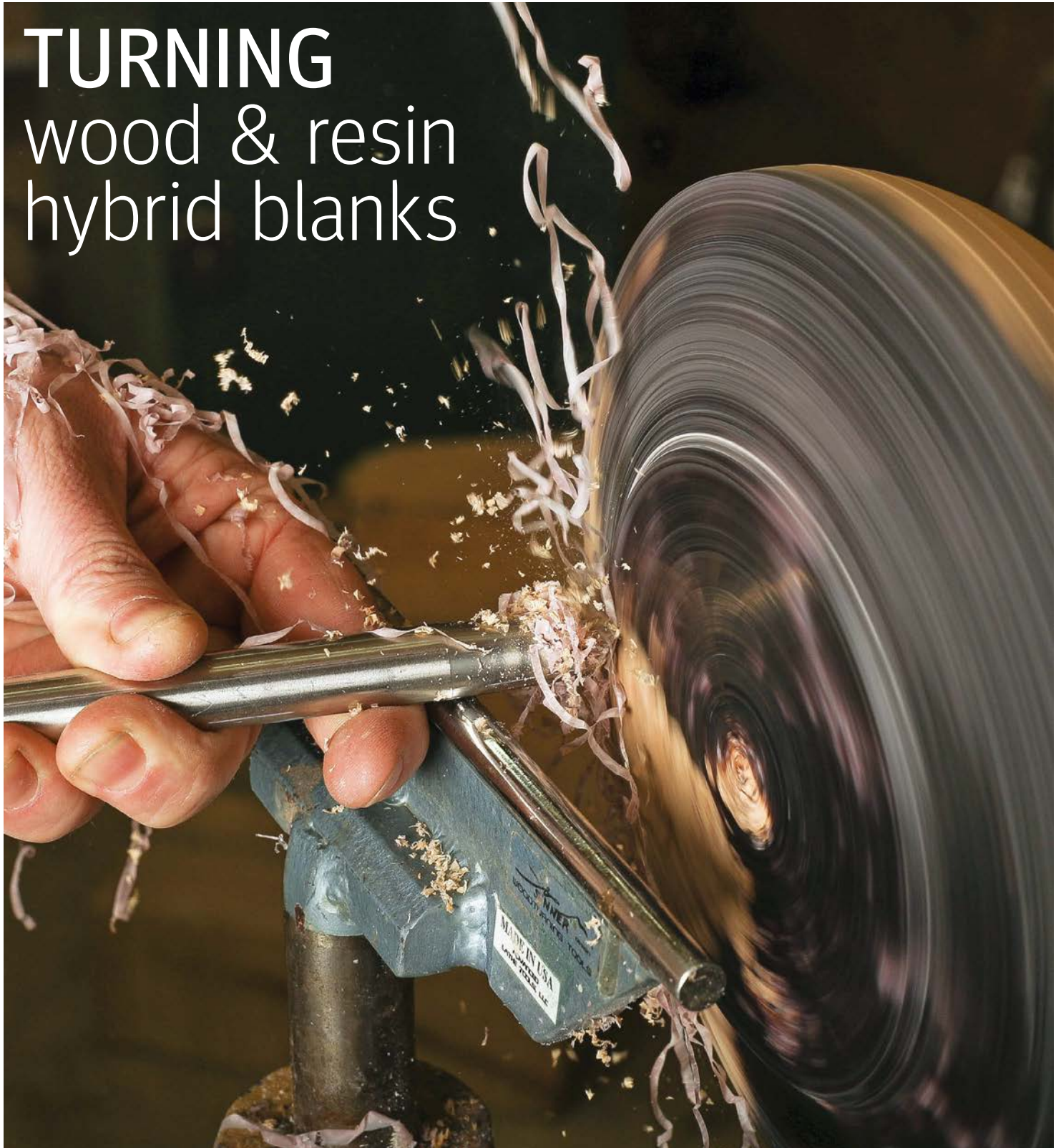


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Online Review



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An interesting challenge


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Let me start by applauding all the clubs who are actively engaging with the under-25s to try turning, other woodworking disciplines and other crafts. It is a sad fact that workshops for hands-on woodworking and other crafts are not as common as they once were in schools and colleges and that is a crying shame. It's almost as though the trades or manual skills play second fiddle to other aspects of higher education. Truthfully, I do not know how we change this mentality with the people who control policy and the money.

We all know how valuable trades and craftspeople are when we have a boiler breakdown, a burst pipe, doors replaced, a new table built and so on.

That said, there might be workshops, but many now do not teach woodwork or metalwork as they once did. Now, partly due to ever-developing technology and materials, there is now a more integrated approach to learning science and maths, which is fundamental to making things.

Ever sat on a chair that had loose joints? Ever set a lathe speed too high for the piece of work on the lathe and something went wrong as a result? Theory and practice have to work together.

But, as hobbyists, many clubs are playing a part in sharing and encouraging people to make, turn, carve and so on. We need these skills to be retained and for people to learn how wonderful they are to try. So please continue encouraging the under 25s. They will remember later on in life what they have enjoyed.

The often-overlooked age group is the 40s. I know I age jumped then, due to the fact that 25-40s tend to focus on career, family, house and so on and are, at times, hard pushed to do much else, but we should not forget them. I have also commented on the 40 and over group before. They tend to be more mobile transport-wise, possibly monetarily, maybe housing-wise and might have a bit

more time to explore hobbies and crafts further. How about targeting this group for courses and taster sessions? Also consider ways of attracting family groups to try things.

I don't have all the answers, but we can build upon the good work and ideas already being done and discussed. Many clubs are commenting that new members are joining, but to continue to encourage people to try is fundamental to not only spreading the word, but also ensuring there are people who know how to work safely and can then share their skills and enthusiasm with others later on.

Let me know what initiatives you have to encourage others to try turning.

Have fun,

markb@thegmcgroup.com



Cover image: Keith Lackner (see page 48)

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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 when turning and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

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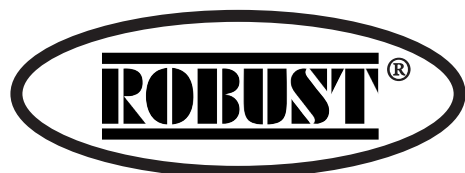


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Hollow form with a join

Mark Sanger looks at how make two-part vessels

In this article I am going to show you an alternative way of making two-part hollow forms. Now, the purists among you will no doubt shout 'that's cheating', and indeed I too have a purist side to my thinking, but hear me out. For quite a few years now I have been making hollow forms in one guise or another and it became apparent to me very early on that, if I wanted to be successful at selling my work, I had to produce several ranges to suit not only tastes but also size of pocket.

You will often hear the saying 'bread-and-butter work'. This phrase has a few meanings, but it is typically used in conjunction with regular work where many pieces are created to specific sizes at fixed prices, or work that is specifically aimed at a lower price bracket will often sell regularly and keep a healthy stream

of regular money coming in, while more expensive pieces are the cherry on the cake.

Marketing work is a huge subject and beyond the scope of this article. But take a leaf out of modern industry and you will find that all businesses try to streamline and make the processes in which they work as efficient as possible without compromising quality, the latter being a key aspect – quality of design and finish should always take precedent over time taken to make.

That is not to say that we can't greatly reduce processing time if we think smart about how we make our more commercial projects. So here I am going to show a simple way of making a hollow form out of seasoned cross-grain and end-grain blanks using basic turning tools.

Wood selection

In this article the projects are made using seasoned wood. While slightly restrictive in the maximum thickness generally available – 100mm – it removes all the issues of wood movement and shrinkage and enables us to produce a project quickly, ready to be given as a gift or sold. For these projects you can choose your preferred species of wood but if starting out turning choose a close, straight-grain, medium density wood such as maple (*Acer* spp.) or beech (*Fagus* spp.), and initially make sure it is void of any knots and other inclusions. If the wood has some markings, such as spalting or ripple, we can decide how to mount the blank on the lathe in a specific way to maximise these characteristics depending upon the form turned. More about that next.

◀ Form

Form is subjective, so you can choose an alternative to those shown here from Far Eastern, Greek or Roman to those closer to home, with the internet and historical reference being an excellent place to start research. It is outside of the scope of this article to look in any depth at the specifics of form, so here I am keeping it simple with examples of the squashed sphere, which is a form with the composition being 'division of two', and a classic form composed of 'division of three'.

DIVISION BY TWO/SQUASHED SPHERE

The squashed sphere is a very simple form – nothing more than a sphere subjected to compression producing a symmetrical shape though its central axis. To give a pleasing proportion in the diagram depicting the join, I have shown the height in increments of thirds of the first sphere diameter. This is only a guide and you can play around with your own projects depending upon the size of blanks available to you.

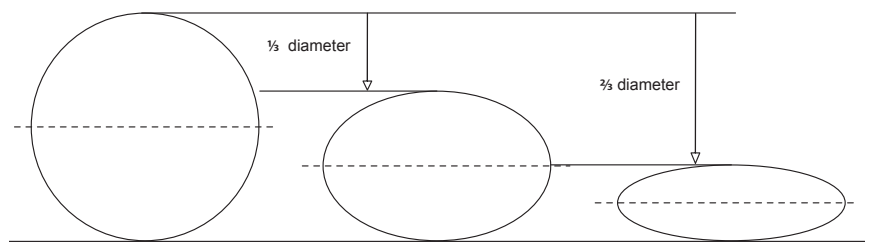
Despite being simple to draw the squashed sphere is one of the most difficult forms to turn as any imperfections of line or proportion will be glaring to see. There is certainly no place to hide in simplicity and this form tests our skill and eye when making.

DIVISION BY THREE /RULE OF THIRDS

The rule of thirds is a common method of proportion and can be found used in many instances in and around our environment such as architecture, graphic design and photography. In my turning I use it more as a guide than a strict rule as sticking to any rule can restrict exploration. It is, however, a good place to start. Here we divide the form and subsequent parts by three as shown in the diagram – a classic form with the other illustration showing the location of join. The shoulder/widest section of the form is positioned $\frac{2}{3}$ up from the base with the foot diameter being no larger in this instance than $\frac{1}{3}$ the diameter of the overall diameter. If the form is purely aesthetic the base can be much smaller in diameter so that the form appears to float, as shown in the one-piece hollow form.

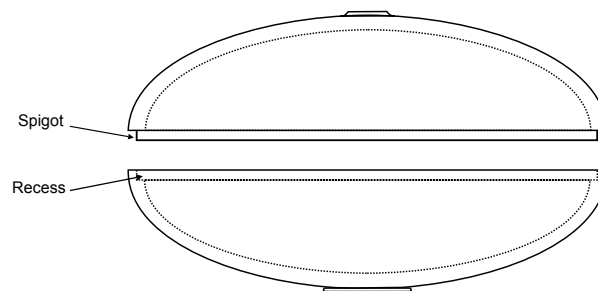
If a form has a larger opening and is intended to be a utility item to hold, for instance, dry flowers, then the base may need to be larger for stability, so don't feel you have to stick to what is shown here. There is no hard and fast rule, so by all means experiment.

DIVIDED BY TWO

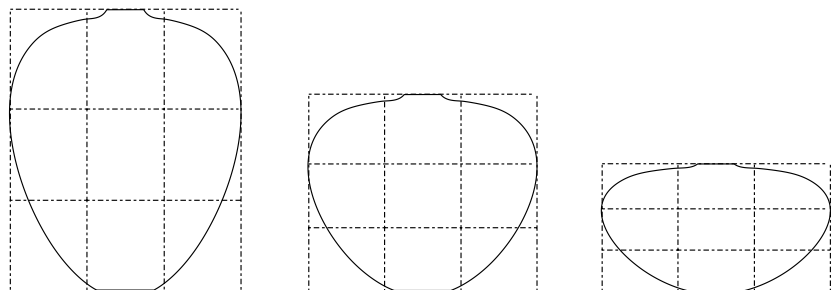


Top and bottom profile are symmetrical

SQUASHED SPHERE DIVIDED BY TWO

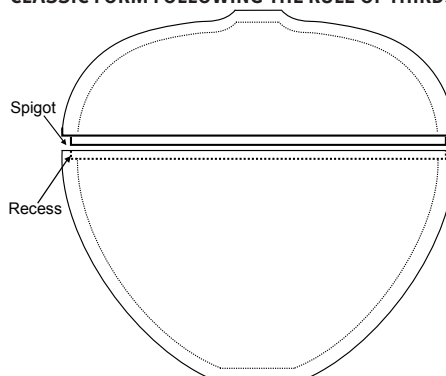


THE RULE OF THIRDS ITEMS DIVIDED BY THREE



Widest section, the shoulder is $\frac{2}{3}$ the height of the form. Base diameter is no larger than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the largest width of the form

CLASSIC FORM FOLLOWING THE RULE OF THIRDS



A finished form using the rule of thirds

Work holding/turning base profile

It is important in my work that the processes I use and/or develop are efficient and simple at the lathe. There is little point for me in making life technically difficult as this only results in more time spent making and less profit margin. It is something you may want to think about if you are making for selling your items at craft fairs or galleries. Also, I do not try to reinvent the wheel. I first look at the traditional methods used in other woodturning projects, with these two-part forms being approached in the same way as making a simple hollow-lid box.

So, the first process, as with any project, is to mount and clean up the outside of our blank. You can use spindle or faceplate-oriented grain; I am using faceplate-orientated grain.

For this I simply mount the blank on a screw chuck held in the jaws of my chuck. You would mount the work between centres for spindle grain. Clean up the outside using a 10mm bowl gouge. Cut a spigot at the tail-centre end, which, due to

the size of the blank – 100mm thick by 200mm diameter – does not need to be that deep as the wood within the spigot is only as strong as the grain running through it. It is important, however, to ensure that the profile of the spigot matches that of the jaws as any mismatch can cause the cross grain to fracture. With the spigot being shaped with the long grind bowl gouge, after which it is cleaned up with the skew.

Then, the centre height of the form is marked on the outside of the blank with a pencil. The base form is then shaped using the bowl gouge, working from tail centre out and, as I near the line, the curve is tightened, finally stopping 4-5mm short of the line for parting off later. If turned directly up to the line, we can end up producing a sharp profile resulting in a flying saucer-type shape than a smooth curve.

Finally, if required, refine the surface with a square end or angled scraper.



A pull cut to rough shape the base area



A push cut refines the surface



Spigot in place

Shaping the top

The form is reversed and the base section spigot is held in the chuck. The top section, with the hole previously drilled to accept the screw, is now the location for the final form's opening on the top part of the form. Cut a spigot at the top section, refine the upper section with a gouge and adjust the surface shape further with a scraper as before to mirror-match the base section. Leave a flat area in the middle to be able to part the two sections from each other and leave a spigot which will be integral to the join later.

Parting through

The form could be hollowed through the small opening, however this is painfully slow, requires specialist tools, is challenging and very time consuming.

Here a 6mm parting tool is used to part in to a width of around 8mm to a depth of 10mm, which leaves enough material for the refining of the final shape as well as the addition of beads or other texture.

The spigot should be parallel to facilitate a good fit into the recess that will be created in the top parted section.

A 2mm parting tool that I have adapted to take a longer handle than a standard tool is used. The longer handle is required due to there being a large overhang of the blade past the rest during cutting, so the extra handle length is required to counter the downward pressure on the cutting tip. I part in, moving the tool over in steps back and forth to widen the cut, stopping short of cutting through, and finish off the remainder with a pull saw with the lathe stopped.



The vessel reversed and the top being refined



Part most of the way through



Use a saw to separate the top from lower areas

◀ Hollowing

Now we have, in effect, two bowls for hollowing and joining later. As the wood being turned has been oriented cross grain and we have removed the need to work through a small opening, all that is needed is a bowl gouge. A 10mm bowl gouge is used. Hollow out the base to an equal wall thickness stopping short of the spigot to allow it to fit into the recess of the top later.

Once done, the top is chucked and a hole is bored with a 12mm drill held in a drill chuck. Use the gouge to partially hollow

it out, allowing room to produce a recess to locate the lid on to the base section spigot later. The recess needs to be a good fit but not very tight due to needing a bit of room for adhesive. A 6mm parting tool is used to part into the face, up to and including the registration mark previously left. As you get close to the edge of the registration mark, stop to check for fit. Once the right fit is achieved, the remaining thickness is removed with gouge until the wall thickness matches that of the base.



Hollowing the base



Drilling a hole all through the top section



Hollowing out the top



Creating the recess with a parting tool



Checking the fit of the base to top section

REFINING & GLUING UP

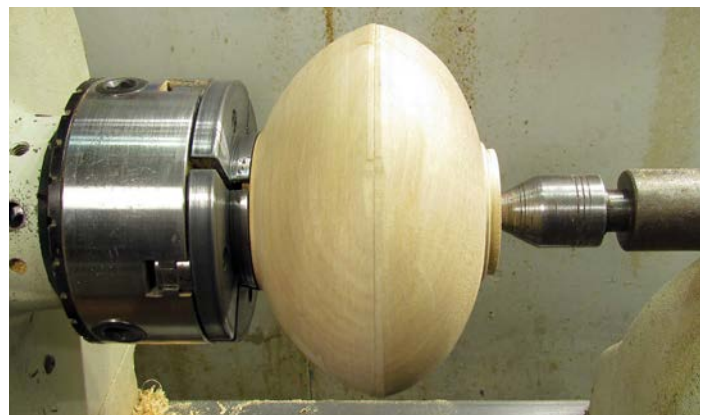
The inside profile of the opening is blended to flow down into the entrance hole – this softens its appearance over the parallel initially drilled hole. To do this, despite the grain direction, I use a freshly sharpened spindle gouge in scraper mode, trailing to gently profile the hole, cutting with the grain as the hole is so small it can be problematic to try to cut in with the bowl gouge.

GLUING UP

To glue up, simply run medium viscosity CA or fast-set PVA glue in around the recess of the top. Offer up the base with the grain aligned, pressed home and held in place until dry. Leave the piece until dry. Once dry, remove the piece from the lathe and mount the base end in the chuck which exposes the top section with the hole in it ready for turning.



A gouge or scraper can be used to refine the inner form



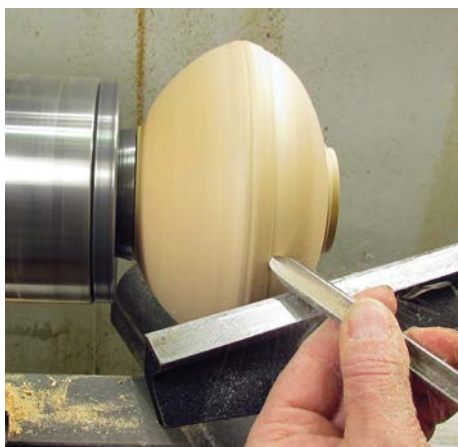
The top and base glued together and the tailstock used for clamping

REFINING

The external profile is refined with a bowl gouge. If the joint is good, you will not see a very visible join, just a hairline join.

The top spigot and waste section is now removed with the

bowl gouge. This piece is faceplate-oriented grain, cutting from the centre out, with the entrance hole being blended using a 6mm spindle gouge cutting from the inside out, with the surface being blended and refined using a scraper.



Refining the out shape



The outer form complete. Spot the join...



Spigot removed and the rim and opening shaped

The join and foot

There are several ways in which the join can be disguised and here I have chosen a simple texture of equally spaced grooves starting from the join. For this a fluted parting tool is used, starting at the join and proceeding outwards

with the point of the tool being placed into the previous groove produced. The grooves are continued, stopping short of the hole rim. Contrast is added to the base of each groove by way of burning, using a small piece of kitchen

top laminate pushed into the groove. With the lathe at a high rpm the surface is finished with abrasive from 120-400. As well as refining the surface, this cuts back the edges of the burn lines to help define the edges.



