was consciously made to imitate a pottery vessel. The beauty, for me, is the fact that the wood grain of the walnut is still visible beneath the decoration

The possibilities are almost limitless. Just remember to have fun exploring and that nothing is wrong. If you like it, that's enough

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# 2015 Utah and AAW Woodturning Symposiums

Mark Baker reports on his visits to two symposiums in America

was fortunate enough to be able to visit two symposiums recently: the Utah Woodturning Symposium and the AAW's 29th Annual International Symposium.

There are many reasons why people attend such events. Many think the demonstrations are important, but when talking to people, the fact that they can meet up with friends and get the chance to talk to those who they would not normally get to talk to is high on their list. Of course, the instant gallery display, the gala dinner and awards event, the ability to meet manufacturers and retailers, see new things and so much more, are reasons and each attendee knows what's important to them. There's no doubt that these two events are thriving and providing top-quality symposiums for people to attend. I have to comment that from an outsider looking in,

Utah Woodturning Symposium

both do a fantastic job and the end result is a credit to all involved. I know they are a logistical nightmare to bring together.

organisationally, I think

The Utah Symposium has the honour of being the oldest of any such events, and according to many people I have spoken to over the years, has a family-type feel to it where all are welcomed. The numbers attending are up to about 400 or so and at the gala dinner, I noted that many of the attendees have been to multiple events and some, all of them. Their event is held 'Twisting Wings' by Michael Anderson in the 'Student Turning under 18 years of age' section

at the Utah Valley University Campus every year. In one of the many conversations I had, I heard someone comment that they wouldn't miss the chance to attend because it was so much fun.

#### **UTAH WOODTURNING** SYMPOSIUM DEMONSTRATORS

Alan Trout - USA Art Liestman - Canada Art Majerus - USA Ashley Harwood - USA Brent Ross - USA Cindy Drozda - USA Cindy Navarro - USA Eric Lofstrom - USA Guilio Marcolongo - Australia Jay Brown - USA Jason Breach - UK Jason Schneider - USA Jim Rogers - USA Kip Christensen - USA Kirk DeHeer - USA Kurt Hertzog - USA Mark Baker - UK Mark Elmer - USA Michael Blankenship - USA

Neil Turner - Australia Rex Burningham - USA Sally Ault - USA Sam Angelo - USA Mike Jackofsky - USA Stan Record - USA

'Caught in the Storm'

by Lynn Shoger



"Black Square Namaste" with aqua, by Eric Lofstrom





A demonstration by Neil turner

'Scottish Highlander' - a nutcracker - by Paul Anderson



Michael Blankenship, a blind turner, demonstrating woodturning



Ebony (Diospyros spp.), chocolate ebony, sterling silver and leather necklace

#### SPECIAL EVENTS

Instant Gallery
Banquet Dinner
Live Auction
Silent Auction
Vendor Showcase
Youth Hands-on Turning
Penturner's Rendezvous
Super Wednesday
Swap Meet
The Great Egg Cup Race

#### **NEXT SYMPOSIUM**

When: 12-14 May, 2016

Where: UCCU Events Center, 800 West University Parkway, Orem, UT 84058, USA

Contact: Susan Hendrix

Email: shendrix3080@comcast.net Web: www.utahwoodturning.com



#### ■ AAW 29th Annual International Symposium

The AAW has the honour of being the largest such event in the world and moves around the USA, and this year, it was held in Pittsburgh. It is a very friendly event but with over 1,500 people attending, you can see that this event, as one person said, is "a symposium on steroids." The person who told me this said it was his first time at this symposium and was blown away by what was available for people to see, attend and be part of. He commented that never had he seen such a variety of work on display or seen so many turners together at one event. I have selected a few of the pieces that caught my eye here, but there were so many more! Jeffrey J. Schnell has some links to the photos he took of the items on display at the symposium and they are well worth a look.

#### JEFFREY J. SCHNELL'S PHOTO GALLERIES

2015 AAW Symposium Instant Gallery Web: https://youtu.be/wpIPbAY4X08

2015 AAW Symposium Gallery: Empty Bowls & Beads Of Courage Web: https://youtu.be/PkaqeWCZhDY









Sculpted vase from the 'Jimulacra' series, by Molly Winton



'Synchronised Swimming' by David Linden in magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora) and milk paint

#### MAIN DEMONSTRATORS

Alain Mailland - France Ashley Harwood - USA Avelino Samuel - Virgin Islands Barbara Dill - USA Cindy Drozda - USA Christian Burchard – USA Craig Kirks - USA David Ellsworth - USA Dick Gerard - USA Hubert Landri - France Jack Brown - USA Jacques Vesery - USA Janice Levi - USA Jason Clark - USA Jason Swanson - USA Jerry Bennett - USA Jerry Kermode - USA Joey Richardson - UK JoHannes Michelsen - USA Kip Christensen – USA Lyle Jamieson - USA Mark St. Leger - USA Michael Brolly - USA Molly Winton - USA Neil Turner - Australia Nick Cook - USA Pascal Oudet - France Richard Angus - USA Stephen Hatcher - USA Steven Kennard - Canada Stuart Batty - USA Ted Sokolowski - USA

#### **PANEL DISCUSSIONS & LECTURES**

Tim Yoder - USA

Artist Show Case – How We Got There: Malcolm Zander, Helga Winter & Kristin LeVier Chasing Professionalism: David Ellsworth & Jerry Kermode How to Critique, Evolve and Learn from the Experience: Jacques Vesery Signature, Branding and Marketing: Derek Weidman, Ashley Harwood & Cynthia Gibson

Significant Moments in Contemporary

Woodturning: Steve Loar

What is Art Anyway? Jacques Vesery

& Sharon Doughtie

Assumptions in Woodturning: Betty Scarpino, Dixie Biggs, Sharon Doughtie

& Steve Loar

Woodturning with Disabilities: Andi Sullivan, Jeff Bennett, Bill Hayes & Dave Hinkelman

Diversity in Wood Art: Going Beyond Boundaries: John Beaver, Jeff Bernstein, Andy DiPietro & David Ellsworth

Iterations of Work - POP lecture:

Sharon Doughtie

Iterations of Work – panel discussion: Sharon Doughtie & Betty Scarpino

#### ORNAMENTAL TURNING DEMOS

Brad Davis Charles Waggoner David Window Gary Miller John Calver Jon Spencer Roy Lindley

#### PANELISTS/LECTURERS

Andi Sullivan Barry Gross Betty Scarpino Binh Pho Bob Behneke Dixie Biggs Helga Winter Ken Nelson Kristin LeVier Larry Miller Malcolm Zander Sharon Doughtie Steve Cook Steve Loar



"... as one person said it is 'a symposium on steroids'."

#### **NEXT SYMPOSIUM**

When: 6–12 June, 2016 Where: Atlanta Convention Center at AmericasMart, 240 Peachtree Street NW, Suite 2200, Atlanta, GA 30303, USA Contact: AAW

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

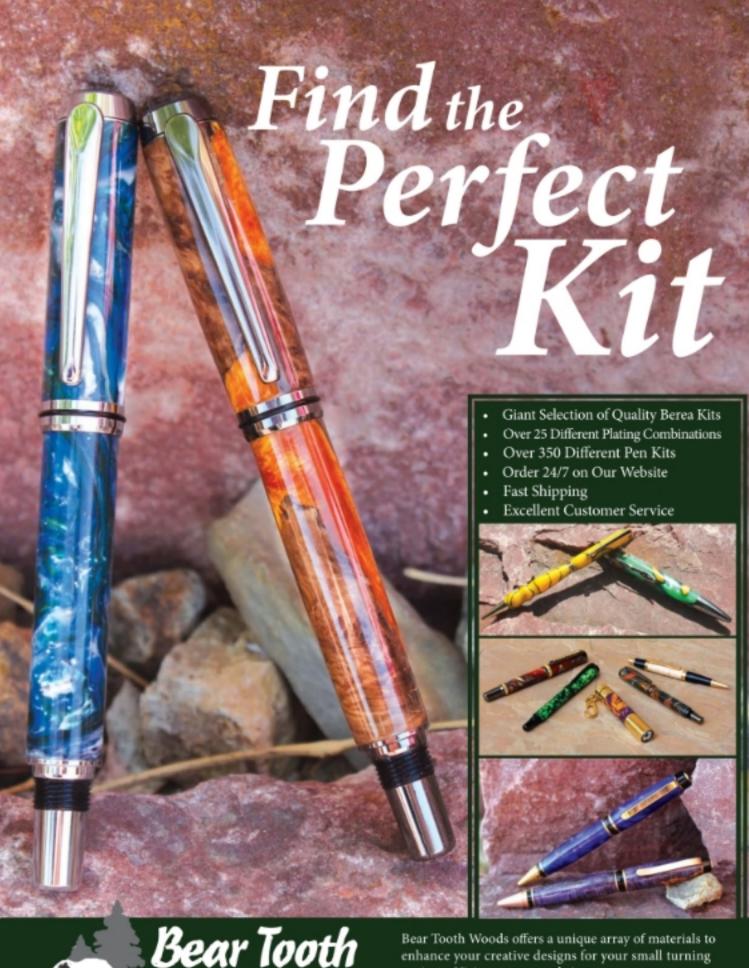
Bowls from the "ReTurn To The Community' initiative where proceeds from the sales go to help children in the community with disabilities