Adjusting the curve



A forming tool cutting a groove on the join



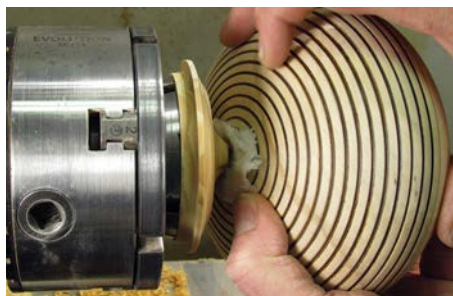
More groove cuts and burning in detail lines

REVERSING THE FORM AND FINISHING BASE AND FOOT

These forms are simply reversed on to a suitably shaped friction drive made from waste wood that fits into the jaws of the chuck. Kitchen towel is placed between the drive and inside of the opening to prevent marking the inside of the opening.

Once reversed, with the tailstock revolving centre aligned into the indent initially made when turning, the foot is produced to the desired design using the bowl gouge, then use the bead forming tool to create the grooves to the base area.

As before, the fluted parting tool is used with the kitchen top laminate again being used to burn into the base of the grooves. Finish as before with abrasive.



Reversing the piece on to a friction drive



The piece secured and extra grooves added

Finally, the waste is reduced to a small section and the form removed from the lathe. Remaining waste is removed with a power carver or sharp chisel,

making sure the cut is away from your hand or body and blended with a sanding arbor and abrasive in a waste section of wood held in the chuck.

◀ Finishes

As this project is turned from seasoned wood, numerous finishes of your choice can be applied. You may prefer to opt for a spray acrylic finish, however I often simply opt for an oil finish

as this easily fills the fine grooves and produces a low-lustre sheen, my preference for these pieces.



The grooved form with burn lines in place and finished with oil



A piece conforming to the rule of thirds finished with oil and no burn lines

Variations on the theme

The technique of making forms in sections lends itself to various projects. If, for instance, you want to produce a project larger than the capacity of your lathe will allow then, as with the 450mm high vase below turned from wet oak on a midi-lathe,

the same technique can be used. Or, as an alternative for disguising the join, an alternative material such as faux leather lace on the two-part vase or coloured paints can be used to good effect.



Multi-part vase with burn V grooves



Mult-part vase with faux-leather to conceal the join

CONCLUSION

Turning forms in two parts certainly makes life easier, enables us to make projects using standard turning tools and gives us the option of making larger or complex form in separate parts. Certainly for me, the ability to simplify and speed up the process

in making any item is a viable one from a commercial point of view. Moreover it makes things more interesting to think about how I will approach a particular project. Give it a go and happy turning. ●

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THRIVING ON INNOVATION

Cook pine bowl

Emiliano Achaval creates an end grain translucent Cook pine bowl, using techniques and processes learned from Ron Kent



Many years ago I was offered some pine to turn. I didn't know whether it was Norfolk Island pine (NIP) (*Araucaria heterophylla*) or Cook pine (*Araucaria columnaris*). I still remember how wet the timber was and how soaked I was at the end of each day turning the wood. After turning a few dozen bowls, I left the rest of the logs outside, with the idea of letting them spalt for some while to add a bit of colour. By the time I got to them, you could put your fist right through them. It is one of the fastest decomposing timbers I have ever seen.

I still have a finished piece of work from one of those pieces of wood. I based it upon Ron Kent's work. It is semi-translucent, and I have to say I ended up not doing Ron or the wood justice. I didn't create the nicest of designs. Well, it was a learning curve.

Ron Kent is our local hero. He probably

single-handedly put the Hawaiian pines on the world stage. His work is well worth looking up. I recently received a load of a huge, more than 100-year-old Cook pine. I decided to call Ron to catch up and ask him for some advice. Why not call the most famous pine turner ever and try to bypass the learning curve with a timber that I have not worked in years?

For this project I decided to do a deep end-grain bowl using just the plain timber without any of the branch knots in place. To be translucent, the bowl needs an even, quite thin wall thickness and the fibres of the wood saturated with oil. Too thick a wall and light won't pass through, likewise, with no oil penetration light cannot pass through. You can add another visual element by having the branch knots in place. Typically the branches of Araucarias are not randomly spaced but have a ring of

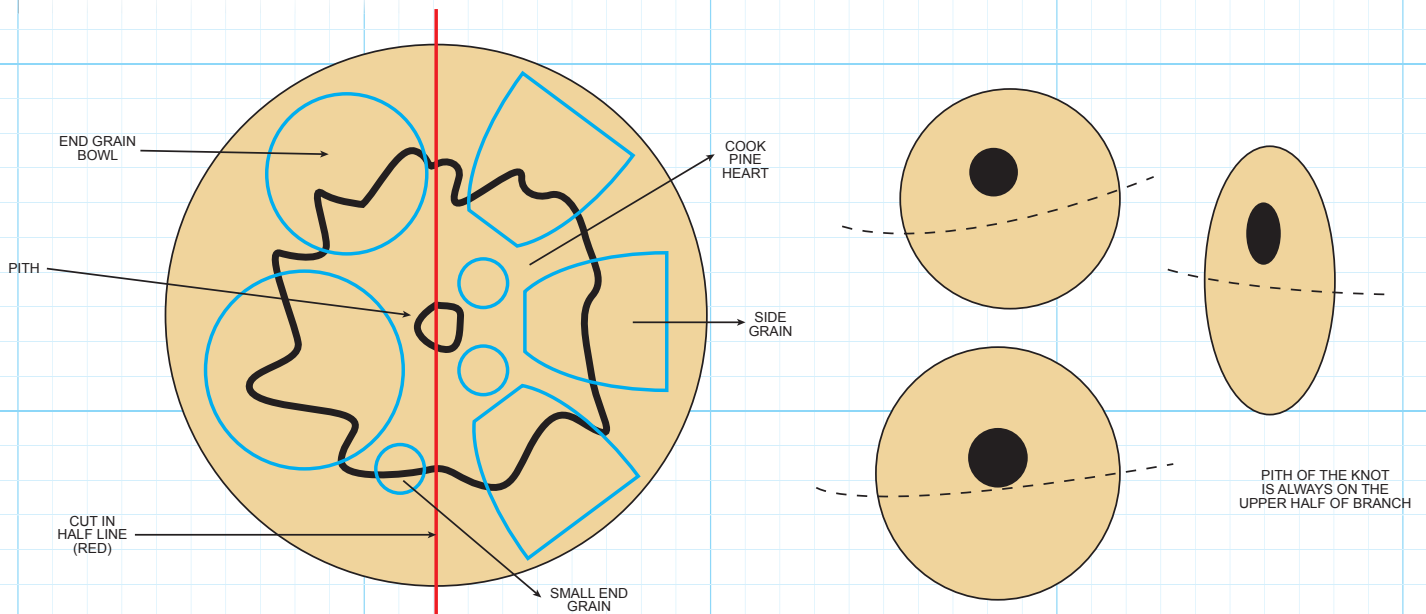
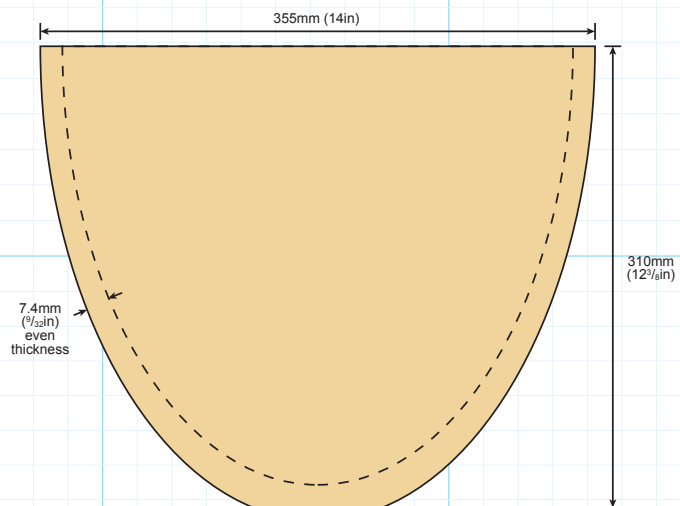
branches which run round the trunk, so on smaller trunks you cut a whole tree ring to include these so the branches/knots become a feature. An example of one of Ron's translucent bowls with the branch knots in place is shown at the end of this article.

Because I didn't have six months to wait, it was turned and finished green. I would not have done this if it wasn't for Ron guiding me. He sometimes got a freshly cut pine on Monday and by Wednesday he had a finished bowl ready to start the finishing soaking process.

So, before we get to how to make the piece. I want to thank Ron Kent for his help. It has been a pleasure and an honour to work with him on this project. I liaised closely with Ron and in this article I am following similar techniques and processes he uses to create his vessels.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Spindle roughing gouge
- 16mm swept-back grind bowl gouge
- 16mm detail spindle gouge
- Parting tool
- Thin parting tool
- Drill chuck
- 32mm Forstner bit
- Boiled linseed oil
- Danish oil
- Mineral spirits
- Polyurethane finish
- Sander
- Aluminium oxide abrasives down to 320 grit
- Wet & dry abrasive down to 600 grit



1 Due to the sheer size of the Cook pine log I had, Ron advised me to first take just a few centimetres off the end to see what the log looks like past that checked end section.

He then advised to play around with chalk drawing in several possible bowl options, a few end-grain pieces and some side grain. Notice how I did not centre any of them. I was tempted to do so, but again, Ron said he never centred any of his work.

The spade of the chainsaw shown is 600mm long. If the log had been, let's say 355mm wide, you could, after cutting to the desired length, mount it on a reasonable size of lathe to turn an end-grain bowl or vase, avoiding what I had to do. The smaller trunks mean no bandsaw is necessary, which is one of the attractions of turning these pines. Also, with smaller diameter Araucaria pine trunks you will likely have a section with the knots of the branches, creating more design choices for you.

◀ Mounting and turning the outside

2 Start by placing the blank between centres. A large drive spur and a revolving centre with a ring, not a pointed cone, are what I use for this method of mounting work, which is what I use to start 90% of my work. This way you can balance the piece by adjusting it up or down and you have the option to adjust it as needed for design purposes or to avoid or take out flaws, cracks or other imperfections.

This is a large piece of wood I am using for this project, but you can of course use smaller pieces and, irrespective of the size of the blank used, the fundamental turning techniques required are the same no matter what size of end-grain project you tackle. It's just the size of the lathe, tools, chucking methods used as well as lathe speed that alter.

Irrespective of the size of blank used, check to see if there are any faults in the wood which will potentially cause problems. If there are, you have to make a value call as to whether the risk is small and it can be used, or it is unknown with a large risk factor. If in doubt as to whether it is OK to use it, don't use it.

3 This is a large, out-of-balance piece of wood, so the lathe speed needs to be low, in this case about 350rpm or lower to minimise vibration while it is rough shaped. Use sharp tools and maintain pressure on the tool to keep it in contact with the rest as you cut the irregular surface.

You are working with spindle-oriented grain, the grain of the wood runs parallel to the bed bars, so the tool of choice for fast removal of wood is a spindle roughing gouge, or alternatively a large bowl gouge. Don't worry about design this early, you are trying to bring it to round, and rough-shaping it so you make a wide and deep tenon for a faceplate or, if working on a smaller section, a spigot for use in your jaws chuck.

4 Make a big tenon for a faceplate. I will be using large diameter and long lag bolts with a hex head that I screw in with an impact cordless drill or spanner. After taking this picture, I decided to go for an even bigger faceplate, 150mm so the work is properly supported when turning without tailstock support later, so I had to redo the tenon.

Do not forget what size screws or bolts you are using. Visualise and/or mark with a pencil line how far they go in the work so you do not cut too far and also so you know where to shape the outside to, so as to remove all the screw holes when sorting out the base area.

5 Now you have the bowl mounted and a faceplate with stout screws. The first thing you should do now is true up the sides so it is running true. Do not increase the lathe speed at this stage. Use the tailstock revolving centre for support as much as you can and only remove it when it is in the way.

6 Use a bowl gouge to true up the face. Anything slightly off balance will prevent you from getting a small speed increase later. Even so, the lathe speed will not be increased above 500rpm for this bowl during the turning process.





7 Bring up the revolving tailstock centre for support and start refining the outside shape. Remember that this bowl is spindle-grain oriented so cut from highest to lowest to ensure cutting with the grain. When you are about two-thirds down the outside of the bowl, you need to leave enough width/mass at the bottom so you can hollow out the middle without inducing lateral movement due to your cutting the lower area too narrow. The lower area is refined later.

Turning the inside



8 Now you need to start removing waste and shape the inside. To speed things up, and to avoid the hardest part to hollow which is the slow-turning centre of the bowl, drill a central hole as far as you can reach or, if working on smaller items, drill to a bit short of the depth of the finished internal depth required with a Forstner bit of your choice. I use a drill chuck held in the tailstock to hold the drill bit.



9 Due to the wood being wet and this being a deep bowl, you will need to work down the inside in sections about 25-50mm deep at a time, getting the second area/section to blend into the first section to final wall thickness before moving to the third area and so on. If you do not do this, and cut too far down without refining the upper areas first, contraction and drying may well cause wall movement and make it impossible to get an even wall thickness from top to bottom.

Start hollowing using either a tipped hollowing tool, a shielded or standard rink or hook tool or other such device suitable for hollowing end-grain work. The larger the work, the larger the diameter of bar and longer the handle required to resist the overhang from the rest. If using tipped tools, minimise the flex by using a small cutter to remove the waste and use a bigger cutter to refine the shape later.

This is a big bowl so I use a 16mm diameter, heavy-duty spindle gouge to start with and, when cutting deeper later, I change to a bowl gouge. You have a central hole so cut from the centre out to the inner area of the wall, leaving it slightly thick at this stage.



10 Once those two areas are cut, refine the top rim, then cut down the side wall and blend the first cut area into the second to finished wall thickness using a push cut with a gouge. I know this is technically going against the grain, but it is a very light skimming cut used. If you need to refine the surface further you can use a negative-rake scraper working from the lower area and pulling upwards towards the top edge using the most gentle of cuts. But the wood is soft so try the cut in waste wood before refining the wall thickness just to see if it will work.

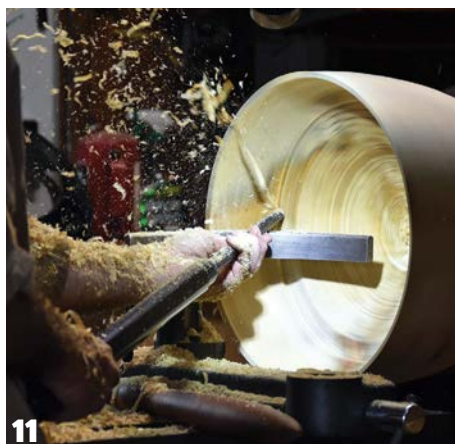
As an aside, on such large work, you could consider using a coring system if it will fit into the opening area safely so you can get a core out of the central waste area.

11 As you go deeper you need a stronger gouge – a bowl gouge in this case with a longer handle. I got excellent results with a bowl gouge with a swept-back wing grind. As I was making push cuts from centre out, on smaller work you are unlikely to have room to make push cuts out, so use pull cuts instead. The flute is pointing in the direction of travel and, cutting on the lower wing, have the gouge rotated almost to the shear scrape position. As you cut ever deeper towards the bottom, measure and be mindful of the screws holding the wood to the lathe. You do not want to cut too deep and access those on the inside.

Continue working in stages until you get all the way down to the bottom, creating the profile you want. I chose a nice curve at the bottom. The opening allowed me to feed the gouge in to get a good cut, which left a surface that could easily be sanded, but you might need to consider using a ring tool or tipped tool or scraper in shear-cut mode to clean up the lower area.

It is advisable to practise the cuts you want or need to use in waste wood areas first to see the impact of using that particular cut, and to build up confidence ready for the finishing cuts

12 Once the inside is done, move on to the lower, outer area of the bowl. You know the internal form so you can readily check for even wall thickness as you remove waste and refine the lower external form to the shape you require.



Sanding & finishing the bottom

13 Once the turning is done, you need to sand the piece. On big bowls I use a 125mm orbital sander.

With large work, such as this, I sand while the lathe is stationary. I place a soft interface pad on to the sanding pad, which you can do with sanding arbors designed to fit a drill or hand-sanding pads. The interface pad will form to the internal or exterior surface, giving a large sanding area which minimises the risk of sanding flats on to a curved surface. When sanding, work sequentially through the grits down to 320.

This is the preparatory stage before soaking and wet sanding, so no need to go finer than 320-grit at this stage.

14 After sanding, either reverse-chuck it and hold it between an extended friction drive and a revolving tailstock centre, the method I used here, or use your preferred method to finish the bottom area. Here is the piece sanded, ready for soaking.

Soaking in oil

15 Soaking in oil is designed to saturate the fibres so that, when finished, the wood becomes translucent and glows when a light source hits it. I asked Wayne Omura to do the soaking in his giant, fully sealable pot of boiled linseed oil and mineral spirit. Wayne's mix is five parts boiled linseed oil (BLO) and one part mineral spirits.

Wayne has been turning pine for more than 30 years and has perfected the finishing process

with his own mix, based on Ron Kent's methods. He believes the first soaking does as much as 90% of the job, thus reducing the time needed for further sanding and soaking. Wayne does all of his bowls twice turned, which means he rough-turns them, lets them dry and returns to a finished shape later, so by the time they go into the oil they are completely dry.

This one was green-turned and finished, so it took a little longer for it to absorb the oil mix to an acceptable level of translucency. I discussed this with Ron and he told me it is one of the challenges of turning green wood. We left the bowl in the vat for two days.

Ron used Danish oil (DO) for his soaking process. BLO is cheaper than DO, and you will obtain the same results.



16



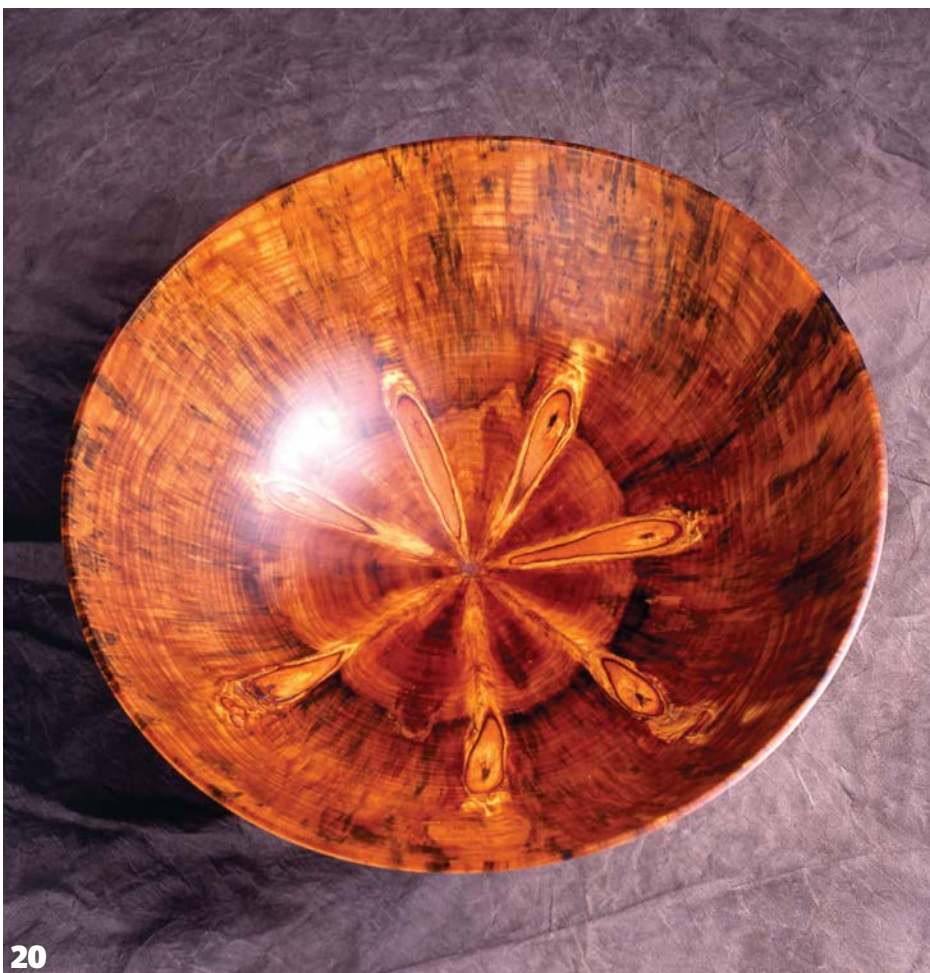
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18



19



20

PHOTOGRAPH BY WAYNE OMURA

16 Remove the bowl from the pot and let it drip dry on the drying rack, capturing some of the oil for reuse. If reusing oil, make sure it is not contaminated with other debris or colourants that might affect future projects.

17 To speed up the process a little, Wayne has a homemade kiln with a heater inside. There are no naked flames on the heat source used. We place the bowl inside and once the temperature reaches 120°F he turns off the heat source. Excess oil will bleed out, so wipe it off. Now let it dry so you can go on to the next step.

Do not worry if you don't have a kiln. Leave the bowl on the drying rack for a few hours, wipe seeping excess oil as necessary to prevent any uneven build up and let the bowl dry for 24 hours. Now you will start the gradual process of building up the oil.

18 Wet sanding is done with a wet and dry abrasive, ensuring the surface remains wet with the oil as one works. Repeat this process as many times as necessary.

Ron used Danish oil for the entire process. His wife, Myra, was usually in charge of the oil build-up stage and it took several months and up to 50 wet sanding and drying cycles to achieve the desired final translucent product.

Because Wayne uses BLO and it will not cure as well or as fast as Danish oil, I mixed a small batch of equal parts of Danish oil, polyurethane and thinners. Wayne has been very successful with this mix, cutting the build-up time considerably. After five applications I was happy with the results.

19 This is the final product. Soaked for two days in BLO, then given five applications of the three-way mix. There is no limit on how many times you do the wet sanding.

Experiment with green and dry timber, see how many applications it will take till you reach a desirable finish. I will be doing more oil applications so I have a little more translucency.

Once you have all the oil coats done, you can, if you want, apply a wax coat. Ron used beeswax and would remove the build-up with 0000 steel wool. Wayne applies a few coats of clear lacquer once he reaches his desired build-up of oil mix which is usually within five to six applications.

20 Here is a picture of Ron Kent's favourite design choice of how the branches, if the section of wood being used has them, are used. This piece was made by Wayne Omura. The blank was oriented with the branches in the lower quadrant of the bowl. If they had been higher, nearer to the rim, the bowl would have a ring of branch knots.

The piece shows clearly how the inclusion of the branches provides another visual element.

I know that most turners turn hardwoods, but the Araucaria family and other pines are very much worth exploring and can yield unexpectedly beautiful results whether turning the end grain or faceplate orientated grain. ●



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TOOLS & MACHINERY

Plant stands

Walter Hall makes pair of plant stands with off-centre columns



Ever since I saw a demonstration by Pete Osborn RPT at the Northumbrian Woodturners Association in December 2016 I have been planning to make a plant stand inspired by his work. I did not, however, want to simply make a copy, but was looking for ideas for a variation of the classic form of Pete's demonstration piece. The inspiration for that variation came once again from Northumbrian Woodturners in the form of the January 2018 competition for an off-centre or multi-axis piece. Thus, the concept of a plant stand with simple

clean lines based on a classic design but featuring an off-centre main column was born. I used reclaimed mahogany, but any close-grained hardwood would be suitable.

In the end I decided to make a pair, and while they are nominally plant stands, they could also be used to support candles if suitable fireproof material were placed on top to protect the wood from hot wax, or to display small decorative ornaments or even other turnings. Larger versions could support a table centrepiece, or form a small wine table

and they could even be fitted with bun feet or other additions.

I like to take other people's ideas and develop them or combine ideas from various makers into a single piece, so please don't feel that you must rigorously follow my design, but do feel free to amend the design to suit your needs and tastes or to use ideas from the project to create new projects of your own. The multi-axis section could form part of a candlestick, goblet, table lamp or many other items.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Beading and parting tool
- 10 or 13mm bowl gouge
- Parting tool
- 25mm Forstner bit
- Callipers
- Shear sanding tool
- Abrasive sheets 120-320 grit
- Abrasive pads 120-320 grit
- Tack cloth
- Face shield/respirator
- Dust extraction
- Steb and revolving centres
- Scroll chuck
- Small faceplate (for friction drive)

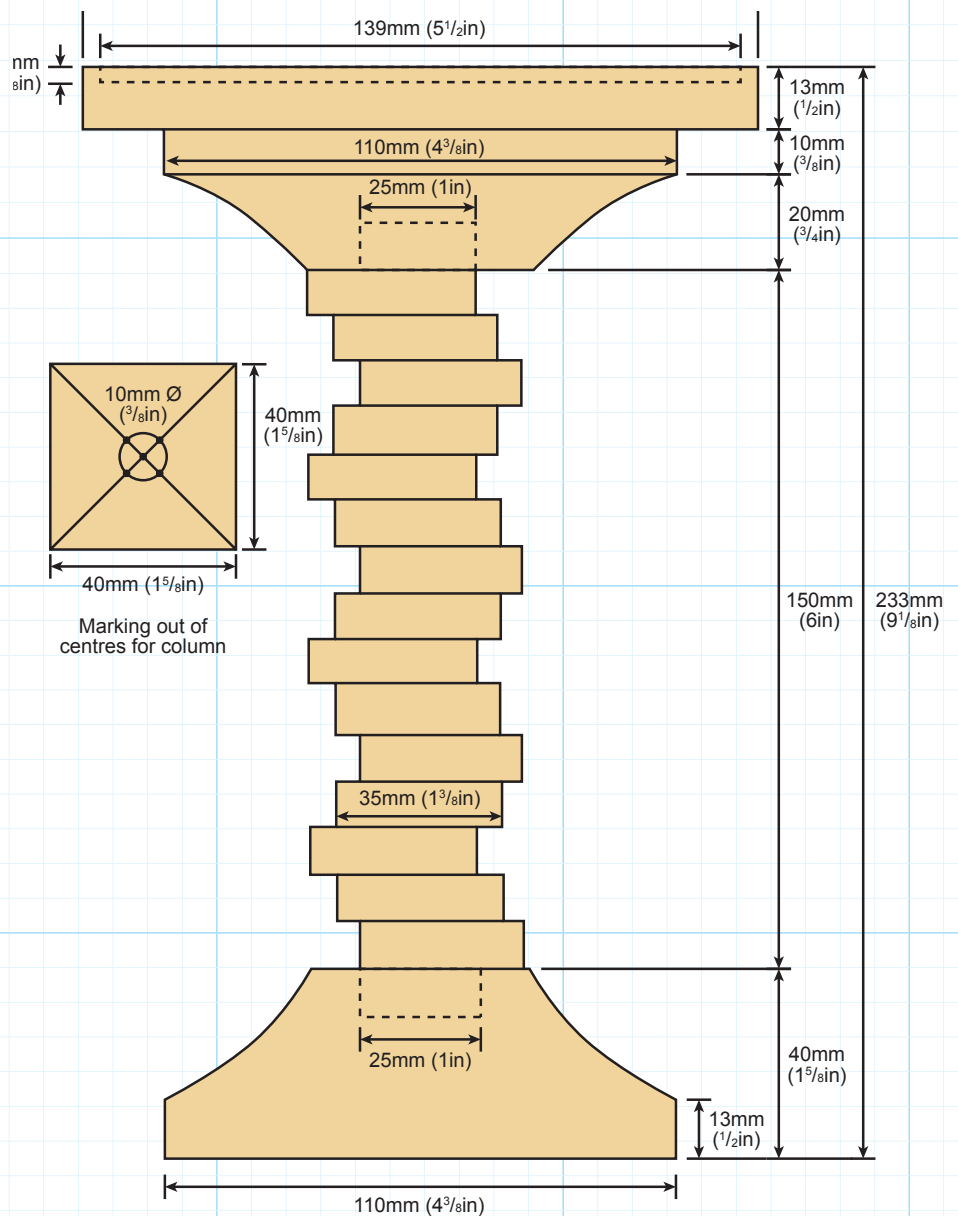
MATERIALS

- Hardwood spindle blank 40mm x 40mm x 200mm
- Hardwood bowl blank 150mm Ø x 45mm
- Hardwood bowl blank 120mm Ø x 45mm
- Finishing oil

HEALTH AND SAFETY

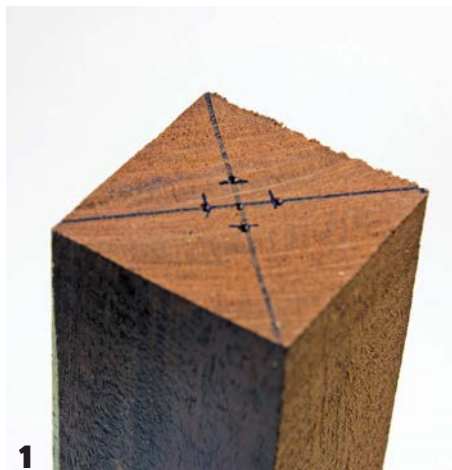
The friction drive method used in this article is a perfectly safe way of mounting work between centres if proper precautions are taken. It should only be used with work that has a flat face to engage with the friction drive and the tailstock must be firmly tightened to the lathe bed and the quill locked down to ensure there is no chance of it moving away from the work.

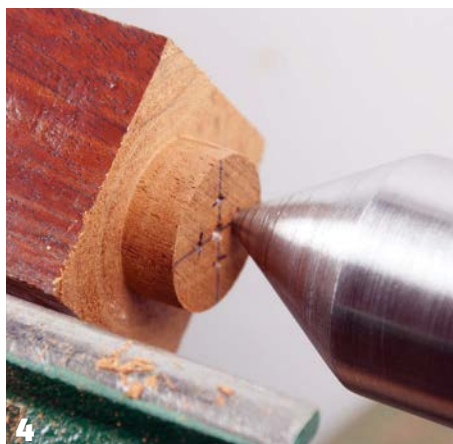
All off-centre work involves workpieces or parts thereof revolving in ways that may not be in line with the lathe axis or may cause vibration. Distance of parts of the work from the toolrest will most likely be inconsistent and there is therefore much greater risk of fingers or carelessly placed tools becoming trapped or coming into more violent contact with the revolving wood than was expected. It is vital that the work is revolving by hand before starting the lathe and to consider carefully the speed and direction of cut.



1 Select a straight-grained hardwood blank, about 40mm square and 175mm long, and carefully mark out the positions of the five centres on to each end. Draw the diagonals on both ends then mark 5mm out from the centre on each diagonal. Centre punch each of the five marked centres to help align them on the drive and revolving centre. You can number the centres to help identification.

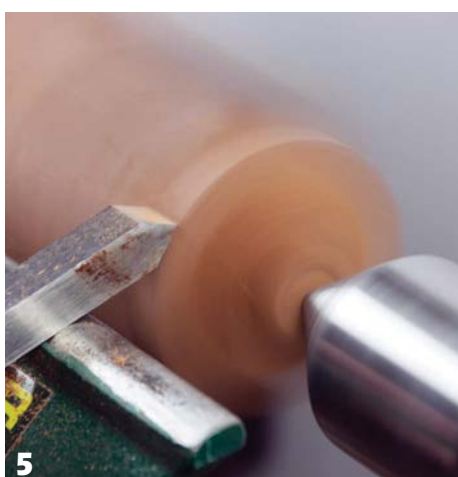
2 Mount the blank on the lathe on the centres marked at the intersection of the diagonals. A steb-type drive centre will facilitate the frequent changes of centre required during the turning process. A revolving centre in the tailstock completes the set-up. Position the toolrest on centre height and clear of the work when turned by hand.





3 Using a 10mm beading and parting tool, cut a spigot on the tailstock end of the blank. This will form the tenon that will be used to attach the column to the base of the plant stand. It needs to be exactly the same size as the Forstner bit used to drill out the mortise in the base, so set your callipers against the Forstner bit to ensure accuracy.

4 Once the tenon is cut to size, loosen off the tailstock quill and re-mount the work on one of the four pairs of centres. It does not really matter where you start, but do ensure that you use matching centres at each end. Turn the work by hand to ensure that it is revolving parallel to the lathe axis and adjust the toolrest so that it clears the work, which will now have a greater effective revolving diameter.



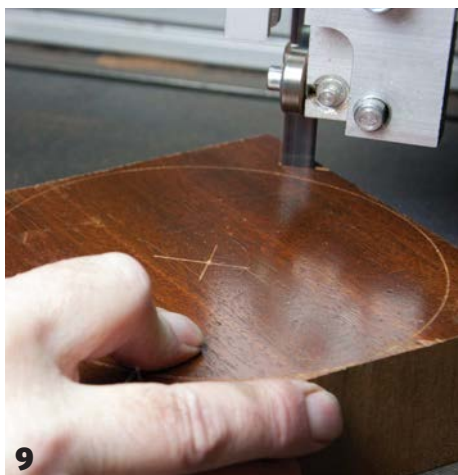
5 Using the beading and parting tool, cut the first of the off-centre cylinders. Arc the tool into the work just as you would with a parting tool, taking great care to align the tailstock-facing side of the tool with the edge of the spigot cut in step three. You will be 'cutting air' for part of the time so maintain a consistent downward pressure on the toolrest and move forward into the cut steadily. Complete the cut when a true cylinder is formed.

6 Loosen off the tailstock quill again, turn the work through 90° and re-mount on the next set of matching centres. Cut the next cylinder, taking great care with the alignment of the tool at the beginning of the cut to avoid damaging the previously cut cylinder. Continue to turn and re-mount the work on each of the centres until you have almost reached the headstock end of the blank.



7 The exact length of the column and number of cylinders is not critical, but depends upon the height you want your stand to be. I settled for about 150mm. Once you have completed all the cylinders, re-mount the work on the true centre and cut a tenon to match the one on the tailstock end of the piece. Any excess length can be parted off.

8 You should now have a column of 15-16 offset cylinders of even width and with cleanly cut edges and no breakout. Check the piece carefully for chipping. If necessary, the work can be re-mounted on the appropriate centre and individual cylinders carefully trimmed to remove damaged areas. Sanding can now be undertaken carefully by hand with the lathe turned off.



9 If, as I did, you start off with square blanks for the base and top, prepare them by marking out the finished diameter and cutting to rough size on the bandsaw. Keep fingers well way from the blade and use a push-stick wherever possible.

10 There are many ways to mount the base blank on the lathe. As the reclaimed wood being used had a flat face I was able to use a friction drive, comprising a rubber face glued to a plywood base mounted on a faceplate. You could also hot-melt glue the blank to a wooden-faced faceplate.

◀ **11** Mark the blank to delineate the extent of the cove to be cut and secure it to the friction drive by bringing up a revolving centre held in the tailstock to centre it and provide support. Make sure everything is secured and tailstock locked down so there is no risk of the workpiece flying off the lathe. Do not attempt this method of work holding with uneven or natural-edged blanks.

12 Turn the blank to the pre-marked diameter and mark the lower extent of the cove with a pencil line. Use a bowl gouge to form the cove shape down to the pre-marked lines, making sure you are forming an even curve with no lumps or bumps.

13 If you are using a swept-back grind gouge you can use the lower edge of the tool to shear scrape and refine the shape of the curve.

14 Now drill the mortise for the column with a Forstner bit. I used a pillar drill with the work firmly clamped to the table, but if you used hot-melt glue or some other fixed method of mounting the blank to the lathe, you could use a Jacobs chuck in the tailstock. Another possibility would be to re-mount the work in Cole jaws for the drilling.

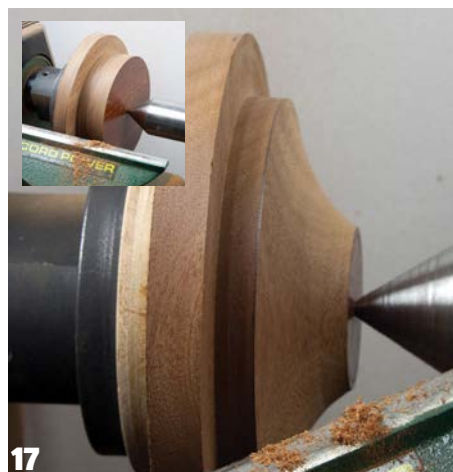
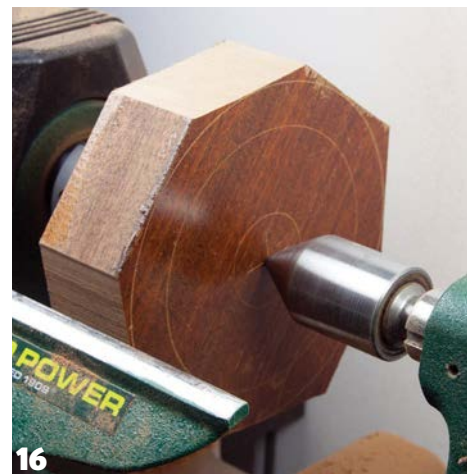
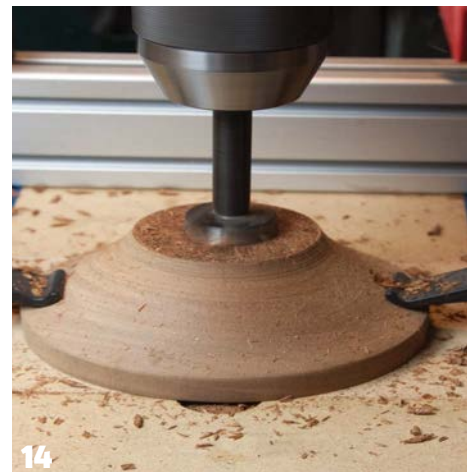
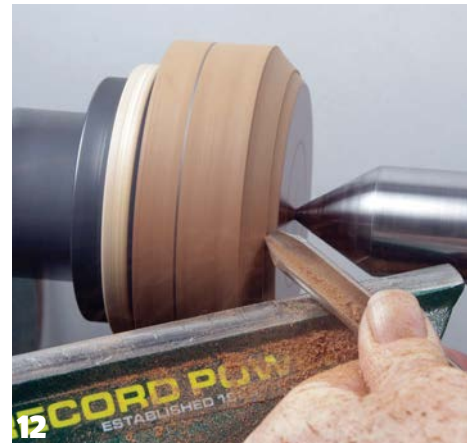
15 Re-mount the work on the lathe and, using a shear sander or sanding pads in a cordless drill, sand through the grits from the coarsest needed to remove any tool marks through to 320 grit.

16 For the table, mark the overall diameter and the internal and external diameters of the cove and mount it on the lathe using the same mounting method as for the base. As for the base, ensure everything is secure and that the work clears the toolrest when turned by hand.