#### RETURN TO THE COMMUNITY

Empty Bowls: AAW members donate bowls, which are sold to raise money for a local non-profit. Large or small, each bowl costs only \$25 and 100% of the proceeds benefit a local charity. This year, the proceeds went to Variety, the Children's Charity of Pittsburgh. Variety provides children with disabilities with adaptive and assistive technologies to allow them to gain the freedom to be as active, involved, accepted, and independent as possible

Beads of Courage: AAW members donate handmade boxes to this nonprofit cause, which provides innovative, arts-in-medicine supportive care programmes to transform the treatment experience for children coping with serious illness. Through the Beads of Courage, children receive a unique bead to represent each procedure or treatment. For example, a red bead for each blood transfusion, a yellow bead for each night in the hospital, a star bead for surgery or a white bead for chemotherapy. Their collection of beads becomes a tangible record of their journey. Each woodturned box will be used to hold a sick child's precious beads





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## Get The Edge not on edge!

For very good reason many folk, especially beginners, get more then a little anxious when it comes to sharpening their turning tools. They have seen experts and heard them extolling their own ability to sharpen "freehand" and are frequenty left with the impression that this is the 'proper' way to sharpen. Here's a thought: the horses in the circus learn to do tricks but that doesn't mean you'd want to be related to an ass!

When it comes to sharpening, it needs to be easy - and quick - and accurate - and repeatable. That way, there's nothing to fear and nothing to discourage you from sharpening as often as neccessary to keep your tools turning-sharp - and that can mean as frequently as every few minutes. Without sharp tools, you can never be a sharp turner, so it is important to get this particular little trick under your belt as soon as possible.

So let's make it easy: sharpen using a jig - and use the best jig available for use with bench grinders: the Oneway Wolverine. This is a jig developed by woodturners for the benefit of woodturners and produced by one of the most respected engineering companies in the business. The basic system satisfies all basic woodturner's sharpening needs but accessories are also available to complement the system and to meet virtually any turning tool sharpening requirement - including really precise wheel dressing. Standard system with long arm and platform (above), including setup and operation DVD: £85.67. Varigrind jig accessory for Celtic profiles (right): £51.18.



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#### 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).

kurt@kurthertzog.com www.kurthertzog.com

t is often advantageous for your turnings to be completed as multiple pieces and then assembled. One obvious reason could be that your lathe won't accommodate the entire length, width or weight in one go. Material costs can drive the choice to multi-piece. An intact large piece is usually harder to come by than smaller pieces commanding a price premium. Cutting away quantities of material from the larger blank to achieve the thinner sections is costly and wasteful. Final turned dimensions can impact on shipping costs. Weight is the main driver of cost to ship but packages outside the shipping companies norm need special handling, thus bringing additional charges. Shipping a project in manageable sizes with final assembly to take place at destination has advantages.

Being able to assemble and disassemble as needed can be your motivation. All of these are important but I favour assembly for the freedom it offers. I can mix and match components at will to determine the best fit or look before committing to the final project. That and free access to all areas prior to assembly offer advantages to me. Within this article, I'll explore a few of the concerns, tips and tricks of multi-piece assembled turnings. With no way to be all-inclusive, I offer these as thought starters to make a few key points to consider if you adapt the assembly concept to your needs.

#### Initial considerations

There are a host of things to consider when planning and executing turnings that are multi-piece assemblies. These can impact not only if a multi-piece assembly can be done safely, but also the methodology you can use in the project. Two extremely important considerations that jump out immediately are permanent versus temporary and structural versus non-structural. If it is going to be put together once and never taken apart, your design considerations are far different than a repeated assembly and disassembly approach. The other key consideration is whether the entire project or the various assembly points will bear load or not. A porch column that is just a façade needing to bear only its own weight certainly is created and assembled

far differently than columns bearing part of the roof load. Similarly, a cosmetic finial has different needs than a lidded box pull. We can't get into the aspects of varying versus static loads, peak loading, impact, environment, etc. Suffice to say that all of these are important with respect to safety and longevity. Indoor service use compared to outdoor service use demands different materials, design techniques and assembly methods too. Be certain that you consider all of these if you use assembly in your projects.

#### Access and choice

By designing and turning your project in several pieces, you can provide access to areas that would be difficult to reach in the final result. By creating the 'blocking' part as a separate piece to be put in place later, you'll have access to the area as needed. Once the area has been accessed, the assembly can be completed. For lidded boxes, ornaments and the like, pedestals, finials, pulls or other components can be fabricated again and again until you are content with the look. Because you aren't committed until the final glue up, you can mix and match until you are pleased. Turned as one piece, you are committed to the initial result. Don't be concerned about those extra pulls, finials and feet. If you standardise on a dimension, they are in reality pre-made stock for your next similar project.



Having access to get anywhere I want as needed is one of my main reasons for assembly



When all is done and you're content with the finish and overall look, the commitment to gluing makes it final



Pretty wood, but I'm not wild about my pull. Not much choice at this point is there?

#### Internal components

There are occasions where you need to have access to the inside of a turning to insert something. It can be an artistic expression such as a captured glass bead or another piece of art being incorporated. That piece will be created and then installed into the finished turning with the enclosure being sealed up. Whether the assembly at that point needs to be reversible depends on the insert. When I make my desk pens, I need to be able to insert the inkfill. The replacement of the inkfill might be years down the road or never, hence there is no need for a threaded access. My method is to provide a glued assembly but one that is easily reversible. Fabricating the body and nib prior to tuning the fits allows for mix and match of components as mentioned previously. Once content with the components, the final tuning allows for proper fits prior to gluing. Because there are no springs or force on the nib trying to separate it from the body, only the lightest of glue joints is needed. With minimal glue engagement, the glue joint is easily broken when needed with only a quick twist of the pieces. Replacement of the internal component, here an inkfill, is accomplished and the reassembly takes place without regluing. The original glue retained in the joint allows for sufficient friction that no re-gluing is required.



The desk pen might last an entire lifetime on the same inkfill whether lightly used or on display



Planning for taking apart for inkfill replacement is wise thinking. My nibs are designed and glued for easy disassembly



Without springs, there is no need for excessive glue bonding the nib in place. Easily twisted free for inkfill replacement

#### Finish before or after



Finishing individual pieces as they are created has the advantage of not creating radii of finish in the seams

One of the stumbling blocks of assembled turnings is the finishing process. Friction polishes aside, finishing beforehand is far more convenient and usually better. It allows for easy handling, fixturing if needed, and application of the finish. The downside is that fits need to be considered so that the components still assemble as originally tested. Finishing after assembly certainly is doable but the issues often are corners and tight "V's that will lose their crispness with finish in the tight spaces. Depending on your project, you may choose to finish



Other advantages of finishing prior to assembly may be the environment where assembly will occur

individual parts as you create them or wait until the final assembly. For any of the friction-type finishes, they are by process best done right on the lathe. Other finishes might be done anywhere. If you are creating an item that will be disassembled, either once or repeatedly, my experience is that finishing individual pieces works far better. For the one time assembly forever, your choice may be driven by where the final assembly will take place and the ease of finishing based on location(s).