17 Use the bowl gouge to turn the top to the pre-marked diameter then turn away the waste to form the underside of the table section and the outer edge of the coved section. Take care to form a flat base and a neat square joint between the two planes. Mark the upper extent of the cove with a pencil line. Now, continuing to use the bowl gouge, form the shape of the cove, matching it to the shape of the cove on the base as closely as possible. Cut carefully to the marked sizes. Drill the mortise for the column as done for the base and then, using the mortise as a mounting point, re-mount the work on the lathe using a scroll chuck and suitably sized pin jaws or other small jaws to fit the mortise.

18 Use the bowl gouge to form a lip at the outer edge of the top surface and level off the surface using the lower edge of the gouge to shear scrape. You could use the beading and parting tool to begin to form the lip if you prefer.

Sand the piece all over to a fine finish. Now, glue the tenons of the column in place in the mortises of the top and base using a suitable adhesive. Once set, remove any surplus, clean up the joints and apply the finish of your choice, I used two coats of Osmo poly-x oil to give a semi-gloss finish. ●



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We bring you the latest news from the world of woodturning and important dates for your diary

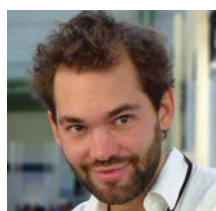
We try to give accurate details on forthcoming events. Please check with organisers for up-to-date information if you are planning to attend any of the events mentioned.

AAW's POP committee selects Burnett and Grandouiller for 2018 Artist Showcase

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE AAW



Sally Burnett



Vivien Grandouiller

(Saint Paul, 9 March, 2018) – The American Association of Woodturners (AAW) and its Professional Outreach Programme (POP) Committee is pleased to announce that Sally Burnett, from Staffs, England, and Vivien Grandouiller, from Chateaudouble, France, have been selected for the 2018 Artist Showcase, to recognise their potential to make significant contributions to the woodturning field.

Accordingly, Sally and Vivien will present at the 2018 AAW Annual International Symposium, 14-17 June, 2018, in Portland, Oregon. Each will deliver two 90-minute presentations and participate in a POP panel discussion, Evolution of an Artist. Their works will be on exhibition at the AAW Symposium and will have exposure to collectors, conference participants, and visitors.

SALLY BURNETT

Sally trained in 3D design and specialised in the design and manufacture of hand-blown glass vessels and panels, and large ceramic tile installations. Six years ago, she was given a lathe by a friend and that was the start of her passion for making in wood. Using mainly English native green timber, her characteristic decorative vessels often have wide tops and small bases with distinctive elegant curves. They are rich in texture created with pyrography and carving, and are often embellished with acrylic paint and silver leaf.

Sally Burnett's symposium presentations

• **Corvus Nero Collection/Open Forms**

Sally will offer a PowerPoint presentation on turning 'green' end-grain vessels with

a wide top and small base. Her lecture will include timber selection, turning thickness to reduce movement when drying, the hollowing process, and her methods to create a balanced form with an elegant curve.

• **Design & Decorative Techniques**

Sally's lecture will cover the original inspiration for her Corvus Nero Collection and the decorative processes she used in her work. She will demonstrate how easy it is to combine simple processes and techniques, such as bleaching, pyrography, carving, and gilding, to create unique, dynamic surfaces.

VIVIEN GRANDOILLER

Vivien began studying carpentry in 2003 and holds degrees in cabinet and furniture-making and design and began woodturning in 2011. Vivien's work is characterised by simple geometric forms that combine turning, sanding and painting. Using a specialised hollowing technique, he creates trompe l'oeil effects, amplified by colour. He likes working with the effects of light and colour, and the way in which they reveal grain, shades of shades, and

form. He enjoys pure and tight lines, which he considers pleasing to the eye and touch.

Vivien Grandouiller's symposium presentations

• **Spheres**

Vivien will demonstrate the turning of a sphere, hollowing off-centre with lathe and Foredom rotary tool, painting with airbrush, and masking techniques for sandblasting.

• **Ogives and Menhirs**

Vivien will demonstrate turning a different grain, painting with airbrush, sculpting with Foredom rotary tool, and masking techniques for sandblasting. (Ogive: a point or arch in Gothic architecture. Menhir: an upright-standing stone.)

About the AAW Annual Symposium

The AAW's 32nd Annual International Symposium will bring together more than 1,200 turners from around the globe to learn, share, and celebrate the art and craft of woodturning, making it the largest woodturning event in the world. Learn more at <http://tiny.cc/Portland2018>.



Sally Burnett's Corvus Nero Woven Black



Vivien's Ogives and Menhirs Colours

SHOWS AND EVENTS

PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX BROSI



Whalebone by Max Brosi. Max is a demonstrator at the event

FEATURED
EVENTS

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER LYONS

Limerick Chapter's winning entry in the 2017 Chapter challenge

AWGB Seminar

When: 5-7 October 2018

Where: Yarnfield Park Training & Conference Centre, Stone, Staffordshire

Web: www.awgbwoodturningseminar.co.uk

This three-day seminar is being held in a new venue and will feature demonstrations from 10 internationally renowned turners from six countries, helping people to learn essential skills and techniques as well as inspiration to create new works.

Irish Woodturners Guild National Seminar

When: 13-14 October 2018

Where: Radisson Blu Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick, Ireland

Web: www.iwg.ie/drupal/Seminar2018

This annual two-day event is Ireland's premier showcase of woodturning from around the world in a friendly and informal atmosphere. The line-up includes Cindy Drozda, Stefan Behr, Jan Hovens, Paul Howard, Liam O'Neill and Philip Mahon. The seminar will also include the Chapter Challenge competition.

Makers Central

When: 5-6 May 2018

Where: National Exhibition Centre, Marston Green, Birmingham, B40 1NT

Web: www.makerscentral.co.uk

Utah Woodturning Symposium

When: 10-12 May 2018

Where: UCCU Events Centre, 800 W University Parkway Orem, UT, US

Web: utahwoodturning.com

Woodworks@Daventry 2018

When: 11-12 May 2018

Where: Daventry Leisure Centre, Lodge Road, Daventry, NN11 4FP

Web: www.tudor-rose-turners.co.uk

Weird & Wonderful Wood

When: 19-20 May 2018

Where: Haughley Park, Wetherden, Nr Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 3JY

Web: www.weirdandwonderfulwood.co.uk

The Toolpost Open House

When: 2-3 June 2018

Where: Unit 7, Hawksworth, Southmead Industrial Park, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7HR

Web: www.toolpost.co.uk

American Association of Woodturners Symposium

When: 14-17 June 2018

Where: Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Portland,

OR, US

Web: www.woodturner.org

UK & Ireland Woodturning Symposium

When: 30 June-1 July 2018

Where: Doubletree by Hilton hotel, Paradise Way, Walsgrave Triangle, Coventry, CV2 2ST

Web: www.ukiws.co.uk

Woodfest Wales

When: 28-29 July 2018

Where: Caerwys, North Wales

CH7 5BP (A55, J31, signposted from J31)

Web: <http://bit.ly/2FRTu8S>

Norwegian Woodturning Cruise

When: 20 August-1 September 2018

Where: Starting at Stavanger, Norway

Web: www.woodturningcruise.com

Southwest Association of Turners Symposium

When: 24-26 August 2018

Where: Waco Convention Center, 100 Washington Ave, Waco, TX 76701, US

Web: www.swaturners.org

Yandles & Sons Woodworking Show

When: 7-8 September 2018

Where: Hurst Works, Hurst, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6JU

Web: www.yandles.co.uk

Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium

When: 14-16 September 2018

Where: The Ranch/Larimer County Fairgrounds, Loveland, CO 80538, USA

Web: www.rmwoodturningsymposium.com

Mid Atlantic Woodturning Symposium

When: 29-30 September 2018

Where: 5 S Queen St, Lancaster, PA 17603

Web: <http://www.mawts.com>

Bentley Woodfair

When: 28-30 September 2018

Where: Bentley, Halland, East Sussex, BN8 5AF

Web: www.bentley.org.uk

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When: 26-27 October 2018

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Web: www.wptwest.co.uk

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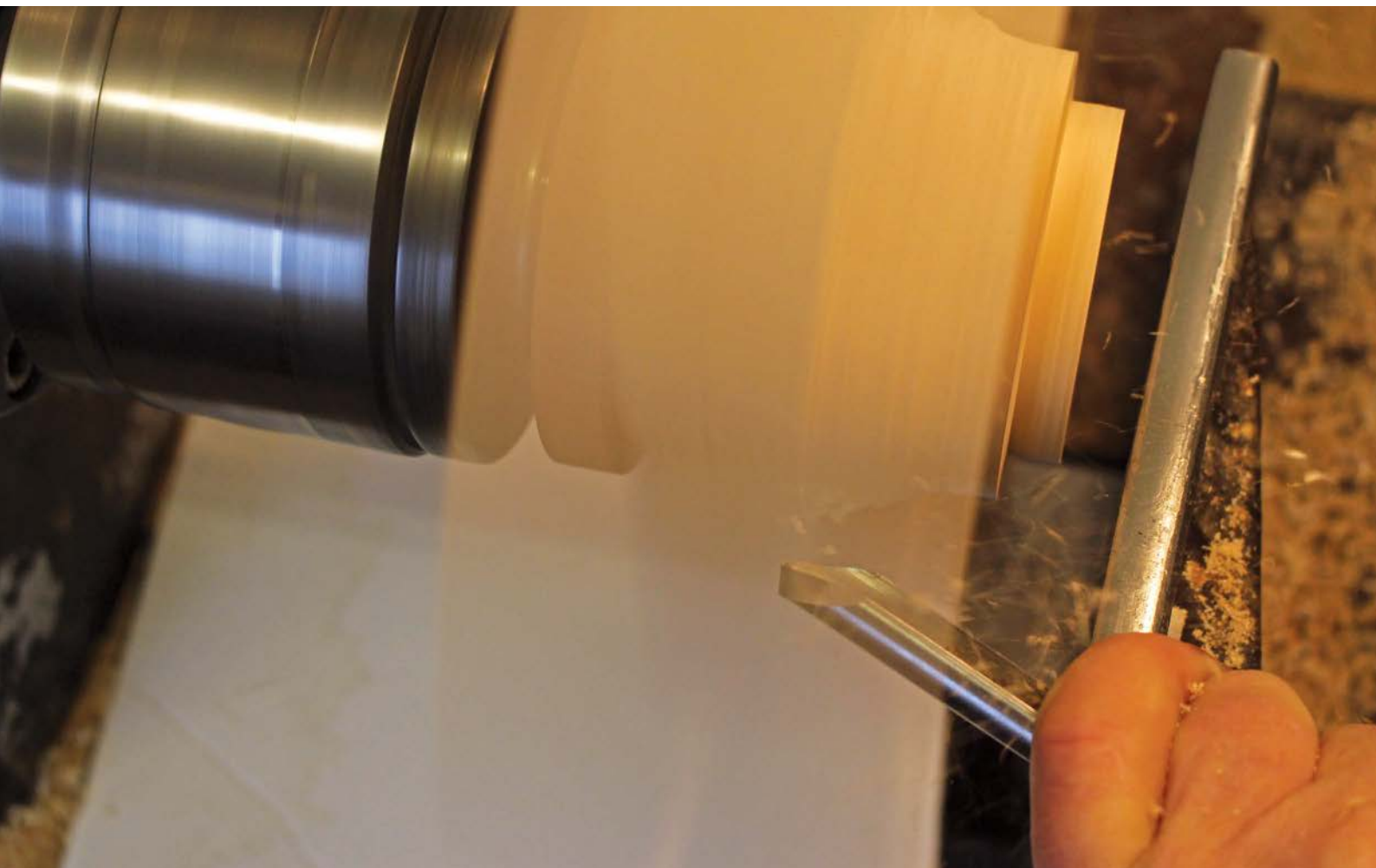
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Square-edged turning

Andy Coates explores some techniques for and issues with turning forms from square-edged stock



At some point in your turning practice the idea may occur to you of turning something from a blank that has not been pre-cut into a disc, or is not square stock that you turn between centres. It is a natural progression and one that many people take – and, conversely, one that many people do not. The primary reason for not doing so is usually because it looks scary. And in truth, it can be. Whether it be square face-grain stock, branch wood, rectangular stock, or some other configuration, such as a cube, they all share something important in common – square corners. And square corners are a scary proposition when they are spinning on a lathe. My father-in-law calls them, not unreasonably, ‘knuckle knockers’. And knocking knuckles is precisely what we need to avoid. It is something you do not want to try even once.

You may have unwittingly worked

with square edges already if you have done any spindle turning. The abacus, or pommel, is a square-edged feature on a spindle, and while you come at it from a slightly different angle than we will here, it is nonetheless a square feature that requires that you don’t chip out the edges to achieve a satisfactory result. Another difference is that it is highly unlikely you would ever injure yourself turning a spindle feature – square-edged faceplate work does not carry the same degree of certainty of safety. It can be dangerous, can result in injury and, accordingly, it requires complete focus during preparation and execution.

We might reasonably consider two different categories of square-edged project – a) the regular blank, and b) the irregular blank. A regular blank project might be a bowl turned from a square blank rather than from a disc cut from

the square blank. Mounting such a blank can be achieved in exactly the same way as for a circular blank, and the resulting blank will be balanced on the lathe. An irregular blank might be a small log or branch section, mounted crossways on the chuck, or a rectangular board mounted similarly. These blanks effectively form a propeller when the lathe is running. They might be in balance, if mounted centrally, but the wings produce a strong draft and can be noisy. And consequently scary.

In some instances you will find that mounting techniques are obvious and essentially no different from conventional holding techniques, but in others you will find that modifications to usual mounting practices are required to mount a blank safely and securely. Do not be afraid of overthinking how you mount such blanks. Safety must always be the primary consideration. Turning is fun. Getting injured is not.

◀ Basic tools

- Long-grind 10mm & 20mm bowl gouges
- Parting tools – various sizes.

It should not need stating, but all tools should be freshly ground to the keenest edge possible, and the edges must be kept keen throughout the turning process.

Stock selection

Stock suitable for such projects will tend to be obvious in as much as it is square. Short branchwood sections are ideal for winged bowls, square blanks bought as un-cut bowl blanks are equally useful, but make sure the blanks are of regular size until you are comfortable with turning such blanks in this manner. Narrow short planks are also ideal, but once again try to ensure that they are of consistent dimensions along the length. It is advisable to reject wood with faults, often referred to as 'character wood', as these present enough safety issues when mounted in a conventional manner without adding a further element of danger by mounting them for square-edged work.

SAFETY

- Working with square-edged/multi-sided work presents danger in relation to the extending edges and corners. Complete focus is required.
- As a minimum you should have and use: a high-impact-rated full-faceshield, respiratory protection and dust extraction.
- At all times ensure the workpiece is behind the toolrest (headstock side) and fingers, hands, arms and body are in front of the tool rest (tailstock side).
- Pay particular attention to the surety of mounting and consider the balance of the workpiece as a part of your personal safety review process.
- Rotate the work by hand to check that nothing is fouling the rest or lathe prior to switching on the lathe.
- Stop the lathe before adjusting the toolrest and toolrest assembly.
- A lathe with variable speed is preferable. A remote-control pod is a real advantage. Always start the lathe on the slowest speed and increase to fastest safe speed slowly.
- Fastest safe speed might be a lot lower than that at which one usually turns when working with round blanks. Speed choice is based on size, shape thickness and condition of the blank. It is always best to err on the side of caution. Use slower rather than higher speeds when in doubt as to what is best.
- Multiple light cuts are better than one heavy cut. Not only for control, but also to minimise the risk of breakout or chipping occurring.

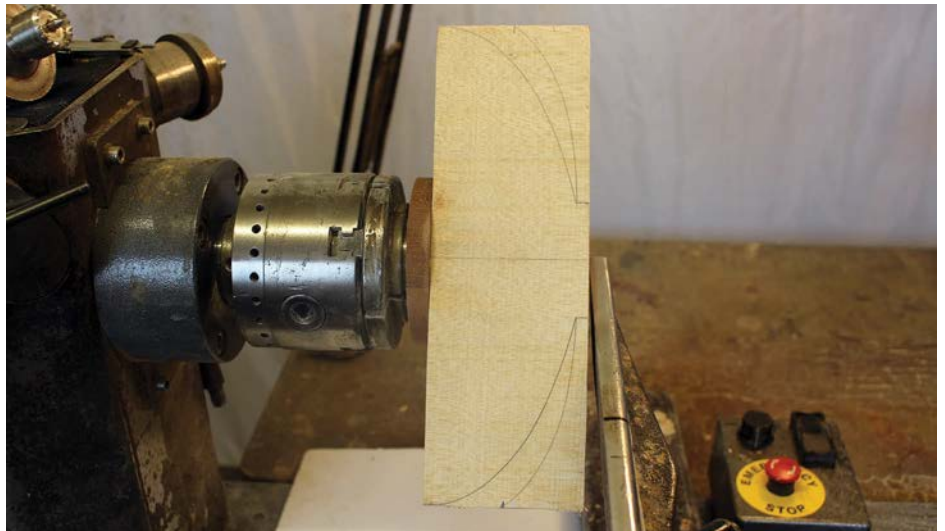
Mounting

Mounting square-edged workpieces needs to be done on a piece-by-piece basis. Each variant will suggest a different method, and size, weight, branchwood with bark, or clean stock can have an influence on the method used. A centrally mounted clean-stock blank may be perfectly safe if mounted on a conventional screw chuck (see centre picture). The tailstock can always be brought into play to add a further level of safety and security. Cube blanks require mounting along the longest axis, and driving on a friction drive between the headstock and a revolving ring centre, with pin removed, is a tried and trusted method. This method also makes it simple to align the blank correctly. Place a mark on the toolrest where a corner aligns and then check that each of the other two on the same axis – there will be six corners in total in two axes – align at the same mark (see lower left picture).

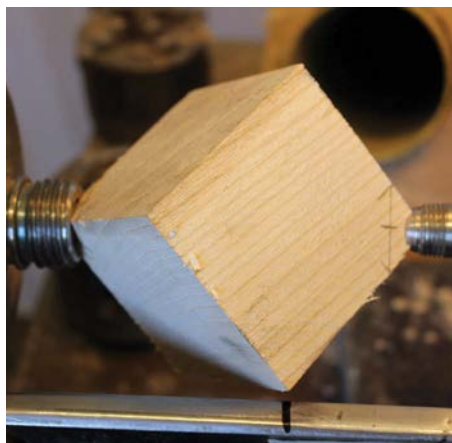
Mounting square-edged blanks accurately is of paramount importance. Rather than using a pencil a marking knife, or craft knife, will give a more

accurate intersection which can be marked with an awl to ensure the dead centre is marked (see lower right picture). Failing to mark the centre precisely will lead to wings of uneven height or position relative to the other wing(s) or corners. Using the accurately placed centre mark as the reference for a recess drilled out on a pillar drill will further ensure central mounting. Pin, O'Donnell or engineering jaws can then be used for holding in the recess. If this method is used for branchwood with the bark retained, an area of bark around the recess should be removed to prevent the chuck hold being compromised.

The Forstner recess holding method can be used for off-set workpieces as well as centrally mounted workpieces. It should, however, be noted that attempting an off-set project presents yet further difficulty to what is already a tricky operation. With a large, heavy lathe off-set work is rarely a problem but with a smaller, lighter lathe, vibration can be a real issue. The only real method of addressing this issue is to counter-balance



Blank mounted on a central screw chuck mount



Cube blank mounted between mandrel head and rotating ring centre



Using a marking knife to ensure accuracy when centring

the workpiece. In order to avoid marking the workpiece a counter-balance rig can be easily fashioned and attached the back of the chuck (see middle left picture). This requires that the backplate of the chuck be drilled and tapped to accept set screws, so do check that this will not damage the chuck or invalidate any warranty remaining. You also need to ensure that the counter-balance rig has clearance between the chuck and back of the lathe headstock. Once attached small weights (these are workshop cast lead weights) can be screwed or bolted to the balance arm until the workpiece is balanced (see middle right picture). It goes without saying that everything should be double checked for security and fastening prior to beginning work, and the lathe should always be started at its lowest speed and increased progressively.



Bored hole ready for pin jaws, but the hole can be a large diameter hole to suit larger diameter jaws



Counter-balance jig attached to chuck



Off-set blank mounted on Forstner bit recess using expanding jaws



Lead weights screwed to jig to balance off-set blank

Making the cut

Cutting will always be the most difficult aspect of working with square edges, and there are no magic solutions to reduce the level of difficulty. There are, however, some techniques that can help.

The first is speed. Instinctively you will feel that the workpiece should be rotated slowly, but the opposite is, in fact, the case. You need to be able to run the piece at the highest speed that you can safely do so. Having only two (in this case) wings protruding means that you will only be cutting wood for possibly 40° of the rotation. For the remainder of the rotation the tool is in air. And this is where problems will occur if they do.

Good and consistent tool control is vital. The outer and inner extremes of the wings have been marked in red and the ghosting is clearly apparent. Conventionally you would cut from centre out toward the rim, but with a winged square-edged workpiece this cut can put too much pressure on the wings and they will flex, possibly resulting in a catch.

Another problem with a cut from centre to rim is the tendency to pull out of the cut early as you approach the rim. This is almost instinctive – the rim is the scariest area to cut and the brain seems to take over and pull you away from it. There are two alternative approaches.

Place a sheet of white card or paper on the lathe bed and direct a strong bench light above the workpiece. Place the toolrest parallel

and as close as possible to the workpiece. Check it does not foul. With the bevel area directly under the flute facing the direction of the cut take a very light entry cut. Initially, the contact is only with the cutting edge, but the bevel will follow immediately. You will briefly feel when it cuts wood and you must not push towards the headstock. Keep the tool in line heading for the centre and traverse as slowly and evenly as possible. Due to the intermittent cut your speed of travel needs to be slow in order to maximise the period the tool cuts wood. As you progress toward the centre the period you are 'cutting air' for reduces incrementally and the cut will become more stable. The second approach is to take the same cut but on the lower wing of the tool with the tool quite closed. This is a shear push cut, and not for the faint-hearted. The danger here is of a catch on the wing, but with good control it is possible to make the cut efficiently and safely. Remember at all times to keep the tool parallel and stable. Close control is vital.

It can be easier to work along the wings in steps, setting a good surface and line and then progressing in the same fashion. The main aim is to make the cut without breaking out the corners.

Most of these types of form result in decorative bowls or boxes, and the solid material at the centre is used to create the bowl or box. Aim to terminate the wings cleanly at the junction between the two areas.



The ghost image of a piece of square-edged work

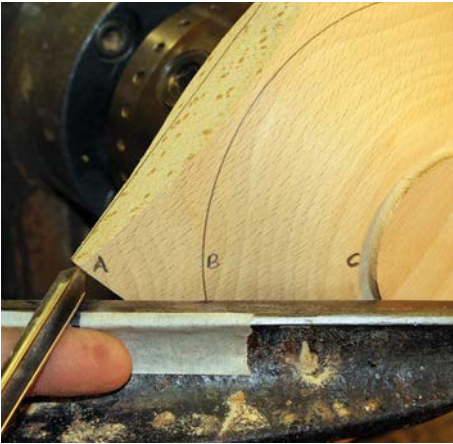


The bevel directing the cut



Work down in steps

◀ Making the cut on three and four-cornered workpieces



Cutting in two directions



Cutting through three corners



Refining the shape

Square-edged work where there are more corners is slightly less problematic than a workpiece with two distinct protruding wings. The period you will be cutting air is reduced significantly, which leads to a more stable cut, and in the case of a bowl this also means that the cut can be made in two parts, one more stable than the other.

On a square-edged bowl it can help to take the cut from A to B from edge inwards, and the cut from C to B in the conventional, centre-to-rim, fashion. The intersection can be blended with a sheer cut using the wing of the tool. There is no intermittent cut in this area so the cut is exactly as it would be for a round bowl.

When turning tri-cornered objects you obviously have three corners to contend with. Here again the key is to maintain bevel support and resist the inclination to push the tool forward as a reaction to bevel support being lost during 'air time'. Keep the course of travel consistent and the speed of travel slow but sure. Working from a cube of wood makes

producing a tenon tricky, but a narrow stub tenon to suit pin or engineering jaws works well. You will notice that you will initially have two peaks showing as ghosts. These are formed by the six corners of the cube (the other two are, of course, used for holding). You can retain all six corners in some designs, or you may choose to retain just three for a traditional tri-cornered bowl. In the top right-hand picture the workpiece has been cut until only the three corners closest to the headstock remain. Refining the shape can be achieved with a shear pull cut. On these forms the pull cut is more controllable and stable.

Having achieved a satisfactory outer shape and formed a suitable mounting tenon the piece can be remounted and hollowed. The walls of conventional round bowls can flex during hollowing, and not only is it no different for square-edged/cornered vessels, but it can be more pronounced due to bevel pressure and the lack of supporting wood around the corners. It is therefore vital that as

little outward pressure as possible be applied to the surface of the wood. Keep tools freshly ground to reduce resistance to the cut and take light cuts.

A common vessel in this range is the natural-edged winged vessel, and this is something you may possibly wish to try.

If you have tried natural-edged work previously you will be aware of the problems associated with retaining the bark. When you combine this with a square-edged workpiece the problems only increase. There is no hard and fast rule to be followed that will ensure success. In fact, the bark on the piece illustrated was removed as it proved far too stringy to be appealing. The key, on species with more suitable bark, is very sharp tools and a clean push-cut entry.

Pull cuts tend to work less effectively on branchwood winged forms because the pressure of the wing can tend to pull the bark up as it passes (see picture below). This would be a recoverable problem if a series of light push cuts from the edge inwards was taken.



Cutting the internal corners

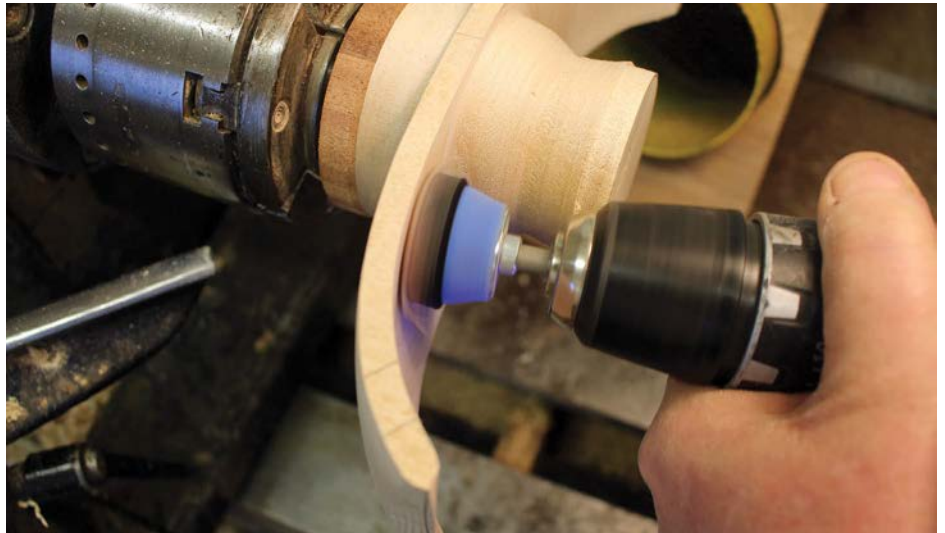


Cutting through a bark edge

Abrading square-edged work

It will no doubt come as no surprise that my advice for abrading square-edged objects is short and simple – abrade with the lathe stationary, the spindle locked, and do it carefully, by hand if necessary.

There will be areas on winged objects that comprise wings and a bowl or box that you will feel confident of abrading without risk of injury, but in the main the task is far better undertaken with the lathe stationary and the workpiece locked in position. There are those who feel confident using rotary-drive arbors on rotating square-edged work, but there is always the possibility of the abrasive snagging and causing a catch. The risk is not worth the potential harm or damage to the workpiece.



Sanding the work while the lathe is stationary

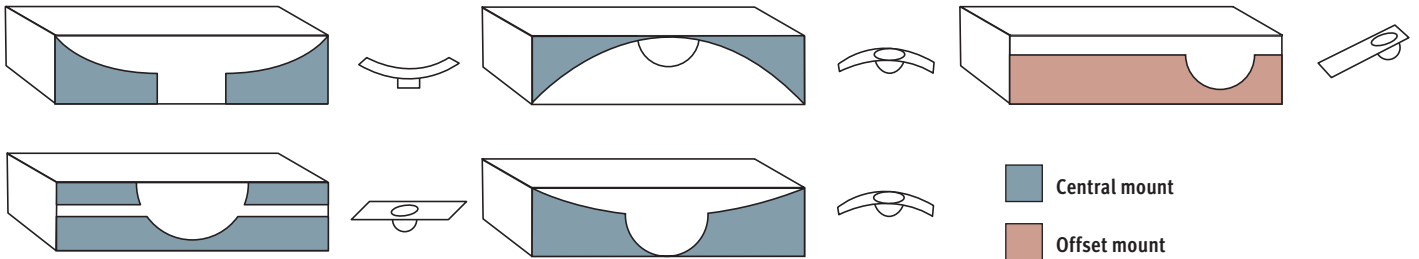
Conclusions

Turning square-edged, winged, or cornered vessels can be an exciting addition to your turning repertoire, and can certainly result in some visually stunning objects. However, the potential for personal harm should not be discounted, and all reasonable steps to mitigate potential dangers should

be taken. Keep fingers, hands and other body parts on the tailstock side of the toolrest, wear a suitable full-face safety mask, turn when fresh, not tired, and remove all potential distractions from the work area.

As is always the case, what you do with these techniques is up to you. You will no doubt have your own ideas

and designs, but to give you a start here is a selection of ideas based on a workpiece blank 250mm by 80mm by 80mm. Some could have a lid added to create a lidded box, others could be enhanced off-lathe with pyrography, stain, paint, decoupage, whatever takes your fancy. Above all else be safe and enjoy. ●



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Australian wonders

Mark Baker talks to Renato Spagnolo about his amazing work



PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN SPAGNOLO UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

I am a carpenter by trade and run a small, family-owned building contracting business with my wife Silvana. Our work covers all aspects of construction, from residential to industrial and civil (bridges) projects.

We have two sons – a diesel mechanic and a surveyor. I was born at Coffs Harbour on the north coast of New South Wales, halfway between Sydney and Brisbane. We travelled a lot for



**ABOVE: Calla lily form
LEFT: Sculptural table**

work but more recently it is more locally based, which allows a little more time for me to spend in the workshop.

I am still very much hands-on in our business so the 'little more time in the workshop' to create special pieces is probably a dream rather than reality. Work and family commitments see the weeks just fly past and weekends become a blur. Friends and acquaintances often ask: 'What will you do if you ever retire?' My standard reply is: 'Just give me a chance.'

Starting turning

My introduction to the lathe was during my high school days in the late sixties and for almost 45 years that early learning had been hibernating somewhere in the deep subconscious... I think that means the same as saying, having never tried again.

Silvana, who is the arty person in our partnership, had been doing carving classes with the late Neil Scobie, and his very good friend John Van Der Kolk, for a couple of years. She had been trying to convince me to have a go and try Neil's classes. The resistance came to a crossroad in late 2007 when she booked a spot on a weekend carving course. I had a great time and another was booked before the first was over. Neil and I hit it off from the first day, just as everybody did when they first met Neil, such was the presence of the man.

Before the second weekend course was over I had managed to get a spot in his impossible-to-get-into weekly night-time workshops. That was the beginning, the passion started, the toys began to build up in my workshop, albeit they were not used enough. Neil reintroduced me into the real world of turning while undertaking classes at his Bucca Creek Woodwork Studio. I was not a confident turner but keen to experiment with carving on turned shapes. At that stage I really had no idea that this was now the new normal.

CLASSES

In one of my early sessions of Neil's classes, I was asked what would I like to make next and perhaps I should start planning and doing some sketches. Silvana had always loved Neil's little suspended urns, so it was her suggestion to expand one of his early types from 200mm high to a full-blown 1000mm tall. I submitted sketches and full-size templates to the coach, Neil, for approval. 'Well you had better get started,' was his instruction.

That piece is called Tribute. It was my very first project on the lathe since leaving school. The vessel is constructed of three blocks of white beech (*Gmelina leichhardtii*). The three blocks of 900mm x 300mm x 100mm were laminated together. The blank was turned on Neil's homemade lathe. I used his homemade hollowing tool, which was of a length and mass to handle up to 200mm of cantilever over the toolrest up inside the vessel. The legs were interesting. I had never attempted aluminium carving before, let alone detailed geometric carving or using sandblasting as a medium to introduce texture and tone.

Tribute became the first piece in the series of three suspended urns that I have now dedicated to the time I was fortunate enough to spend with Neil. Although completed in 2009, Tribute was judged best piece in the instant gallery at Turnfest Symposium held on the Gold Coast, Australia, in March 2017. The 2017 Turnfest All Stars Symposium was dedicated as a tribute year to Neil Scobie, who passed away in May 2016. To take out the inaugural Neil Scobie Award for Excellence with my Neil Scobie-inspired piece called Tribute just gave me the greatest feeling possible.



Tribute

Influences

My time at Bucca Creek Woodworks with Neil has had the biggest influence on all of my woodwork, not just turning and carving. He challenged all his students to develop their own styles while gaining confidence using his techniques.

He promoted the principle of not simply 'knocking off' other professional artists' work, especially when offering your work for sale. He also felt strongly about the need to acknowledge the artists who may have inspired the piece or ideas behind a piece when you display something that was not entirely yours.

The confidence and experience gained at Bucca Creek fuelled a desire to learn more about who was doing what and how around the world. Neil convinced me to attend Turnfest in 2012 – Australia's largest symposium for woodturners. He introduced us to all of his friends and artists from all over the world, each of whom is world-class in their own right. I felt way out of my comfort zone but I have gradually gained the confidence to display some of my pieces in the instant gallery each year.

RESEARCH

My research left me with a special liking for the work of Ron Fleming. Some of my earliest turned and carved pieces have his calla lily influence and I am still developing shapes and forms on that theme.

Betty Helen Longhi has been teaching and making beautiful work in metal forms and her work is definitely inspiring my latest designs.

Silvana, with her special designs, also challenges my skills and techniques. The Wave vase is entirely our own design with a first-time addition of colour. We have been told that this piece shows resemblance to the work of Gordon Ward from Western Australia. We had never known of his works but the mind can play tricks on your influences when you are trying to scramble together something unique. I think there are not too many things that have not been tried before in one form or another and that is what I believe drives everyone's desire to be different.

I love the work of German biologist Ernst Haeckel. His work with micro-organisms and drawings of radiolarians (in the late 1800s) from the depths of the oceans makes a great study. This led to the design for my second in the suspended urn series called Mariana, and its miniature prototype. This design was inspired by Haeckel's sketches of a single-celled organism called the Thalamophora found in the depths of the Mariana Trench.

The third suspended urn in the series had its early design stages based on concepts from Haeckel's drawings and mythology surrounding the sea and monsters from the deep. The Kraken, which is a giant squid, is by far the most detailed and intricate piece I have tackled and a first venture into carving a life form which appears to be superimposed on a vessel. That piece has more than 400 hours of work invested in it. A quarter of those hours were spent on the three carved aluminium legs. Sadly, while he saw the sketches, drawings, and the final set-out on the turned raw vessel, Neil never got to see the finished piece, which was only completed a couple of days before the 2017 Turnfest Symposium where it was displayed for the very first time.



Mariana

Working methodology

With turning and carving, we have been taught that mistakes are 'design opportunities', but a completely different set of rules applies to furniture and cabinetmaking – if you muck up a component, just throw it over your left shoulder and make another. There are no options except the promise not to do that again.

I believe thorough planning with sketches, models, prototypes and good templates will eliminate 95% of mistakes across all disciplines. The other 5% is down to a number of things, namely thinking the processes through, good set-up, attention to detail, concentration, quality of tools and equipment and skill levels appropriate to the task and safety. That doesn't mean being afraid to try something new.

My best 'design opportunity' evolved after sanding through a calla lily vase while trying to get the thickness down to less than 1mm. That little misadventure has led to a new series with windows and challenged the whole thought process about where the next subtle change might be.

By far the most challenging aspect for my projects in these early years is design and the ideas and not detailing the processes for a project. With carpentry and drafting in my daily work, the latter is the easiest task.

I am fortunate to have Silvana to bounce ideas off, with hers usually being the winner. My advice to anyone struggling for design ideas would be: try to start with a clean slate (open mind), look at the little things around you, take in the most basic detail in shapes and textures.

To give an example, in my last year of high school, I can remember my chemistry teacher told us to look at the flame on our gas Bunsen burners. We were asked to write down 20 or 30 distinct details about that flame. The tip of the flame is made up of three points – not one, there is a visible separation between the top of the burner and base of the flame, etc. This is called 'observing' and relates to everything we do. Some of us are able to do this easier than others but we can all improve on that skill.

Challenges

Design is not the only challenge we woodworkers and turners face. Most home workshops have space issues (lack of) so clutter becomes a safety issue and how we manage those things is a challenge.

Then there are the timbers, glues and finishes and what will work best for me and also what can I do with the tools and equipment I have. Neil's favourite saying



The Kraken marked out and ready for rough shaping



The detail after sanding

around the workshop was: 'You need one of these and remember, he who dies with the most tools wins.'

A good personal experience with the challenge of material choice was with the Mariana suspended urn. Although number two in the series, I had never planned a number three. Neil suggested that a modelling clay model then a prototype be made. I believe this was to get me used to good process and project pre-planning. Anyway, the initial plan was to use white beech and polished aluminium legs, similar to the Tribute piece. As prototypes are usually not display pieces I decided to set it up with timber legs to save time. The little piece looked so good with West Australian jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) legs that I finished and polished it for our own display.

Mariana was completed with carved aluminium legs polished and trial fitted. The whole thing just didn't work the way

I wanted. I believe the highly polished smooth carving and shiny aluminium blended together, whereas Tribute has texture and contrasts between sandblasted and polished white beech and the aluminium legs.

The prototype caught everyone's eye but the real piece was lacking appeal. The carving was said to be technically the best I had ever done. White beech is just the most beautiful timber to carve and sands up to a silky, glass-like finish, so the lack of appeal wasn't the vessel, it was the legs. Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*) legs were carved to the same shape as the aluminium and the two timbers worked a treat together.

Number three, the Kraken, really did come to life legs first, so to speak, with a rich, deep red slab of Australian red cedar (*Toona ciliata*) purchased to contrast with the spare aluminium legs left over from the Mariana project.



Kraken

Future

In the immediate future, more time in the workshop to improve on skill levels and techniques would be great. At present I have a very small body of works, fewer than 25 pieces based on turned forms, so I consider myself as still doing my apprenticeship. To date none of my pieces, whether turned, carved or joinery, have been for sale. A selected few have been given to family and friends as birthday or wedding gifts. I have only had one commission, that was for a pair of Scobie-designed document boxes or jewellery chests.