#### Disassemblable versus reversible



When the adhesive needs are only to keep things in position with strength from the joint, hot-melt can be a choice

There are two items to come to grips with. The assemblable and disassemblable functions of artworks to be shipped in smaller pieces, assembled and then disassembled for shipment or storage. The frequency of the process as well as the skill sets of those doing the work will impact your selection of methods. Threading, slip fits, pinning and compression grips all lend themselves to items requiring this multiple times. Additional information on creating threads in your turnings is available in issue 262. Reversible is quite a different story. I use reversible to mean perhaps taken apart for repair or the rare disassembly for relocation. Of course, the threading, slip fits, etc. will work here but there are also the



With compressive loads relying on the joint design, hot-melt is reversible with denatured alcohol

reversible adhesives available. For hundreds of years, hide glue has been used for precision woodworks that have need for disassembly for repair. Steam and heat will allow for disassembly of hide glue joints. Modern day hide glue formulations are available right from the dispensing bottle, thus eliminating the glue pot. Another simple adhesive that is easily reversed is hot-melt adhesives and most can be released with denatured alcohol. Because the hot-melt adhesives are available in various 'strengths', including industrial versions, always test the adhesive and the reversal before committing to the final use. There is additional information available on what you need to know about adhesives in issue 269.

#### Grain match

There is no need to forgo grain match when doing assembly. The planning of the material orientation can be accommodated by design and material processing. If you are working from a single piece, cutting and turning based on final visual grain match can be planned. Even with multiple smaller pieces of the same species, consideration can be given during the material selection to allow for best matching. The best recommendation I can offer is to sit with a sketch pad for a moment before cutting. Figuring out where the visual needs are the most obvious can assist with your processing. Sometimes it can't be accomplished 100% but a bit of pre-thinking will solve most of the needs.



Made from a single block, the cutting was planned to allow for grain match of each of the faceplate pieces

#### Joint strengths

For the cosmetic or no load interfaces, the task is pretty easy. Pieces need to fit together well and provide for the fastening mechanism you choose. Without safety or load considerations, you'll have a multitude of choices. The threaded and adhesive work well – both are straightforward to accomplish. For many of my low need interfaces, I've used a simple friction fit and have many ornaments with interchangeable lower finials. Each of them will remain quite nicely based on the friction alone. Since they only bear their own weight and it is minimal at that, this choice works well

for assembly, display choice and disassembly or change. Of course, always keep safety in mind when you consider any consequences of joint failure regardless of the mechanism. Lately, I've taken to using rare earth magnets for many of my shell ornaments, especially where shipping is involved. The ability to ship the ornament body and separated finial packed appropriately, then have the end user simply slide the finial into place, is extremely helpful. With more secure packing and less breakage in transit, the end user requires no tools or special skills to assemble the piece – just slide in the finial and it will take care of itself.



I've been using rare earth magnets glued inside my lower ornament body. A finishing nail head is embedded in the finial before turning

#### Workholding ease

Mention was made of the ability to do projects larger than your equipment can handle by using assembly as part of your project. This certainly has value but what about the difficult workholding issues even when the work will fit? Long spindles can be a challenge so perhaps multiple shorter pieces will work. Turnings with thick and



This ceremonial tea set, yet to be Japanese lacquered, was far more easily accomplished as three pieces rather than two

thin sections can present difficulties from workholding to tool reach based on toolrest location difficulties. One that may escape immediate thought is offcentre turnings. Assembly can often assist with needs that might present difficult holding and even potentially forcing you to turning outboard.



Base made from three pieces is commonsense based on ease of workholding and material cost savings. The finial is made from two pieces

#### Interface surfaces

Let me use an example to get you thinking about several of the important issues. Assuming that the material thickness and strength is sufficient, an interface joint for a longer length might take at least two forms. One might be a bottoming contact while another might be a shoulder contact. Both offer column strength of the material but present different issues in fabrication. The photos here show two different diameters but could easily be the same diameter. With the assumption that these might be bed posts or the like, they are to be assembled with adhesive once or with reversible hide or hot-melt adhesive. Either way, both should be plenty strong enough. Either

one can have the decorative sleeve created as a third piece to be added after the two are assembled. This makes multiples easily made identical as well as reducing turning away of stock and any critical measuring. Notice how they all provide plenty of face grain to face grain gluing surface.



Depending on your choice, you can shoulder on the bottom, shoulder or both to provide column strength



An added decorative ring can be turned separately and added as desired by sliding it over the diameter



Contacting at the bottom rather than any shoulder, whether present or not, will provide strength and can use the decorative sleeve idea

#### Thoughts on grain match

Good gluing practices are key to assemblies as they always are.

Keep in mind the grain orientation between the various pieces
and any differing expansions if using different materials or species.

Orientate the pieces that will be bonded so they will expand and
contract in unison rather than fighting. You will not be able to
restrain grain movement with adhesive as the wood will move
regardless, so be certain you don't put undue stresses on your
adhesive bond. Regardless of your selection of adhesive, orientate
the grain to minimise the variations in grain direction to improve
the life of assembled components, whether load bearing or not.

#### Additional thoughts on grain

On occasion, you may be assembling components that don't really care about grain. Burl comes to mind not really having a grain expansion rates. While the burl may not care too much about varying rates of expansion, any substrate you bond it to might. Burl to burl might be fine but burl to a grain orientation sensitive species will. Some adhesives do have a bit of give but don't always count on it. There are some things you can do to help yourself, however. Much like a table maker might use 'breadboard ends' on a table to prevent potential for problems, you can help some situations by judicial gluing. If you are bonding a low stress application, particularly cosmetic attachment of burls, glue only the least sensitive area of the joint. Use one of the more flexible adhesives and apply it along the length of the grain. That direction will have minimal dimension change in comparison to other directions. In most instances, you can get sufficient bond by restricting the adhesive to this area.

orientation and the dramatic differences in grain orientation



Keeping grain orientation for joint and adhesive bonding will help minimise stresses over the life of the turning



Any misorientation will put undue stress on the joint. Even different species should be orientated as best they can for grain



While the burl may not vary in expansion rates based on orientation, any grained substrate will move dramatically



In order to minimise stress on any adhesive attachment, you can apply adhesive in the area denoted by the tape

#### Glue traps

If you are not familiar with glues traps, you should learn their value. Most of us use far too much glue as we believe that more glue makes a better bond, but this is not necessarily so. Adequate adhesive is required of course but surface cleanliness and preparation are absolutely key to success. When we mix glue, we feel the need to use it all up rather than throwing excess away. Glue traps are features that

will capture glue as it tracks up the interface and this is especially helpful when using adhesive to insert a plug or other feature where the interface will show squeeze out. The depth and frequency of trap cuts can vary but applying adhesive in the proper area and in sparing amounts will go a long way in preventing the visual problems with glue squeeze out.



A glue trap groove cut into a pen end cap replacement. Adhesive is only to be applied to the lowest flat ring



Because the wooden end cap can't be a hard press fit, it needs to be adhesively bonded but is susceptible to squeeze out

#### Conclusions

There are many reasons for using assembly as part of your turning process. It has so many advantages I find it hard to believe that it won't benefit you in some way. Whether because of the work envelope of your equipment, cost of single piece blanks, oversize or awkward shipping, mixed materials, assembly/tear down needs, access to difficult places, workholding ease, production processing, or the many more not listed, assembly is a very powerful tool. Like any method you might not be currently using, it may take a bit of thought and experimentation. My mindset used to be using assembly when I needed to solve a problem caused by using a

single piece, but I've since adopted the exact opposite thinking. Now I think about why I need to do a single piece and only follow through with that if the single piece adds more value. Please don't misconstrue using assembly as a crutch that 'real woodturners' wouldn't use. I'd suggest that it is the wise use of another tool in your arsenal to get to the most accomplished end point in the best manner. Best being defined as most time or cost efficient, achieving results not easily achieved otherwise, or just plain succeeding at your project. Give assembly a fair shake and I'm certain you'll find a home for it in your turning world.









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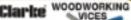
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# Techniques for turning a vase in two parts

Philip Greenwood demonstrates how to turn a two-part vase using ordinary tools

#### 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

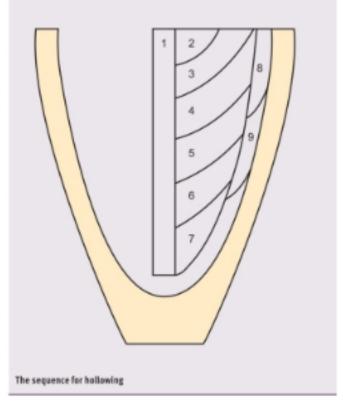
n this vase project I will show you how you can turn a vase with standard tools you use every day. No hollowing tools are needed, but if you have a hollowing tool this can be used. This is why I have turned this in two parts - yes, a small vase could be turned in one piece, but a medium size or large vase does require special tools due to the tool overhanging the toolrest. Turning the vase in two parts makes the process a lot easier as you are able to see what you are turning away. You should have no problems of shavings gathering inside the vase, which if you don't stop the lathe very frequently and remove the shavings, they will wrap around the tool and twist the tool in your hand, which is very dangerous. With this design, I am looking for the two halves to be joined at the widest point, which needs to be around two-thirds from the base of the vase. I will always place detail on the joint line - if you don't, you will see the joint line. This detail can be "V" cuts or beads. Yes, a fellow turner may guess that this is a joint line! I tend to leave more timber inside the vase at the base to give this stability; this is more important if the vase will be used, otherwise it will overbalance and fall over. It's all about knowing what the client will use the vase for. I have used a wax finish but an oil finish could be used instead. I have sanded and sealed the inside of the form as well - I know no one will see this but I know it is finished.



## PLANS & EQUIPMENT EQUIPMENT USED 25mm French-curve scraper 3mm parting tool 20mm skew chisel 10mm spindle gouge with a fingernal profile Range of abrasives Sanding sealant Glue Three-part buffing system PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask and extraction TIMBER REQUIREMENTS Yew (Taxus baccata) - 200 × 110mm (3.74.1 S 106mm (43m)

#### SEQUENCE OF HOLLOWING

The sequence of hollowing is shown on this drawing. On this project I started with a basic shape on the outside first, but leaving more material around the base. Move to the inside by removing the centre and working from the top down into the bottom area to remove most of the waste, then you need to refine from the top down into the bottom of the vase. This is to minimise vibration and achieve the best finish and wall thickness over the full vase. Use a pair of callipers to measure the wall thickness so it is even through to the topside of the base. Then take a very small refining cut on the outside. An alternative way is to finish the outside completely before starting the inside of the vase – this is fine for a one-part vase where you don't have a joint line



#### ALTERNATIVE METHODS, TOOLS AND DRILLS

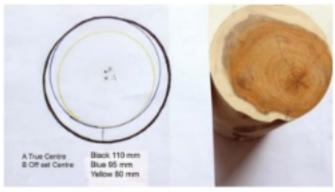
An alternative way of removing the waste from the inside of a vase is to use a drill bit in a Jacobs chuck, which is inserted in the tailstock. Start with a small drill bit and use increasingly larger bits to remove the waste. This just leaves you to finish the inside shape. Using a hollowing tool is the best way of hollowing a vase in a single piece. These come in a straight shank version along with a swan-neck version, which is handy when shaping the underside of the top. You can buy one that has an articulated head that you adjust to remove the waste on the underside of the top. These type of tools vary a lot in price so if you can see one in use, or even better, try one before you buy to make sure it's suitable for your type of work.



Using a swan-neck tool for hollowing

#### SPLITS

Splits in timber can be a problem at times; this piece of yew had a split down one side meaning that if it was mounted in the normal way on the true centre (A) you lose a lot of timber – in my case 30mm in diameter – or you mount this offcentre (B) like I have and you only lose the depth of the split – for this piece it is 15mm. My piece was originally 110mm. I managed to achieve 95mm in diameter, but if mounting on true centre, this would have been down to 85mm in diameter. This is a common method I use if I have a split in timber or if turning a thin stem and I don't want the pith in the centre of a stem, that is if the pith is in the centre



1 Mount the timber between centres on the lathe, Mine was offset due to the small crack in the log, which can be seen at the top in the photo. Due to this being offset, you will have a bit of vibration as well as an intermittent cut. The circle shows roughly the diameter this will finish at. Turn this to round using a spindle roughing gouge

Mark the spigots at both ends; make them wide to give a good grip in the jaws of the chuck and as close to the perfect diameter. This is completed with the parting tool

The top end of the vase is mounted in the chuck, still use the revolving centre for support. Mark this out with a pencil. The righthand line of the two at the top is the waste area where the bottom will be parted off later. The right-hand line of the three at the bottom is where the top will be parted from the bottom

Start to part down the spigot – this photo shows the point where I had parted to around 6mm deep. The groove to the right is the parting cut where the bottom of the vase will be cut off later

Start to rough shape at this stage using the spindle gouge. I always try to leave a lot of waste at the bottom of the vase; this will help to reduce vibration when you hollow the inside later on

Part down to around 25mm with tailstock support; take a cut one and a half times the width of the parting tool to prevent this binding while parting in such a deep cut. Take the tailstock away and finish this off with a saw

Mark a pencil line around the top to give you a guide when hollowing out

Use a spindle gouge to drill a hole down the centre; this does not have to be too deep as you can repeat the process as you hollow out. My flutes are facing 11 on a clock face. Your spindle gouge must be on centre height for this method to work. Don't forget to withdraw the tool after going in every 10mm to remove the waste. Remember that the tool tip will be hot

#### HANDY HINTS

- Plan the sequence first to check you won't run into problems as the project progresses
- Try to keep the toolrest as close to the work as possible. This is more important when working inside a vase. A long reach toolrest is good for this
- The inside finish is just as important as the outside if you can see the inside through the opening, or can feel the inside surface

































Start the hollowing processes with the spindle gouge; start in the centre with the flutes around 10 o'clock and scoop out towards the pencil line. Take smaller cuts as you go deeper to reduce the force on the end of the tool tip. Move the toolrest in as much as you can; this will help with controlling the tool

Use a scraper to smooth out the inside of the top. Reduce the wall thickness as well so the vase is not top heavy – you want the weight in the base not the top. Sand the inside down to 400 grit and seal with sanding sealant

1 Place a piece of scrap timber in the chuck and turn a recess that will hold the top of the vase. This needs to be a tight fit to enable you to turn the top safely

2 Now turn the neck part of the top with the spindle gouge. Shape the neck first into the hole in the middle; you are looking to achieve a flair opening in the neck. Now start turning the outside, keep checking the wall thickness as you go. This will be finished when you have jointed the top and bottom together

13 Use a scraper to finish the inside of the top, holding the scraper in a trailing mode so the tool tip is lower than the handle to prevent it snatching. You want a flowing curve from the hole to the outer edge

1 4 Mount the bottom part of the vase in the chuck. Start the hollowing process in the centre – don't come too near the edge at this stage as you need to mark the recess for the spigot on the top part to fit in. Take smaller cuts the deeper you go because of the tool overhang

15 The next step is to mark the spigot diameter on the face and then use a parting tool to cut this recess, but only to 2–3mm deep at this stage. Try the top in this recess and remove small amounts until this fits. If you make the recess too large in diameter, you can recover from this by not making the recess as large in diameter as you take it down the full depth of the recess

16 Now you've cut the recess you know how far you can come out towards the edge of the vase. You can see I have moved the toolrest into the opening to give me more tool support. Keep stopping the lathe to move the toolrest further into the vase the deeper you go

#### **HANDY HINTS**

 Wear a dust mask when using any timber.
 Yew (Taxus baccata) can cause your heart rate and blood pressure to drop.
 If in doubt about a timber's properties, check first, or wear a dust mask at all times when in the workshop 1 7 Use a French-curve scraper to clean the inside of the vase. As you go deeper into the vase, remember to raise the toolrest height so the scraper will still be on centre height when held in a trailing mode. Try to achieve a clean cut to reduce sanding. Sand and seal as with the top part

Now is the time to glue the two halves back together. Place glue in the recess, line up the grain as close as you can – the more material that was removed when parting the two, the more mismatch you may have depending on the grain pattern. Clamp using the tailstock until the glue has dried and remove any excess glue

19 Now take a cut across the surface to blend the two halves together. Thin down the bottom section of the vase so you have a flowing curve along the length of the vase, then take a finishing cut over the full vase to reduce the amount of sanding

Add detail to the neck and also to the joint line. On my vase, I used the long point of the skew chisel to place three 'V' cuts; the centre one is on the joint line with one either side of this. This helps disguise the joints and any mismatching of the grain

2 1 Sand and seal the whole vase including the neck opening. With the tailstock in place, part down to around 12mm, trying to achieve a clean surface on the vase base. Use a saw to finish cutting through the last 12mm, then sand and seal the bottom

2 I finished the vase with a three-part buffing system. This gave me the finish I was looking for

#### HANDY HINTS

- An oil finish would be just as good as a wax finish
- Always try to shine a light into the vase when working to see where the tool tip is, and also to see the finished surface. This only works if you have a large opening you can see in
- It is a good idea to leave more timber in the base for stability
- If in doubt about the shape of your item, then draw this out first on paper first.
   You can draw a template and use this to check the shape of your turning
- A lot of turning shops let you try a tool before you buy it, which is useful if you are spending a lot of money on a hollowing tool
- 10. Always keep your tools sharp!