The boxes were made from Australian red cedar for the frames, with each box's panels and draw fronts cut from two different slabs of coolabah burl (*Eucalyptus microtheca*). The Australian red cedar is a pleasure to work with but the coolabah burl can be a nightmare for tear-out and cracking.

In a couple of years' time I would really like to be in a position to spend most of my time in the workshop, creating some of our own designed pieces, both cabinetry and those that have their early stages on the lathe. A couple of nice commissioned pieces would be OK along the way to help pay the bills.

Development

I have been asked if I ever give up on a project. The simple answer is no, but there are always 10 or more unfinished pieces around the house or workshop. Some are put aside waiting for more inspiration to get the detail right, others are projects started in the classroom with the intention of sanding and polishing some other time at home. Mainly it is the lack of time or pressure to make something new for a special event that sees the backlog of unfinished work grow, but I will not give up on something.



All of my turnings are used as a base for further development, design and carving. I am still blown away by the works of J. Paul Fennell, Jacques Vesery, the late Binh Pho and, closer to home, that of Neil Turner, carvings by Grant Vaughan and countless others. There are techniques for surface texturing and piercing that I have not even explored yet. With all this comes an appreciation for all forms of turnings, from the most delicate turnings of Jean-François Escoulen and Cindy Drozda to the monster stump turning and hollowing of Gary Stevens. I will spend more time going back over the teachings of Richard Raffan and Stuart Batty.

Other projects

Along with the turning and carving I also like all forms of cabinetry and furniture making. Jewellery cases and blanket boxes, as mentioned, are my standard gifts for family and friends. There is

always another run of five or six of these partly finished in the workshop until Silvana reminds me that we have to have one finished in a week's time.

About four years ago I wanted to lift the bar and decided to make a special chair. Our youngest son is also a part-time photographer and hinted that a chair for taking portraits would be awesome. Research, sketches, more research, advice from Neil. Sam Maloof had not long passed away so his designs were very much in the forefront, David Upfill-Brown, Tony Kenway produce absolutely magnificent work and many others were studied as well.

I wanted a design that was upholstered and had loose-fit or inserts for the seat and back, whereby we could change colours or fabrics for different settings or themes. The chair needed to be part of the photograph, not just supporting the subject. Eventually all but one design was eliminated and the project with the highest level of difficulty (for this first-time chairmaker) began.

My design, Studio Chair, is an adaptation of a walnut (*Juglans* spp.) chair made by Douglas Finkel. My version features an extended back, which is approximately 150mm higher and wider than his original so as to project above the subject's shoulders. The padded seats and back can be easily removed, new fabric can be wrapped around and then put back.

Advice

With my limited experience I don't believe I am qualified to offer advice or tips to other turners, apart from the ever-present need for safety and not getting complacent as skill levels improve. Respect the fact that a professional turner at a demonstration can turn a cylinder from a square blank in seconds – if it takes you 10 minutes, it takes you 10 minutes.

A few years ago, a friend who owns and runs a turning school in northern Italy had just suffered a serious accident at the lathe. Someone had asked him to turn a platter for them. That person had arrived at the turning school with a pre-prepared laminated blank and just as the turning was being completed the platter flew in half. Moral of the story, be ever-mindful of where the dangers may strike from and always wear appropriate protective equipment.

In conclusion, I would like to dedicate my profile story to a great mate, friend and mentor, Neil Scobie, who 10 years ago started me on this fantastic journey. ●



ABOVE: Studio chair inspired by the work of Douglas Finkel

BELOW: Scobie-designed jewellery boxes



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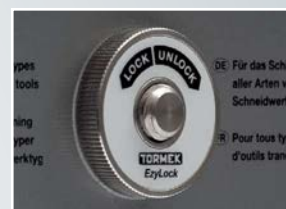
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Torus ring

Ernie Conover shows how a simple shop-built chuck makes turning napkin rings easy

Napkin rings are a useful bit of treenware that take both turned and joined forms. The latter are usually a hole drilled in a shape such as a bird or animal and often carved. Sadly, turned examples are not seen much at club meeting show-and-tell tables or in galleries.

I think this is because chucking is not very intuitive and fails miserably with scroll chucks. However, a simple series of jam chucks makes quick serial work of any number desired.

My wife Susan is a weaver, so we routinely dine with cloth napkins—handsomely woven ones, I might add. By turning a series of napkin rings from contrasting wood it is easy to tell whose napkin is whose. If one species of wood is to your liking you may stain it various colours, incise various numbers of grooves in the periphery with a V-scraper, or woodburn numbers, names

or symbols into them to set them apart. Making each ring unique is in keeping with the dictionary definition: 'A ring to hold (and distinguish) a person's table napkin when not in use.' Well, actually mine is generally trashed while Susan's is pristine, but that's another story.

A napkin ring is actually a torus, a shape that is also seen in architectural mouldings and at the base of columns. For napkin rings the outside and inside of the torus are flattened, making them look more like a low-profile car tyre.

Although a torus can be spindle turned, generally the strongest grain orientation is to faceplate turn it. The blanks for this project may be sawn from any 25mm to 30mm thick plank. I used a 28mm-thick walnut (*Juglans* spp.) plank. Start by using a pair of dividers/compasses to mark a 63mm circle on your chosen wood then bandsaw it just oversized.



1 The quick production method of mounting these small pieces of timber is to lay the perfectly flat face of the wood against the face of a chuck, or a faceplate, bring up a revolving centre and align it with the centre mark left from the dividers. Then, lock the tailstock in position and wind the revolving centre point into the wood so the tip penetrates just a little bit but holds the wood securely against the chuck. Rotate the work by hand to ensure everything is running true. Now, use a bowl gouge to trim the circle to that line.

2 Scrape a chamfer at each edge to facilitate jam chucking. To hold it you need to create a jam chuck. To do this, use a piece of wood, faceplate-oriented grain, somewhat wider than the torus ring turned. Mount it on a faceplate or create a spigot to grip in the chuck. Once it is mounted securely, bore or turn a hole just under the size of the outside ring diameter to a depth of a minimum 30% and a maximum 50% the depth of the ring. Once the hole is cut, taper the hole very slightly, then place the ring into the hole so the ring locks in place when gently tapped in place. If it does not lock, adjust the taper. Ensure it runs true.

3 Once the ring is secure and running true, use a low lathe speed and drill through the blank with a 38mm Forstner bit held in a drill chuck in the tailstock.

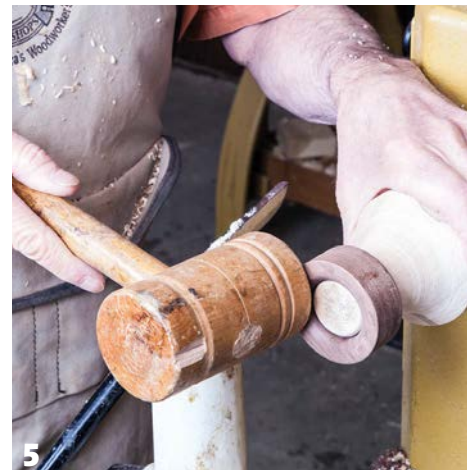
4 Now use a small bowl gouge to radius the edge of the centre hole. Sand the edge and inner section you can reach and, once done, reverse the piece and tap into the chuck again. Radius the centre hole again, sand the inner area and edge.

5 Mount a scrap piece of timber on a faceplate or hold it in a chuck. Turn a 3° taper, the nose of which just fits inside the bore of your piece. Gently tap the ring on to the cone until it runs true.

6 Now, use a bowl gouge to cut the outside edges to a radius that matches the ones cut on the inside. This is faceplate work so you want to cut from lesser to greater diameters to cut with the grain to minimise tear out.

7 Sand and apply a finish. You can reverse it multiple times and just put it on hand tight for sanding and finishing. I use wax or oil and burnish with shavings.

8 You can, if accurate and careful with marking and turning, turn multiples of the same size. It takes practice but it is worth it. You can alter the shapes of the rings also, try turning a fat, chunky doughnut shape for a sculptural piece. ●



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Turning resin and wood hybrid blanks

Keith Lackner explains some need-to-know information on techniques to turn and finish resin and wood infusions effectively

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With all the options of turning tools out today, it can get pretty overwhelming and confusing as to which to use when turning wood, let alone when you face the added element of wood that has been infused with resin. In this article I will explore what tools I use, what other tools can be used, tips on using them effectively and safely as well as getting the most from them.

But it is not just about the turning. I will also discuss the processes I use to finish my work resin/wood infusions, from sanding through to creating a high shine.

Safety

- As with any turning, thoroughly check that the resin wood infusion blank is sound. If you see any figures, cracks, or other anomalies, inspect it carefully to see if it might come apart. Check the join lines carefully to see if any separation has occurred. If you have any doubt about the blank at all, don't use it.
- Always wear personal and respiratory protective equipment.
- When turning, it is quite possible that long ribbons of resin are produced.

These readily wrap around the work and centres/chuck. DO NOT try to remove these while the lathe is running. If you try to do so, your fingers may get caught in them. Stop the lathe to remove them.

- A high lathe speed is not necessary to achieve a good finish.
- When using tipped tools or scrapers, never have the cutting tip/edge higher than the handle. Have the cutting edge below the handle height in a trailing mode.

Traditional gouges and scrapers

Bowl gouges, spindle roughing gouges, skews and scrapers are what most people think of when they think of turning tools. I spent all my early turning years watching and learning from master turners and craftspeople, so it only makes sense that I use gouges for most of my roughing and shaping.

My tool of choice for the bulk of my shaping and refinement, whether it is faceplate or spindle-oriented work, is a 13mm bowl gouge with a 40/40 grind. This is a grind used and recommended by Stuart Batty and it means the bevel at the nose of the gouge is ground at a 40° angle and the wings are swept back 40°. Other grinds that are commonly used are the Irish grind or the Ellsworth grind, which are both swept-back wing variants. I use a spindle gouge when I want to create some finer detail on spindle-oriented work, but the bowl gouge does the bulk of the work.

Most turning tool gouges are made from M2 high-speed steel (HSS). This serves turners well for most of the turning they are likely to encounter, but when turning resin or resin/wood hybrids it is like turning some of the very dense burrs or timber that is full of silica/resin deposits. The abrasive qualities will remove your cutting edge faster than just turning plain timbers. M2 HSS will work fine if one is doing just a few bits here and there. But in my opinion, if one is going to use the denser, harder timbers, timber/resin hybrids or even just

resin blanks more often than a few times a year, a better option is to use one of the more exotic steel variants such as M42 HSS. I like these because the cutting edge on the gouges with this grade of steel doesn't wear down as quickly as that on the standard M2 HSS.

For parting tools, skews and scrapers M2 HSS works perfectly due to them not being used as much for bulk material removal as the gouges. It is for the tools that do the main shaping and material removal that I like to use the M42 steel.

CONVENTIONAL CUTS

When turning resin-infused pieces, one can typically follow the conventional turning procedures one uses for faceplate or spindle-oriented blanks.

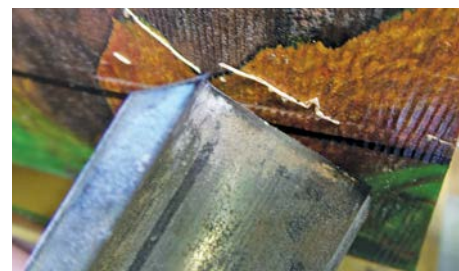
But, since resin does not have grain, depending on the make-up of the blank resin-to-wood ratio, following slavishly the rules of which way to cut what grain orientation of timber might not be necessary. This comes in handy when making small tight coves but, of course, if there is more wood than resin, cut the sections as you would for a totally wooden piece. If there is more resin than wood, you choose and make the value call as to what gives you the best results.

USING GOUGES

Most of my pieces – box/vase wood/resin blanks – begin as a square block. I typically mount the blank between centres and turn it down to a cylinder

using a spindle roughing gouge. If it is a bowl blank resin/wood hybrid I will use a bowl gouge to true everything up ready for refining the shape. For the purpose of this article I will use a spindle-oriented blank.

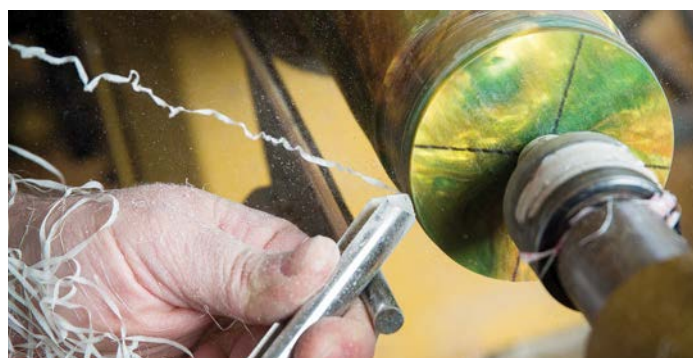
Set your toolrest so the cutting edge of the gouge is at centre or slightly above. Position the gouge on the toolrest and slightly lift the handle until the cutting edge begins to make contact with the resin. With a sweeping motion, move the gouge into the cut and move from left to right with the cut occurring on the lower wing. Repeat this process until the blank is round. Once the blank is round, I like to use my 13mm bowl gouge that has a long swept-back grind on its side as a shearing cut. This cut will leave a perfectly smooth finish. To achieve this cut you will need to turn the flute of the gouge so it is facing the piece and on a slight angle. Slowly pull the gouge along the wood/resin. When done correctly you will have a chip that resembles a corkscrew.



Spindle roughing gouge in use



Bowl gouge used to make a shear cut using the wings of a gouge much like a skew chisel



Bowl gouge being used to start shaping the blank



Bowl gouge shaping the outside of a hollow form



A spindle gouge being used to hollow out the end of a box, working from the lowest out and up to the top edge

BOWL GOUGE

Once your piece is perfectly round, all cleaned up and any imperfections have been removed, it is time to establish the shape of your project. For this I use my trusty 13mm bowl gouge. To start, have the flute of the gouge pointing in the direction of travel cut and in the closed position. If you are cutting from left to right, have the flute pointing at the 3 o'clock position, if cutting from right to left have the flute at the 9 o'clock position. Then enter the gouge into the wood in line with the bevel and gently push forward until you have the

bevel gently rubbing on the surface and open up the flute just a little to either the 1 o'clock or 10 o'clock position depending on which way you are cutting.

If done properly you should have a continuous ribbon coming off the piece, almost like silly string. Traditional gouges are, in my opinion, the best way to make a crisp, clean finish cut on the resin and wood. With plenty of practice and a combination of push, pull and shear cuts, a surface will be left that will contain no, or minimal, tear-out, and will allow you to begin sanding in finer grit grades.

HOLLOWING OUT

To remove the bulk of the inside of a resin and wood infusion, you can pre-drill to remove some waste and then use a gouge, as one would on the end grain of timber, working from the centre out and up towards the top edge. Make multiple light cuts. Due to the bevel not rubbing, go gently so as to minimise potential chatter and chipping of the resin. Make sure you leave enough wall thickness to remove any damage and to get to for final thickness and finishing later.



Working on a faceplate-oriented blank with a tipped tool wearing face protection and using a round cutter to refine the shape of the inside



A small sample of carbide tip shapes and sizes available

Turning with tipped tools

Recently companies have been emerging with various types of tipped tools. The metal used for them is typically HSS. These tools have some limitations but one thing they do really well is hold an edge for a very long time, especially while cutting resin.

For most of the rough-shaping and initial hollowing of my piece, I typically use radiused square carbide tip, which has a bevel at the front edge and is flat topped like a conventional scraper. There are other types of square, round and pointed-shaped flat-topped tips too. There is another type of cutter available to turners with a hollow area behind the cutting edge which I will look at later on in this article.

These flat-topped carbide tools make it easy to remove material very quickly and get down to a rough shape without having to stop and sharpen your edge frequently. These tools

are great for small shops, as they do not require the investment of a grinding system. To 'sharpen' the tool all you need to do is loosen the set screw and rotate the cutter. Once all the sides have been used, they can be thrown away and replaced with new ones.

HSS-tipped tools with small cutting surfaces can be used to rough-shape work, but they will need frequent sharpening. Carbide doesn't create as sharp an edge as HSS but the new grades of carbide hold a good edge and the edge created lasts a lot longer than any HSS edge, but both will produce good cuts.

Depending on the profile of the tool blade on which the cutter sits, you can have the cutter presented square on to the work or tilted at a shear-cut angle.

PRESENTATION ANGLES

For rough shaping and hollowing I like the tip to be about 13mm or so in size – bigger sizes are great for refining shapes but present too much edge to the work for rough shaping and waste removal.

The way these tools are used for initial waste removal and shaping is different from gouges. You need to place your toolrest so the cutter is cutting at centre or just below on external work, and on or just above centre with the handle of the tool just higher than the cutter tip on internal work. The nearer the tool is to horizontal the more aggressive the cut. By trailing the cutting tip, having the handle higher than the tip, the cut is gentler. If you raise the handle high, make sure you adjust the rest so you have the cutter in the right position to suit external or internal sections accordingly. On internal work, especially when working on enclosed forms, the ability to raise the handle too high will be limited due to fouling the opening of the form.

WASTE WOOD AND INITIAL SHAPING

When removing waste and rough shaping a blank, I prefer to use a square radiused-edge cutter. I use a series of gentle push cuts, either making a push cut to a specific depth before moving to the next cut, or making a series of smaller cuts along the work going back to the beginning, working ever deeper until I get to the surface level required. I recommend lining up the cutter head so only half of it is making contact with the material at any one time. This makes for less of an aggressive cut with a cleaner finish.

Once the blank is round this is when you can either switch to the round cutter or the diamond cutter to refine the shapes and create detail as required. Both tools work using the same principle as the square end. Slowly enter the cutter into the work at the right position for the area being cut and once you see the ribbon form from the resin you can move the cutter into the desired direction to achieve the shape you want. There is no bevel rub/control, it is a scraping cut. I primarily use tipped tools for hollowing due to the fact that you can cut when pushing, pulling and moving them laterally, making then a very efficient tool for hollowing, and makes hollowing with carbide tools a very efficient method.



The radiused square cutter I use for roughing and shaping



The cutter is capable of being used in a push cut, slid along the work to cut on its side or both at the same time, of course being mindful of cut depth and such like. Multiple light cuts are preferable to heavy cuts



The standard entry mode of the cutter to work for rough shaping is to have the handle just higher than the tip and the tip cutting on or just below centre on external surfaces or on or just above centre on internal surfaces



By raising the handle higher still, you might need to adjust the height of the rest so you have the cutter cutting in the right position on the area being cut. You end up with an even gentler cut than the initial shaping cut position



Having the handle very high is the gentlest cut of all and can be used to great effect, where reach allows, to minimise chipping the acrylic. It works well on dense timbers too

Common mistakes

The common mistake I see when people are turning resin is when the resin will look like it has a chipped/shattered surface. This can easily be broken into two reasons: sharpness and speed. Sharpness is the easiest to fix and to adjust. When your tool is dull you will be pushing harder to make your cut and you will notice you are no longer creating a ribbon and are more than likely creating dust. You are putting too much force into the resin due to a dull edge and that extra force is causing the resin to chip away. The other has to do with speed. Either your rpms are set way too slow for the travel speed of your cutter, or you are pushing your cutter across your work too fast, not allowing the cutter to do its job properly.