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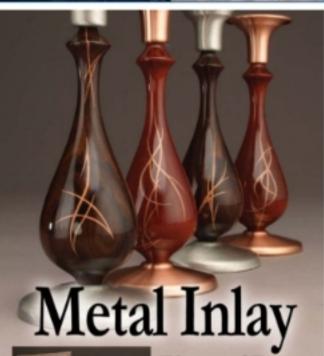
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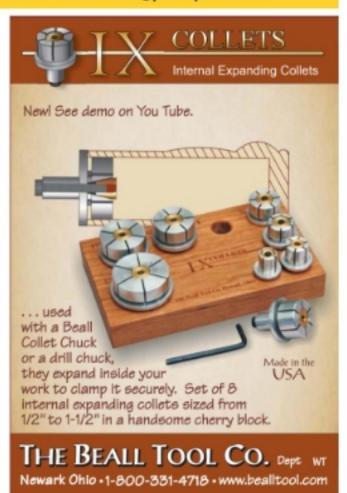


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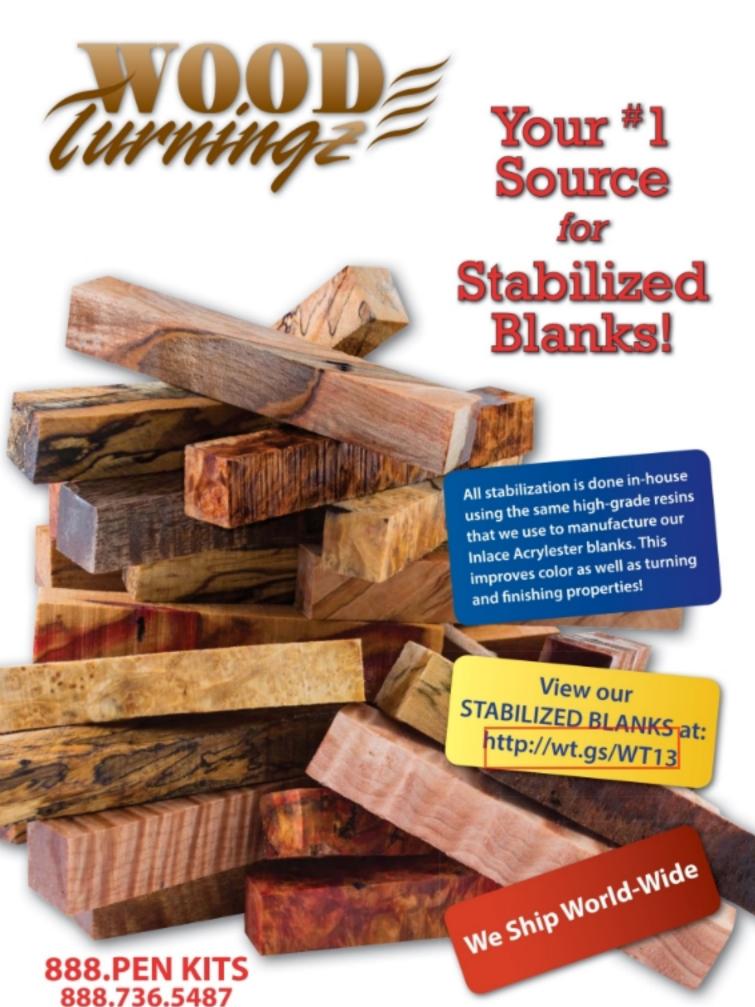


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#### Dutch woodturner Ronald Kanne shows us around his workshop

reviously – and still sometimes – a sound engineer in radio and TV, Ronald Kanne discovered woodturning around 10 years ago. He grew up six metres below sea level, telling us: "Like a real Dutchman should!" His hometown was a small place, called Marknesse, in the North East Polder, in the Netherlands, but Ronald is now based in Nieuw-Wehl in the countryside in the east of Holland. Here, he tells us about his inspirations, his start in turning, plans for the future and more....



A selection of bird feeders

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

I don't remember exactly. It must have been about 10 years ago when I wanted to make a specific little thing for restoring the old farm where I live. I had previously seen an old man at a market turning and it looked so easy! I thought "I can do that" and bought a lathe – you can find hundreds of cheap lathes on eBay. My turnings were bad, but it was the machine and gouges that were no good. After buying a book and slowly learning how to present a freshly sharpened tool to the timber, I became addicted. I often drove home from work late and would think: "Step on the gas and I'll be home by 10, then I can eat and make shavings for at least an hour!"

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

Nature. My biggest aim is not to make beautiful artistic pieces, but for the wood to be beautiful.

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

If you want to have fun while turning, make sure you use decent tools and a heavy lathe.

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

The book I am reading is De eeuw van mijn vader - translation: The Century Of My Dad  by Geert Mak. The book is about the history of Europe from the late 19th century until a few years ago, told through the lives of the family of the writer.

#### What is your silliest mistake?

To start reading De eeuw van mijn vader by Geert Mak...

#### What has been your greatest challenge?

The first time I sold 30 identical bowls, which I had to produce in time for a deadline, but knowing my skills were not yet good enough to do so. I succeeded, it was done in time and I learned a lot from it.

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

Make small delicate things, like the pieces by Hans Weissflog. I particularly admire a piece called 'Small Treasures II', which is a pierced star bowl with a stand made in African blackwood (Dalbergia melanoxylon).

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

There are always several things I'm working on at the same time. My kiln is working now and is filled with lots of bowls, walnut (Juglans regia) peppermill blanks and platter blanks as well as a few huge beautiful ash (Fraxinus excelsior) pieces. Just out of my workshop is a thin lampshade and I've just finished





ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT: Two examples of Ronald's spalted beech (Fagus sylvatica) bowls

delicate work for the restoration of a 'Friesche staart klok'. I'm also working on a bunch of bird feeders as well as four bowls made from a chestnut (Castanea sativa) tree. The tree fell down last autumn. One of my customer's four children is moving out of the house this year and she wants to give all four of them a bowl made out of the tree – the children played, cried, ate and lived in and under it. This is the best job there is!

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

When producing bowls, I use my own designed tool: a piece of wood with two nails in it, which scribe two lines in the bottom of the bowl. On wet wood, the outer line is the minimum tenon size; in dry wood the inner scratch is.

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

Time – more of it and more room as well as a bigger workshop! But that is three already...

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

I particularly enjoy rough turning wet wood into roughly shaped bowls.

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

What could be better than complete peace on earth?

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

That's more or less asking 'what if you were alone on a desolate island...', so I think the question is irrelevant...



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#### LIKES

- College woodturners are nice people.
   They never stand behind their own ego
- The sometimes unexpected grain in the fresh wood, while making a bowl
- I like to teach and demonstrate now.
   I love to explain what I do as well as I can and when I see a student having a 'lightbulb' moment
- Being physically tired after a day of chainsaws and turning wood blanks
- That I can only find four dislikes in woodturning!

#### DISLIKES

- The dust
- No matter how much I try to clean myself of shavings, I always find shavings in my whole house...
- Production turning is working on your own

   that's nice for about three days...
- If you're turning on a certain level, all the gear you need is expensive, expensive, expensive!

#### **HANDY HINTS**

 Undertake a course with a well-known woodturner to improve your skills. I took several, including one with Glenn Lucas. It was fun and worth the money.
 Woodturning gets to be more fun if you are better at it!



Concentrate and look serious!

Email: ronaldkanne@gmail.com Web: www.ronaldkanne.nl

#### VIDEO LINKS

To watch Ronald at work, visit www. youtube.com/watch?v=ZVf6CZ8IVSU, or www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLZ-beMejuc









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# Things we forget — but shouldn't

In this extract from *Turning Toys*, **Richard Raffan** discusses some of the most important considerations you should make before turning on the lathe and during your turning

#### RICHARD RAFFAN



Richard Raffan is a highly respected and well known woodturner and is best known for his turned bowts and boxes. He is a teacher, demonstrator and author of a number of classic woodturning books and DVDs

www.richardraffan.com

ost readers of Turning Toys will probably have some turning experience. I know that many will have learned to turn using my earlier books and videos. The more we turn, the better we get – for the most part. But the more we turn, the easier it is to fall into some bad habits. Recently, I watched a couple of dozen well-known turners in action, some who rely on the craft for a living. Astonishingly – to me at least – many were turning contrary to, or unaware of, many of the craft's best practices and rarely to any advantage I could discern. We can all become lackadaisical and occasionally forget some absolute basics, so here are a few reminders.

#### ■ Safety

#### Wear a face shield or visor

It protects your face and eyes from wood chips and sparks from grinders.

#### Never leave machines running unattended

This is especially important with regard to saws and when you have wood mounted on the lathe. A dust extractor is an exception.

Always have your hand on a key or lever in a chuck. Never leave a key in a chuck unattended. If you start a lathe or drill press with a key in the chuck, it can fly in any direction.

#### Wear earmuffs or earplugs to preserve your hearing

I can guarantee that you don't want tinnitus if you can avoid it, so always use ear protection when using power saws and planers. While lathes are quiet, some turning isn't. If the sound becomes too penetrating as you turn, it's sensible to use earplugs.

#### Install and use good dust collection

This is especially important when you are sanding. Fine dust will find its way deep into your lungs, where it can eventually cause grave health problems. You need to wear a mask or, better still, an impact-resistant helmet with built-in dust protection. When sanding, have dust-extractor intakes in front of and behind the headstock, like the setup on my VL150 lathe – see main photo on page 83.

Always check the speed before starting the lathe. If your lathe has variable speed control, develop the habit of turning it back to zero then up very slightly, so you always start at a slow, safe speed. Most variable-speed lathes also have the drive belt mounted on pulleys, creating two or three speed ranges; position the belt to limit the maximum speed. The lower the speed range, the more control you have over the precise speed.

#### Never try to turn wood that is vibrating as it spins

As a safety measure, my lathes are set to run at a maximum speed of 2,000rpm. I have no need for higher speeds, even for very thin spindles.

#### Never stand in line with the work when you start a lathe

This is particularly important when the project is held using only a faceplate or chuck with no tailstock support. If the speed is too fast, you won't have time to evade the wood as it flies off the lathe. Sometimes, wood just flies apart.

#### Remember that sharp rims cut deep

It's very easy to create razor-sharp edges as you turn, particularly on facework rims. If your hand slips onto one, it will slice you to the bone in an instant. Get into the habit of softening edges with a scrap of 100 or 120 grit abrasive, or use a gouge on its side.

#### **Turning basics**



Ideal cutting angle: hold a skew chisel or gouge so that the part of the edge that is cutting is about 45° to the oncoming wood

#### Let the wood come to the tool

Let the lathe do the work. All you have to do is hold a tool so that wood is sheared off as it passes over the tool's edge.

#### Keep the portion of the edge that is cutting at about 45° to the wood

This applies mainly to skew chisels and gouges, tools designed to slice wood cleanly when the bevel rubs the wood – see ideal cutting angle photo above. You don't need to push the tool hard against the wood, but you do need to hold it firmly on the rest.

#### Move with the tool

Keep your feet shoulder-width apart and keep the tool handle in at your side. Use your whole body, not just your arms, to move the tool – see good working stance photo below right. Sway with the tool handle from your knees. If you keep your hand on the handle near the ferrule rather than the end of the handle, your hand will move less and you'll be less cramped physically.

#### There is no 'correct height' for the toolrest

The precise height of the rest depends on which tool you are using for what job and on your height in relation to centre. Ideally, the lathe's centre height should be about the height of your elbow. On a large-diameter spindle, the rest might need to be high so you can stand comfortably with a skew chisel or gouge handle dropped slightly below horizontal. When you part off the same spindle, the rest needs to be lower so you don't have to stand on tiptoe to reach over the rest. If you are hollowing end grain with a scraper, the rest needs to be at or even a little above the centre.

#### Keep tools sharp

This sounds so basic and so obvious, but one of the most difficult things to learn is when a sharp tool could be sharper. If it even vaguely crosses your mind that a tool might need sharpening, go straight to the grinder and do it. As with turning, don't push the tool into the grinding wheel. Let the wheel come to the tool. Just hold the tool firmly on the rest, with the bevel resting lightly on the wheel.

Professional turners sharpen freehand for speed and it's a nice skill to have, but jigs make sharpening much easier and help you maintain the shape of the cutting edge. Jigs are not a panacea, however. You can still mess up an edge. You need to keep the tool moving on the grinding wheel to avoid creating flat sections and dips.

#### Cut more slowly as the tool moves towards the centre

Wood moves more slowly near centre, so you need to slow the rate at which you move the tool into the cut. If you push the tool into the wood at the same speed all the way to centre, you'll tear the grain, especially on the end grain of spindle work.

#### Listen to the lathe

Stop the lathe and ascertain the cause or origin of any sound you don't recognise. Hollow sounds indicate splits or loose bark, for instance. A shriek as you turn on the lathe usually means the spindle is locked and the belt is slipping. It wears the belt but is no big deal and not dangerous.

#### Never use scrapers for spindle turning

That will leave you with a lot of sanding. Scrapers on spindles never do a good job unless the wood is really hard; even then, cutting tools are far superior.



Good working stance: hold the tool near the ferrule to avoid cramping your arm and keep the handle in close to your body. Use your whole body – not just your arms – to move the tool

Abrasives do not become finer with use 120 grit abrasive does not become 180 grit with use, then 220 grit, etc. When abrasive stops cutting, throw it away and get a fresh piece. Fold abrasives in three, so the cutting surface sits against backing. Fold clothbacked abrasive with the warp – usually along the lettering.

#### Tool catches – and how to avoid them

#### Unsupported edges catch

The portion of the edge that's cutting needs to be in line with the fukrum, where the tool contacts the rest.

#### Remember the 1-2-3 rule

The simplest catch occurs if you let the tool edge contact the spinning wood before you put the tool on the rest. The wood instantly snaps the tool down onto the rest with a loud bang. To avoid that, follow these three steps: one, tool on rest; two, bevel on wood; three, lift the handle to are the edge into the cut.

#### On end grain, always start a gouge on its side

Gouge catches happen when the wood exerts pressure on an unsupported edge, so never start spindle or bowl gouges with the flute up. Tilt a scraper down to avoid a catch. Scrapers catch when the angle between the top of the edge and the surface being cut is more than 90°. Make sure you tilt a scraper down when cutting flat surfaces. Scrapers can tilt up on internal curves, but not on end grain.

#### Skews catch when you let the edge roll back to contact what you just cut

To avoid skew chisel catches when turning beads – like the example shown above – or on end grain, only the bevel side should be against the wood – not the bevel face. Remember, too, that skew chisel catches only mess up the wood: gouge catches on facework like bowls are much more dangerous.