There are two ways to fix it. Either increase your rpms or slow down your cutting speed. Once the piece is balanced I prefer to select a speed appropriate for



A chipped/shattered surface

the size of blank and treat all of them as though they are bowl blanks. So if I were turning a 100mm blank, a speed between 850 and 1200rpm would be appropriate – there are good turning speed charts available. Do have a look and use them

as a guide but with the caveat to always err on the side of caution and go slower rather than faster. If shattering of the resin is happening and your tool is sharp for safety reasons, slow down your cutting speed and take a smaller cut.

Surface refinement

When refining a shape, larger cutting tips or conventional or negative-rake scrapers of the right profile to suit what is being cut work very well indeed. Just take a delicate cut using very little pressure into the work.

Earlier, I mentioned a different type of cutter, which has a groove behind the cutting edge creating a sharp cutting edge. These cutters are typically used to remove waste and refine the shape of internal work. When mounted on a round bar, they are typically used in shear cutting mode where the cutter is

presented at about 45° to the surface of the work. If you present this type of cutter on a round bar, like the scraper-tip type of tool used earlier with the tip horizontal to the work, they are likely to grab.

There are variants where the tip is angled downwards on the tool blade in negative rake position and mounted on a square bar. This type is stable and can be used to rough shape work. Again, vary the tilt of the cutter to the work by raising the handle a bit or a lot to get the cut you want.



Conventional scrapers work well when used in trailing mode, but you might find that negative rake scrapers can be even more effective



HSS scraper tips come on various sizes and shapes. Pick a shape of cutter that suits the area being refined. Some are mounted on round bars, square or set at an angle to cut in shear cut mode only



Round cutter, which has a groove behind the cutting edge on a round bar



The grooved cutter set on a tool at a negative rake angle

Sanding and finishing

Sanding is a very important part of turning that is often overlooked when creating pieces. I have found the best paper to use when sanding resin and wood is Abranet. The perforation of the paper makes it ideal for sanding resin and will not clog in the lower grits like standard paper. But stearate-coated aluminium oxide can be

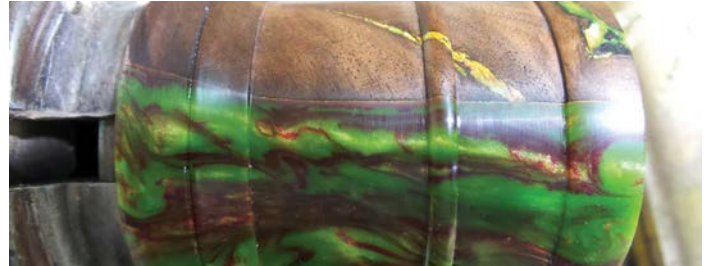
used to good effect. I start at as coarse a grade as required to remove the damage and work sequentially down to 600 grit before switching to standard paper. At 600 grit I have found no difference in clogging in Abranet and standard aluminium oxide abrasives. To really get the resin to come alive I always wet sand using Micromesh or

other micro-grades of abrasive going through the grits, water sanding through 12,000 grit.

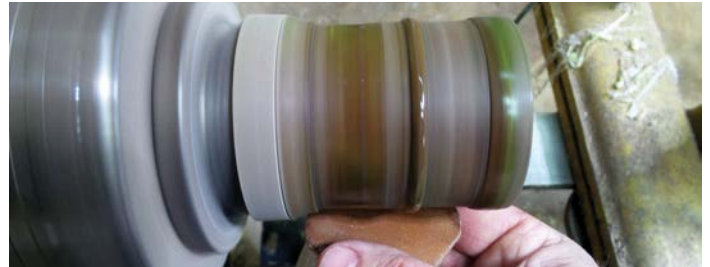
At this point you are ready for the finish. For the most part I like adding a nice oil finish giving the wood a nice warm glow, and really like the contrast from the warm glow of the wood and the high gloss of the resin.



Coarse abrasive removes the damage quickly



After working through the grits to 600



Wet sanding with micro-grades of abrasive

Finished piece

After following all the steps given in this two-part series you are left with a one-of-a-kind piece that can be custom made to any colour you want, and any design you wish. With resin casting you are only limited by your imagination and creativity. ●



A selection of finished resin and wood infusions

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Bar stool with curved backrest

Richard Findley picks up where he left off last month to complete his Windsor-style bar stool

Last month I described how I made the tall oak bar stool, turning the seat, legs and stretchers, drilling using the 'mirror trick' to form the turned mortise and tenon joints that hold the whole thing together.

The last article finished with the stool glued up, but I need to get it cleaned and levelled before work can begin on the curved backrest. I have a plan for the curved backrest but, with several options open to me on how to bend timber, I'm going to be entering new territory and the whole thing will be something of an experiment, so more on this later.



Marking the bottoms of the legs



Sawing the legs to length



Trimming the legs with an upturned plane held in the vice

Cleaning down

With the glue dry, the first job is to level the legs. The nature of the joints into the seat means that there is some variation in the finished lengths of the legs. Using the bed of the sawbench as a flat table top, I cut some wedges and place one under three of the legs, adjusting until the stool stands without rocking. I place a spirit level on top and stand back to get a visual of the overall stool. Some slight adjustments and I'm happy to mark the legs for cutting.

Using an off-cut of timber around 10mm thick, I rest my pencil on top and, using it as a makeshift scribe, I draw a line, parallel to the saw table. Laying the stool on its side on the bench, I use a saw to trim them to length. To perfect the bottoms of the legs I trim a small bevel around the edge of the base with my block plane before setting my hand plane upside down in the bench vice, flush to the bench top. Each leg is carefully drawn across the sharp blade to smooth, flatten and finally level it. The stool is regularly checked for rock on the bench and adjusted as needed.

Next I need to trim the ends of the through tenons and wedges. This is a simple job using a flexible Japanese flush cutting saw, which has no set on the teeth, allowing it to saw the tenon without marking the seat. The tenons are finished off with a freshly sharpened cabinet scraper with a curved edge and, finally, the whole seat is lightly sanded to 320 grit to match the rest of the stool.

Backrest – the plan

Traditional Windsor chairs often have curved backrests that are formed by steam bending. My planned backrest is just a simple curve slightly larger than the diameter of the seat, but I am aware that the radius I am aiming for is rather tight so possibly a little ambitious for a first bend. I am also aware that Windsor chairs are usually made out of green, or partly seasoned, timber which responds much better to steaming than the seasoned



Trimming the tenons with a flush cutting saw

material I use. But, undeterred and full of confidence, I decide to give it a go anyway.

Steamer

Steamers can be made in various ways, most often either from timber or exterior grade plywood, or from some sort of tubing or pipe. Bearing in mind that this is going to be used for this project and possibly a few times in the future, but not as a regular or long-term piece of equipment, I don't want to spend a huge sum on making it. Most chairmakers seem to prefer the wooden version for their regularly-used steamers, but with a sheet of good quality 18mm ply coming in at around £40, compared to a 3m length of underground soil pipe at around £10, I went with the soil pipe. I have read reports of PVC pipe melting due to the heat of the steam but, for a tanner, I figured I'd give it a go. I also need a way of making steam and by far the easiest and safest way is with a wallpaper stripper, which at £25 from the same supplier, seems quite reasonable.

The great advantage of PVC pipe is that it cuts and drills very easily. I cut it to around 800mm long – just a little longer than the wood I intend to steam – using a hand saw. I also drill two pairs of 15mm holes across the pipe, below the centreline, and insert turned dowels into the holes. These allow the piece of wood to be steamed, without laying on the



Using a cabinet scraper to finish the tops of the tenons

bottom of the tube, letting the steam fully circulate around the wood. I also drill a 15mm drain hole in the base of the pipe at one end, to allow the excess water to run out. The steamer has a 28mm fitting on the end of its hose, so I drill a suitable hole in the side of the pipe, around halfway along. The ends of the pipe are filled with simple turned, tapered bungs made from off-cuts.

I use my V-shaped cradle jig – which I usually use on my lathe for drilling into the ends of square stock for joining things such as newel posts – to support the steam pipe. The adjustable nature of the cradles allow me to sit the steam pipe at an angle, so the excess water formed by the cooling steam can run back down the pipe and out of the drainage hole.



The steamer in action

Wood for bending

Throughout this project I have been using kiln-dried European oak. Anyone who knows anything about steam bending will most likely raise an eyebrow when I say that I intend to use the same wood for my bent backrest. I know this stands less than a 50/50 chance of success, but if it does work it will look great, and bending oak, indeed even kiln-dried oak, isn't impossible. I know of a few chairmakers who regularly bend kiln-dried timber, even though it goes against the common belief that only green wood can be bent. I want to find out for myself, so I decide to carry on.

Preparing the timber

My idea is to have all parts for this stool turned, so I select a piece of the oak which has a good straight grain. I know that any short grain that doesn't run perfectly along the length of the blank leads to potential splitting when the wood is bent. Having run a tape measure



Turning the oak 'sausage' for the backrest

around the seat of the stool and roughly decided where I'd like the backrest to be positioned, I cut the blank to 35mm square and 630mm long and mount it between centres on the lathe. I rough it to a cylinder and make a series of sizing cuts along its length to set the diameter to my target 28mm. Using a roughing gouge I then simply 'join the dots', turning the whole spindle down to the diameter of the sizing cuts. A planing cut with my beading



The oak 'sausage' ready for the steamer

and parting tool used as a skew and I can sand it.

With a 28mm-diameter, 600mm-long oak sausage I am ready to get the steamer on. I connect up the steamer to my pipe and let it build up a good steam before putting the wood inside. Most of the instructions I have read on the subject suggest two to three hours should do the job. This gives me time to make the bending former while I wait.

Bending former

My initial plan is to make a two-part former, with a male and female part which can sandwich the bent piece of oak, holding it firmly while it sets in its new position. I glued and screwed two pieces of 18mm MDF together to give me a 36mm thick former and cut out the curve I need from each half on the bandsaw, being careful to allow for the thickness of the wood in between. The curves were cleaned down with a spokeshave and abrasive to make them suitably smooth and even.

I set a series of sash cramps to support the two halves of the former and to give me a way of bringing them together to form the bend. With everything prepared, I am ready to attempt my first bend.

EPIC FAIL

I remove the bung from one end of the steamer and, with a gloved hand, I quickly take the steamed oak over to the former. I had previously marked a centreline and the top face, so lining it up in the jig is straightforward. As I tighten the cramps I am still optimistic about the results, but that optimism soon



Bend one was an epic fail

dissolves as a slight bend begins to form, closely followed by a crack which grows more dramatic with each turn of the sash cramps screw. It is clear this isn't going to work.

It is immediately obvious that the style of former I made places pressure in only three points and offers no support to the wood being bent, so a rethink is needed.

ATTEMPT 2

After sleeping on the results of my first attempt at steam



Bend two was better but still not what I was aiming for

bending, the next day I cut a piece of straight-grained ash, turn it as I had before, only this time to 25mm, and place it in the steamer. By all accounts oak should bend, but ash is a good bit easier to do so. While this is steaming for a couple of hours, I go about changing my approach to the bend.

Many chairmakers use a flexible metal strap to support the wood as it is bent. At such short notice I can't get any thin steel but I do have a ratchet strap clamp which, although not as strong as steel, may well do the job, and would certainly be an improvement on the previous attempt.

◀ This time, I only use the inner part of the former and screw it to my bench to make it stable and secure. I cut some notches in the base of the former to allow me to use G-cramps to apply additional bending force if required, and set up a sash clamp to give some support to the centre of the bend.

After the ash has been in the steamer about two-and-a-half hours, I retrieve it and bring it over to my modified former. I wrap the strap clamp around the wood and begin to tighten it. Straight away I can see that the ash is much more flexible

than the oak and a bend begins to form. After a frenetic few minutes of tightening the strap and fitting and adjusting cramps, I have the bend as tight as I can manage. This is a huge improvement on my first attempt but, rather than following the curve of the former completely, I have ended up with what can only be described as a Gothic arch, rather than the pure semi-circle I was after. Having already spent several days on this and with the deadline for the article looming, I decide to revert to Plan B.

Social media community

As I mentioned in the last article, I am active on Instagram and have a good following of fellow woodworkers and turners. During this experiment I posted a couple of pictures of the bends to see if I could get any feedback. The response was heart warming. There is so much negative press about social media but, used well, it is an amazing tool. Many experienced chairmakers and woodworkers of all sorts offered tips and insight as to how I should improve on my methods. The following is a summary of the tips I received to achieve a successful bend next time:

- Soak kiln-dried wood before bending for anything from 24 hours to 7 days
- Use a 2mm stainless-steel strap to support the wood as it is bent
- Avoid using turned timber. Use square or rectangular-section timber for bends to achieve a more even shape – this is the reason I ended up with a Gothic arch
- Use ash until I have more experience
- Use fast-grown timber as this bends more readily than slower-grown, more dense timber

Green vs kiln dried timber

In the most simple terms, green wood is quite flexible and seasoned wood is stiff. Think about twigs that you might pick up from the ground beneath a tree and you'll know that freshly fallen twigs will bend a lot before breaking – if they break at all. Twigs that have been down for some time will snap with ease. As wood dries it becomes less flexible and more brittle, which explains why green wood bends more easily than seasoned timber. Some say that once timber has been kiln dried, the cells of the timber are damaged in such a way that it can never be returned to a 'green' state, but speaking to chairmakers and wood workers with vastly more experience in this area than myself, it seems it is possible to soften even kiln-dried timber to a point where it will bend quite readily by soaking from anything from 24 hours to a week.

Plan B

I fully intend to return to steam bending at some point in the future because I can see its huge potential, but I need to alter and improve my set-up before I do. I think the steamer itself was a success, but the former and bending gear needs a rethink.

Thankfully there is more than one way to bend timber. I have had some success with bent laminations in the past, so I decide this is going to be the way to move this forward. It ends my hope for a fully turned chair, but as long as it still looks good, it's a small price to pay for a successful end project.

Bent laminations are formed by cutting thin strips of wood which are individually flexible enough to achieve the desired curve. By using enough of these strips, glued together, a curved section can be made.

As with steam bending I want straight-grained timber, but I can now go back to oak, keeping the whole stool in the same wood. The strips can be cut on a bandsaw, which keeps wastage to a minimum, but the only blade I have at the moment is 10mm wide and has already seen quite a lot of work, so I'm not confident of achieving the high-quality straight cuts I would need. A new wide blade is really needed.

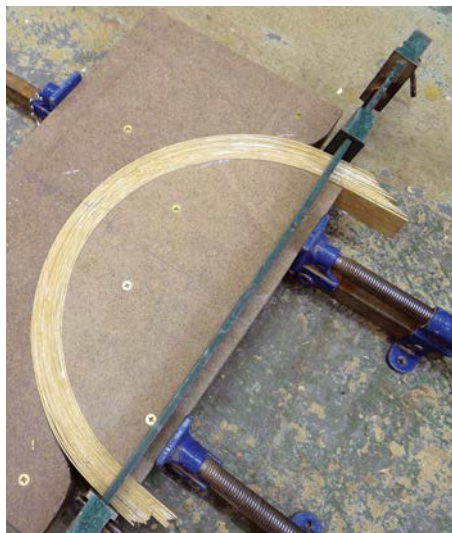
I decide to use my sawbench with the fine 96-tooth blade fitted. This will leave a surface good enough to glue, but is more



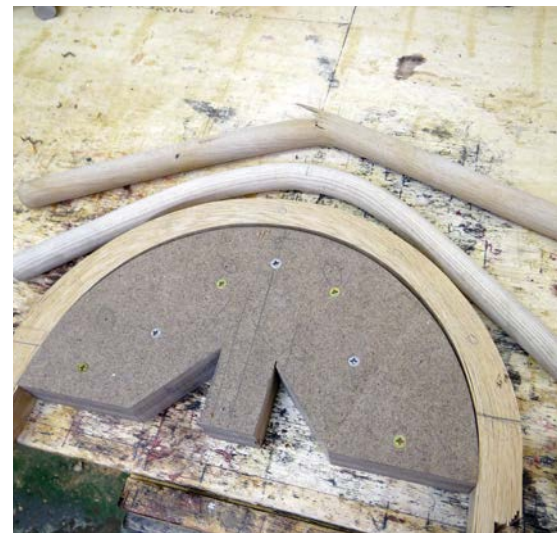
Oak strips cut, ready for bending

wasteful, the teeth being a little over 2mm wide. I make a couple of practice cuts and manage to set it to cut strips of around 1.5mm, which will curve around the former. Nineteen strips give me a blank of around 30mm, which is ideal.

I set up the two-part former as I originally had for the first bend and, keeping the strips in order, I glue a face and add it to the jig. This is a messy business and I need to work fast, although at this time of year (it is February at the time of writing) the glue doesn't set too quickly in the cool workshop. With all of the strips carefully lined up in the former, I tighten the cramps and am pleased with how it all goes together.



Strips glued together in the former



The three bends, showing improvement with each

Shaping

The following day I remove the curved section from the former and am pleased with the result. There are a couple of small gaps between laminations, but nothing major. I decide that the new square backrest needs tapering and rounding a little to soften it and give it some visual interest, so after cutting



Cutting off the ends of the bent lamination

off the untidy ends of the bent lamination, I mark a taper from full 28mm thickness in the centre to around 20mm at the ends and carefully hand plane it, using a g-cramp to hold it down to the bench, regularly checking it doesn't rock and that the curve is even.



Planing taper the backrest

Fitting

The back is fitted to the seat with a series of spindles, but I need to work out exactly how high I want the backrest above the seat and to work out the angle I need to fit the spindles. The first thing to do is find the positions for the spindles. I decide five would work well, but working with the curved surface of the seat makes it impossible to take any kind of measurement, so I clamp a piece of ply to the seat which acts as a baseline

for the curved rest, keeping the seat, legs and backrest all lined up on the correct plane, and allows me to mark out lines from the centre of the seat, radiating out to the spindle positions.

Working out the height of the backrest is a trial and error process and I decide that the easiest way to see how it looks would be to make a simple L-shaped jig from scrap MDF. I clamped this to the seat and, in turn, the backrest to this

jig. A few adjustments and I settle on the underside of the backrest being 130mm above the seat.

Using this set-up I am able to work out the 20° angle at which the spindles sit and, to check this, I cut a piece of beech with angled ends, slotting it in between the seat and the rest.

I am pleased to see that the angle works and the overall look is how I imagined it.



Setting out the positions of the back spindles



L-shaped jig to work out the height of the backrest



Mock-up including a spindle to check the angles

Drilling

As with all of the joints on this stool, the tenons are turned and the mortises drilled. As before I drill free hand, guided by my mirrors. This was fully described last month and the set-up is just the same here. I drill the backrest first. Having marked out the positions of each spindle I need to fix the backrest level on the bench and so use two wedges under each end and clamp it down to the bench, using a height gauge to check it is sitting level. The angles of the spindles radiate from the centre of the seat, so I carefully line up my mirrors so I can easily see that the drill is vertical in one plane and held at the correct angle in the other. I wrap tape around

the 12mm lip and spur drill bit to guide me to a 15mm maximum depth.

Drilling the seat is the most nerve-racking part. The consequences of getting this wrong don't bear thinking about, so after double and triple checking my markings and process, I drill the first hole. This time I only use a single mirror to show the angle of my drill and use the sliding bevel to give me a sightline to ensure I am drilling along the correct plane.

The drilling goes exactly to plan and I am pleased with the results and more than a little relieved to have this stage successfully completed.



Using the height gauge to check the backrest is sitting flat and level on the bench



Drilling the backrest using 'the mirror trick'



Drilling the seat using a mirror and sightline with a sliding bevel



All holes drilled successfully

Spindles and assembly

The five spindles that support the backrest are a simple turning job, taking the maximum diameter from 22mm and producing a pleasing curved taper down to the 12mm tenons using a combination roughing gouge and beading and parting tool. Each is sanded to 320 grit and tested in the holes to ensure the best fit.