#### TURNING TOYS WITH RICHARD RAFFAN

This extract is taken from Richard Raffan's book *Turning Toys*. To purchase a copy for yourself, see details below

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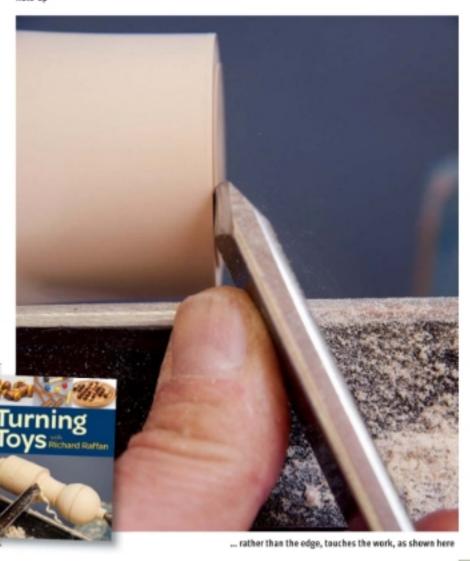
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Starting a cut with a gouge: with a spindle or detail gouge, roll the tool on its side so the cutting edge is supported. Spindle roughing gouges can be started flute-up



Skew catch: to avoid a catch like the one shown here, be sure only the side of the bevel...







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# Lace-making bobbins

Terry McDonald makes these useful lace-making bobbins, which can be adapted to multiple designs

#### TERRY MCDONALD



Terry served in the Fleet Air Arm as an aircraft radio and radar technician and worked in avionics as a design and development engineer for 20 years after leaving the Navy. He also then worked in IT and

electrical/mechanical engineering before retiring and taking up woodturning.

twg.mcdonald@btinternet.com

aving made beer mugs, which are great big things, I thought I would improve my skill sets by turning something a great deal more delicate, hence my mind turned to the task of making something small and delicate but also useful. It seems to me that there is little point in making things for the sake of it.

My sister-in-law was a lace maker so I decided to make her some bobbins and having written the article on making a beer mug – see issue 277 – it occurred to me that others might like to have some information on making bobbins as well. After all, you can use offcuts of pretty much any timber for this project and therefore, bobbins are fairly cheap to make and probably good sellers at craft fairs and other similar places. So let's start with some background on the history of lace making. The origin of lace is disputed by historians, an Italian claim is of 1493 by a

Milanese family, yet a Flemish claim is lace on the alb of a worshipping priest in a painting about 1485, but since lace evolved from other techniques, it is impossible to say that it originated in any one place.

The late 1500s marked the rapid development of lace. Both needle lace and bobbin lace became dominant in both fashion and home décor, but especially for enhancing the beauty of collars and cuffs. Lace was used by clergy of the early Catholic Church as part of vestments in religious ceremonies, but did not come into widespread use until the 16th century in the north-western part of the European continent.

The popularity of lace increased rapidly and lace making spread throughout Europe and the world. The English diarist Samuel Pepys often wrote about the lace used for his, his wife's and his acquaintances' clothing.  $\triangleleft$ 

Inevitably, machines were developed to make lace and by 1870, virtually every type of handmade lace had machine-made copy. It became increasingly difficult for lace makers to make a living from their work. In England, most of the handmade lace industry had disappeared by 1900. Until the late 1960s, few were interested in tracing old lace designs and few courses were available to keep the technique alive.

Fortunately for us, there are now many who have taken up the craft and are making lace by hand again. To date, inspiring journals, guilds and foundations show that old techniques with a new twist can challenge young people to create works that can definitely be classified as art. Indeed my wife's sister made lace by hand until, regrettably, her eyesight prevented her from continuing the craft.

#### Materials

Clearly 'needle lace' makers do not need our skills to carry on their craft. Fortunately, 'bobbin lace' makers do, so making lace bobbins is something that you might wish to do as each bobbin needs to be different and therefore you have a great deal of scope for your design ambitions.

Lace making has been a cottage industry almost since time immemorial, although as with all things, it became industrialised as described above. However, handmade lace is still very much sought after and there are many practitioners all over the country and indeed the world. This means, of course, that

you have a ready-made audience for your bobbins and if you can make them all very different, then you will have a ready market to which you can sell your products.

Basically, a bobbin will normally be a particular length and also within bounds a certain diameter, however, as stated earlier the design of each must be very different as the lace maker needs to be able to identify a specific yarn at a glance. This gives you, the turner, a product that is fairly delicate and which requires a wide variation in design so copy turning is definitely out of the window.

The need to have different designs can either stretch your imagination, which you will enjoy or lace bobbins are not for you – so where to begin?

We need to know what timbers can be used and indeed what timbers cannot. From research carried out for this project, it would seem that any timbers can be used. Different coloured woods will help the lace maker identify their bobbins from each other. The following can be used; laburnum (Laburnum anagyroides), boxwood (Buxus sempervirens), holly (Ilex spp.), pau rosa (Dalbergia frutescens), lacewood (Platanus hybrida), yew (Taxus baccata), zebrano (Microberlinia brazzavillensis), lilac (Melia azedarach), maple (Acer saccharum), tulipwood (Liriodendron tulipifera), rosewood (Dalbergia latifolia) and ebony (Diospyros spp.). And so the list goes on... Bobbins have been made from many different materials, so the world is your oyster and if it can be turned, it can be turned into a bobbin.

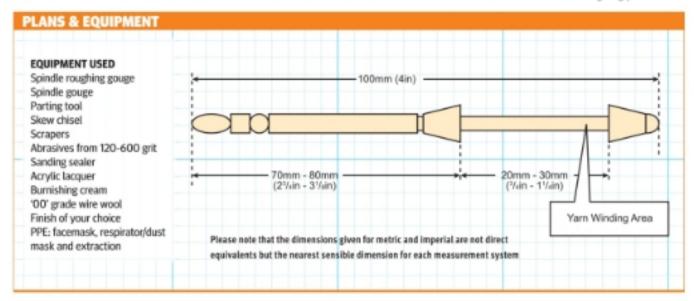
#### Design criteria

Again, it would seem that within fairly large boundaries, anything goes. The main point to remember is that the lace maker needs to be able to quickly identify each individual yarn from many; this gives you a very clear mandate, making each extremely different and individual. Of course from a commercial point of view, you will probably want to make a number of similar bobbins but the very fact that they need to be different means you don't need to try and make them the same.

There are a good deal of commercial makers out there, so there is a market for bobbins but this means that manufacturers will make many of a particular pattern, which will inevitably help those of you who have chosen to make individual bobbins.

The main thing to remember is that they need to be light – and therefore slim for much of their length – and different. Decorating bobbins with beads and/or small charms to make them different is used commercially, although I would suggest charms, which might catch the yarn, might not be popular with some lace makers.

Dimensions given in the drawing below are all approximates. You can decide what size to make yours but I would suggest you keep to within 20mm either side of the overall dimension, given as this seems to be about the norm. The remainder of the dimensions are given as a guide and you will note there is no diameter dimension given, this is deliberate but remember, lightweight is the guideline so bear this in mind when designing yours.



#### Health and safety

All the normal safety items should always be adhered to. Ensure there is adequate dust extraction and remember that some woods can be quite toxic and you never want wood dust in your lungs, however benign. Ensure that you have no loose clothing and never wear a tie when working on any machinery. When using finishes, be sure there is sufficient ventilation and always wear a mask and, where necessary,

gloves. Be sure to have an up-to-date fire extinguisher available and in easy reach in your workshop area. Always check manufacturer's safety data on any product that you intend using prior to use - these are usually freely available on the manufacturer's website if not supplied with the product. And finally, check that power cables are not chafed or in danger of becoming entangled in machinery.



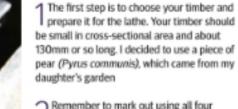












Remember to mark out using all four corners; this will ensure that if the timber is not entirely square, you will be able to find the exact centre, as the four lines will leave a small square in the middle of the end of the timber. If there is no small square, then your timber is exactly square

3 Mark the centre on the two ends using a combination square or ruler and create a hole to receive the drive and revolving centres. An old rock peg is suitably shaped to create the holes

4 Place the wood between the drive centre and the revolving centre

Using a spindle roughing gouge, bring the timber to round

You can then place two pencil marks 130mm 6 apart and with the timber rotating, introduce the pencil to the marks; this will give you a line around both ends of the round section - this will be the correct length for the bobbin

Next, using a narrow parting tool, reduce the diameter of the spindle on the outside of the two lines, leaving sufficient timber to withstand the forces while turning the bobbin shape

8 The next step is to mark up the yarn winding area with your pencil and reduce the diameter in that area to around 4-5mm

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- 1. If you have them, it's a really good idea to use offcuts from other projects
- 2. It is a great help if you have a good variety of timber available, as this will allow you to make each bobbin different
- 3. Don't make the mistake of leaving your timber much longer than the overall length required. If you do, you risk snapping your bobbin in the making
- 4. Remember that a bobbin is quite small. in diameter, so your cuts need to be that much more delicate
- 5. If you don't have a chuck to hold a hookand-loop sanding holder on your lathe, then you can use your pillar drill instead; this will allow you to sand the ends of your bobbin after cutting off the two ends
- 6. Alternative finishes can be used for your bobbin, such as CA adhesive, but remember that your bobbin needs to be super smooth to avoid snagging the yarn





You can now shape up the rest of your bobbin using a spindle gouge, parting tool and skew chisel. Of course, feel free to use any other tool that you might have which you feel achieves the desired shape – perhaps a scraper or beading tool

1 O You are now ready to sand using grades between 120-600 as required

11 At this stage, you can apply sanding sealer and when that's dry, acrylic lacquer. Next, burnish on the lathe when the lacquer is dry. You may wish to do this after parting off the two ends, assuming you have no need to burnish on the lathe

12 Drill a 2mm hole through the end opposite the 'yarn winding end', so that the user can add beads if required. Remember, you should choose to drill prior to removing the ends whenever you decide to put on the finish. This hole can also be utilised by you to hang up the bobbin to dry after applying sealer and finish, if you choose to do this after parting off the ends

13 Part off the two ends using whatever method you find easiest – I chose to reduce the diameter with the thin parting chisel, while supporting the bobbin as far as I felt was safe

14 Then to remove the bobbin from the lathe, remove the two ends using a junior hacksaw with the ends clamped in a bench vice. Sand the ends of the bobbin and apply sanding sealer and acrylic lacquer to the bare end areas. Just remember that the lace maker will want her bobbins to be smooth so they don't catch up on the yarn or material

15 Your final bobbin should look something like this ◆

#### **HANDY HINTS**

- It is probably worthwhile to plan your designs in advance. After all, it's much easier to rub out a design on paper when you realise it is too much like other designs you have made before
- It may seem obvious, but always make sure the grain of the timber runs down the length of the piece you have chosen.
   It is easy to pick up a piece of scrap from another project which looks OK, but isn't
- Pen blanks make good bobbins and you can use the plastic varieties to produce some interesting effects
- 10. The good thing about this project is that bobbins are functional and also make lovely ornaments. If you don't have someone to give the bobbin to once you've completed it, why not display it in your house for people to admire?

















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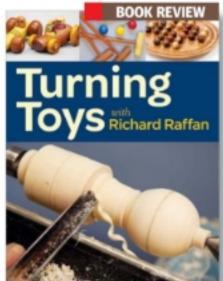
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#### TURNING TOYS WITH RICHARD RAFFAN by Richard Raffan



urning Toys with Richard Raffan is a fun glossy book with 18 great projects, which would all make brilliant gifts for young children. Each project is a traditional toy design and demonstrates an essential skill-building technique, with step-bystep high quality photos and drawings to help you along the way. With his clear instruction, Richard aims to 'help you work smarter and faster to produce better work, no matter what you're turning'. The text throughout is in large print, which is exceptionally useful while reading it in the workshop!

Not only does Richard provide these 18 fun projects, but he also tells you precisely how to choose the correct tools and wood for your work; solve and avoid common turning problems; select easy and safe finishes for your toys and more. There are safety boxes scattered throughout the guide, which one should be sure to take note of.

Before Richard gets into the projects, and after a short introduction, he looks at the basics of turning cylinders, dowels and wheels, and most importantly, workshop safety. Following on from these chapters are the projects, which include: a wheely bug; racing car; peggies; wands; stackers; spheres; fruit and vegetables to 'cut'; a croquet set; teether and rattle; nesting tubs; a goblet; bilboquet; spinning tops; balance tray and table skittles. There is certainly a toy for every child in Richard's book!

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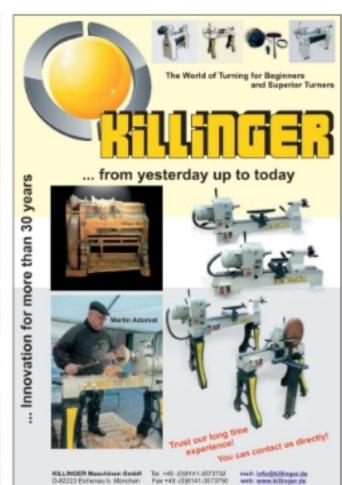
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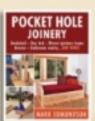
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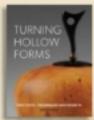
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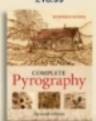
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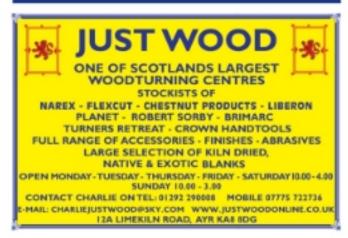
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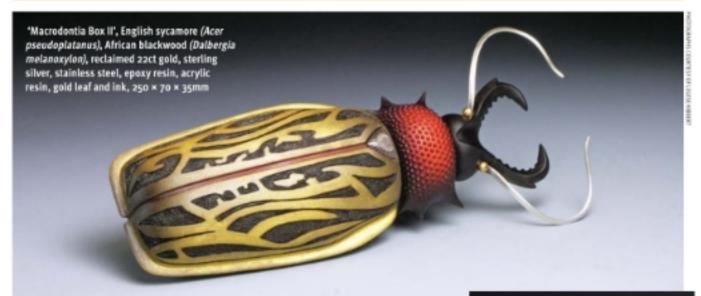
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# Louise Hibbert – 'Macrodontia Box II'

Louise Hibbert shares this stunning piece with us, which demonstrates creativity in construction and a collaboration of materials



his piece, entitled 'Macrodontia Box II'
is part of a series of pieces that I have
been making inspired by the Coleoptera
order. The order of beetles is thought to
contain almost 25% of all species and so the
variety of shapes, colours and textures that
it contains is absolutely extraordinary.

I have always used other materials in my pieces but these beetle boxes have really pushed my imagination to find ways to recreate some of the fine details and surface finishes that the real beetles exhibit.

The process begins with visual research. I gather loads of images from books and the internet, picking out beetles that are particularly amazing – whether it be an eye-catching overall shape, an incredible colour or texture, or beautiful detail. I then start making sketches, often for a number of pieces. These are then refined and individual scale drawings are made for each piece, often containing notes with ideas about colours or how certain parts will be created.

This piece was made in a number of parts

nine in total. First, the collar was made to
finish around the edge of the stainless steel
capsule that would line the inside of the
box. This was made by piercing out a ring

of copper that was then turned to fit around the capsule. An image of a diatom was then printed onto paper and cut out to fit the ring and glued onto the surface. An epoxy coating was then added to seal and protect the image and add extra depth and sheen. I then made the small triangle that fits at the top of the wing case in the same way.

The main body was made from a piece of English sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus). First, a hole was turned to fit the larger half of the stainless steel capsule and the copper ring, then the main form was created with some offcentre turning and completed with a reciprocating carver, needle files and abrasives. The design was then drawn onto the front surface and scorched into the wood with a pyrography machine and the remaining surface was gold leafed. It was then airbrushed with acrylic inks to tone down the bright gold leaf around the edges, the red line was painted down the centre and finally the capsule and copper parts were glued to it.

The main section of the lid was also made from English sycamore, turned each end to fit the lid of the stainless steel capsule and the dowel of the head section. The rest



Detail showing the piece disassembled

was carefully carved into shape. It was then airbrushed with inks and a fine texture was created with the application of tiny coloured acrylic resin dots.

The antennae were made out of sterling silver wire, hammered into a square profile, tapered down and then curved. I then made a couple of gold balls by melting some reclaimed 22 carat gold and soldered these to the bases of each antennae. The basic shape of the head section was turned out of African blackwood (Dalbergia melanoxylon) and carved to finish. This was drilled to fit the antennae and all the pieces were assembled together to complete the box.

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