After a trial dry fitting I am well pleased with the result. I use a round-bottomed spokeshave to soften and round the backrest before thoroughly sanding it to the same 320 grit as the rest of the stool.

Pleased with the look of the stool, all that's left to do is to glue the backrest in place and, once dry, apply several coats of hard wax oil. ●



Assembling the stool



Planing cuts on the back spindles



Adding curves to the backrest with a spokeshave

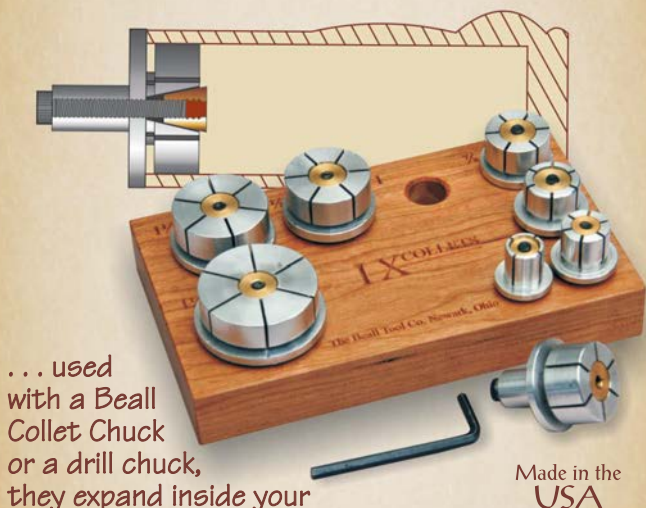


The finished stool

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Choosing a lacquer.

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1



1 Acrylic Lacquer is a waterbased lacquer. Ideal for work on or off the lathe, it is touch dry in about 20 minutes and hard dry in two hours. It provides a tough clear coating and can be applied by cloth, foam brush or spray.

2



2 Acrylic Gloss Lacquer is an easy to apply bright gloss aerosol lacquer. Fully dried in 20 minutes it gives an extremely hard wearing gloss finish, suitable for use indoors or out and is ideal for those awkward to finish items.

3



3 Acrylic Satin Lacquer has all the properties of the gloss aerosol but with a softer, more subtle finish where lots of protection is needed without a bright finish.

4



4 Melamine Lacquer is a cellulose based product, touch dry in thirty seconds, workable after five minutes. It gives a bright gloss finish which cures once dry, achieving maximum durability after 28 days.

5



5 Melamine Gloss Lacquer, an aerosol version of the above, modified to allow delivery through the aerosol nozzle and ideal for all turned work and especially intricate and fiddly pieces.

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CHRIS WEST

Chris has spent a good deal of his time designing, turning and writing on the subject of salt and pepper mills. His latest book, *Adding Spice to Woodturning: 20 Salt, Pepper & Spice Shaker Projects for Woodturners*, was published in 2017 by Artisan Ideas in North America. www.westwoodturnery.co.uk



COLWIN WAY

Colwin started turning aged 13 and has since gone on to teach the craft. He wishes to continue to give people the confidence to try the wonderful hobby for themselves. colwinway@btinternet.com



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John has woodturned in the UK since his schooldays but in a more meaningful way since taking early retirement 10 years ago. He likes making decorative hollowed pieces from interesting woods with holes, sap and bark. He thinks that he's OK with a bowl gouge but useless with a skew. www.johnplater.co.uk



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Keith is a self-taught woodworker and turner, whether it is through watching DVDs, going on courses or visiting different symposiums and asking as many questions as he could. He is well-known for his resin/wood turnings. keith.lackner@yahoo.com
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Mark pursued woodturning full-time in 2004, making one-off sculptural pieces that include colour and texture as well as pure woodturned forms. He demonstrates and teaches in the UK and abroad and is the author of *Turning Hollow Forms* from GMC Publications. www.marksanger.co.uk



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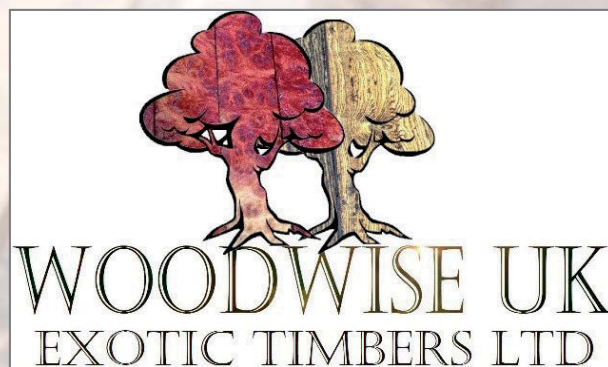
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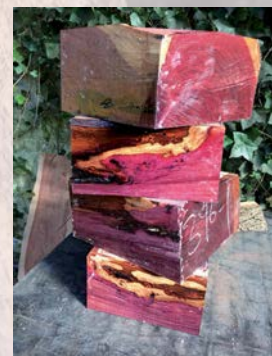
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Drop leaf table

Colwin Way finishes off the table started in the last issue, by creating the top, assembling all the parts and applying the finishing touches



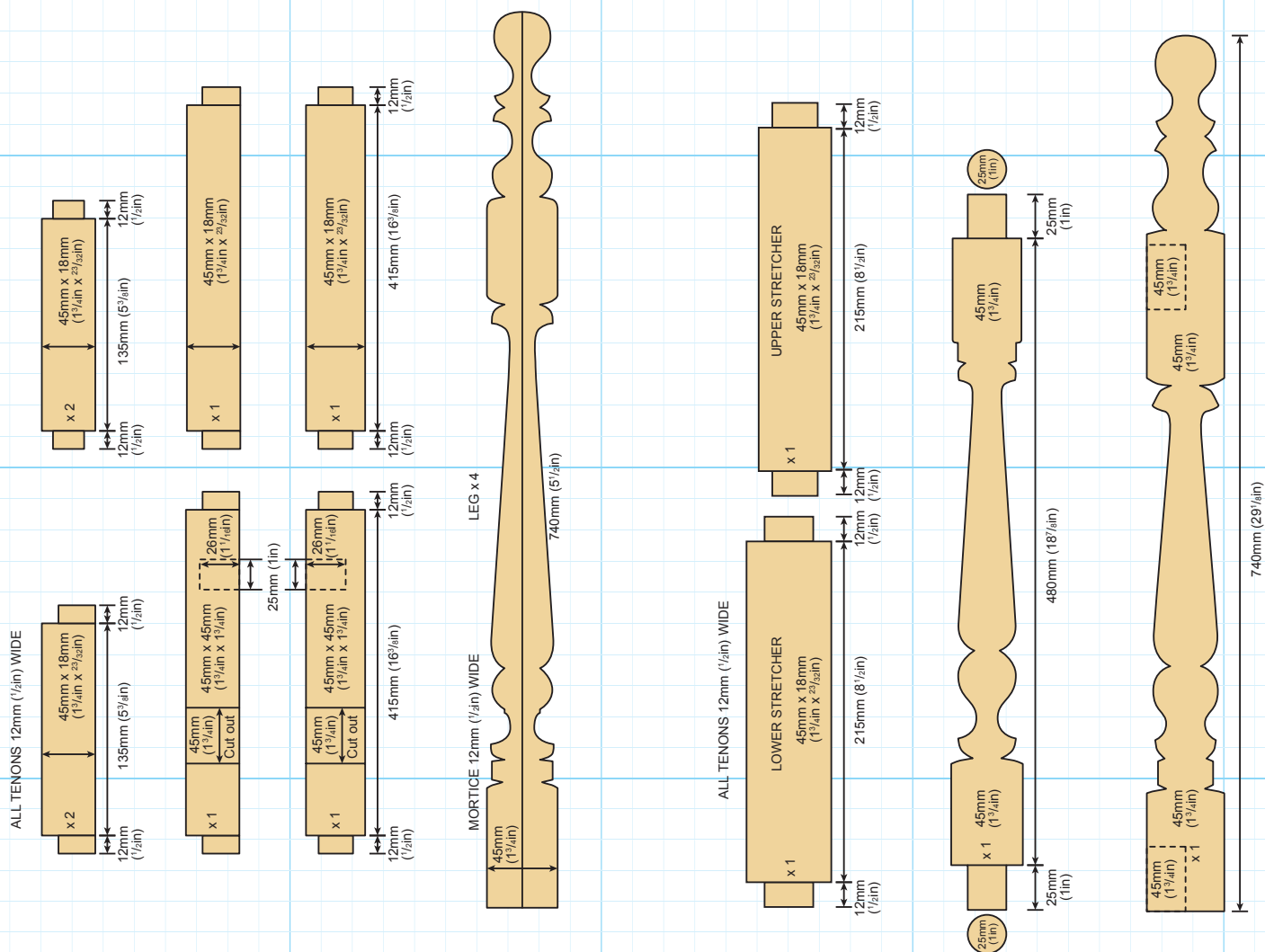
Following on from the first part of our drop leaf table project we're going to look at the next section, the table top and the table top support. Now, I'm no furniture maker but I do mix with a lot of very good ones. This does a lot to inspire and encourage me to try new things or methods I don't use in my normal turning day. This is how I've arrived at this latest project. Square joints, mallet and chisel – all things I can do and use in a schoolboy fashion. What I'm getting at, I guess, is that just because the project is slightly out of our comfort zone, we can still achieve something good. I'm really chuffed with what we've made and I'm not going

to try to bluff you by saying I've made loads before, because I haven't. I just fancied doing something a bit more challenging and thought I could pass on the inspiration and encouragement.

Anyway, enough of the reasons behind the table – let's get back to the making. You may have already started or you're waiting for this second part. You've chosen your timber and are already thinking ahead to where your table may live and how you're going to finish it. This section will be full of all the nice bits, such as assembly, finish and showing your creation off. So here goes. Let's get on with the prep and see this table come to life.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Bowl gouge
- Faceplate
- Bandsaw, jigsaw or router
- Wood glue
- Sash clamps
- Trammel compass
- Faceplate
- Steel rule
- Polishing mop and fine abrasive metal compound
- Brass hinges
- Mallet
- Carpentry chisel to suit hinges
- Stain
- Oil, wax oil or lacquer finish

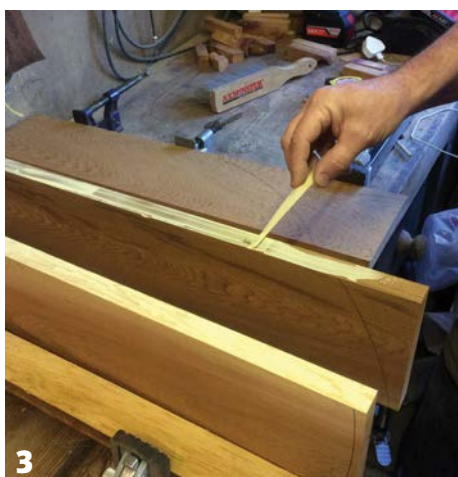




1



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5



6



7



8

Table top

1 Start with the table top and preparing all the boards. Run all your boards through a thicknesser to get all of them the same thickness. Now prepare the edges to be joined either by hand planing them or, as in my case and pictured, along a surface planer to achieve a nice straight edge.

2 When you've edge planed all your boards put them together dry and decide which way you want them to fit together, matching the grain for best effect. While you have them where you want them, mark the board edges so you don't lose your place.

3 When you're happy with the positioning of the boards, prepare everything for gluing. Position your sash cramps ready for gluing by dry fitting to the correct open position to support the board widths. Glue the board edges ready for laying down. I use an old coffee stirring stick to apply adhesive, which seems to work well.

4 Now you can lie the boards down ready to be clamped together, lining up your pencil marks in the same position you had when dry fitted. Use a piece of scrap timber along any areas you wish to keep undamaged. This will save work having to re-plane later.

5 This picture shows the boards glued together with a small bead of glue coming from the joint – this is a good indication that the glue has filled the entire length of the joint. This glue can be wiped off now to save work when the glue dries hard.

6 Check to make sure the boards are straight and true and haven't risen with the clamps. Notice I haven't glued all the table top in one go; this is to prevent cupping. Once the first joints are dry I will carry on and glue the rest of the boards together.

7 Once the whole table top has been glued and had a chance to dry properly you can start to mark out your circle. Once you've decided on the size of your top, make up a trammel compass with a piece of scrap timber, nail and a pencil and mark out your large circle.

8 You can now cut the table top out. I'm using a bandsaw but a jigsaw or router on a trammel guide would work equally as well. Save all the scrap wood for the moment as you may want to use it for packing pieces when gluing together later. When cut out, sand down the back of the table as this will be difficult to get to later.

Once cut, the top can be turned. I turned this one and that is shown on the next page. But turning the top requires a lathe with the capacity to do so. Many people might not have that lathe capacity.

The alternative method is to use a router on a trammel. You can cut the top and fit a different cutter and create the edge profile with this method too.

◀ **9** Fix this newly sanded side to a faceplate, checking the length of the screws through the faceplate first to make sure there's no possibility of the screws coming through and ruining the table surface. If you use the side you marked the circle on you should have a small centre hole for centring the faceplate.

10 Because this article is largely a turning project, I'm turning my table top. However you may not have a lathe large enough to do this. Don't worry – you can hand sand the edge with a block and, if you own a router, route a profile on the edge.

11 Here you can see the top turned and sanded. The profile was added with a bowl gouge before sanding down from 100-grit abrasive to eliminate any residue glue from the joints and level off the surface with the help of a sanding block, which helps to keep the table flat.

12 OK, that's the top finished – we can move on to the table top support frame. We have two pieces to turn and two rectangular stretchers to make. The line drawings and measurements of these components are shown on the line drawings, but the picture shows the turning of the pivot spindle. This spindle has a round tenon either end which acts as hinges when assembled into the rest of the stand.

Assembly

13 So here are all the support sections turned and machined ready for assembly. All the square tenons have been made to the same thickness of 12mm to keep things easy. You can also see the round tenons on the pivot leg and the cut-out on the main support leg, which will allow the structure to tuck into the main table frame.

14 I've used a PVA-type glue to assemble my table, but use your favourite. I don't think there should be too many problems with the joints failing on this project as long as the glue is in date. Once again, the coffee sticks come into their own for this process. Take your time here, double-check everything and, of course, make sure you fully assemble dry before the final glue finish.

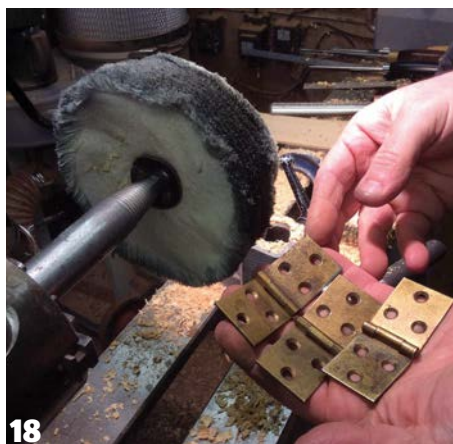
15 Start by assembling the side with the cut-outs. This will be the side you'll need to get right as it contains the unglued pivot turning and the cut-outs for the support stand. Look at this picture when assembling and you'll see the mortises are facing the opposite direction to these cut-outs. Note the pieces of scrap wood protecting the legs from being marked by the sash clamps.

16 The stand now needs time for the glue to dry, so let's continue with the table top. Decide where you want the top to hinge and scribe your line across with a straightedge. Go with the grain of the timber to keep the strength along the join.





17



18

17 How you cut the top is up to you but I'm using a bandsaw, which gives a nice narrow cut. This is important because the more timber removed here will show on the edge of the table when re-joined with the hinges as a difference in width. When you have the two parts of the table, plane each edge straight and lightly sand.

18 I wanted a certain look to the table I made so I chose brass second-hand hinges, which I bought online. When they turned up they had a nice antique look about them. However I wanted them to shine a little so have used a polishing mop on my lathe with some metal polishing compound, just to take some of the grime away.



19



20

19 The hinges need to be sunk in, so first position your hinges in place and mark around them with a marking knife. Remove the hinge and deepen your marks with the same knife and a metal rule. It's now back to a mallet and sharp chisel. I used a chisel to match the size of my hinge – 30mm – but you could use a smaller one and make several cuts.

20 To keep the depth of cut the same throughout the hinge, make a series of cuts along the surface of the hinge joint with a single mallet tap on each, then lay the chisel flat and gently remove the waste. Make sure you have the table top rested on a soft surface, such as a piece of router matting, to stop damage occurring. Here's how the fitted hinges look.



21



22

21 After the table stand has been finished and allowed to dry, turn the stand upside down and operate the support leg. Bring it out to where you want its most open point to be and make a mark. This is where we need to create a stop block. The picture shows the stop block I made – it has a slight wedge shape and is glued and screwed into position.

Finishing touches

22 I love the look and smell of the cedar I made my table from but it was just a little too light in colour for where it was going to be place, so I darkened it with a medium oak wood dye. This immediately made the grain jump out and looks really striking.



23



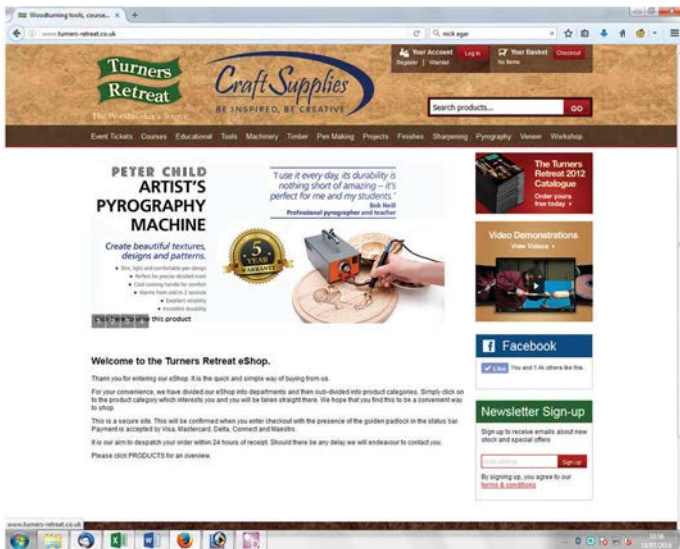
24

23 Now all the surfaces are treated you can fix the table top to the stand. To make a secure fixing make up some wooden fixing blocks. I've kept the natural wood colour here so you can see them easier. Notice they have one hole going through and into the stretchers and two screw holes into the table top. Screw these blocks in but don't glue them – this will allow small movement in the timber.

24 So there we are – the completed table all ready for the finish you want. I used a wax oil on mine which leaves a lovely finish and is easy to repair. I hope you've enjoyed this build and using the various techniques involved in it. Remember, if you're worried about taking on such a big project, break it down into sections, taking as many weeks as you need. This isn't a difficult project, just time consuming, but above all, enjoy yourself. ●

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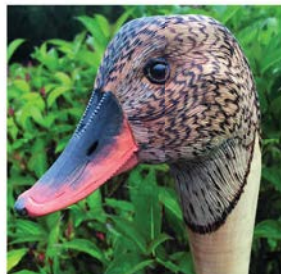
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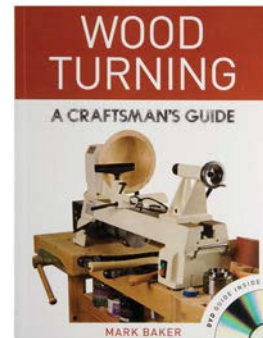
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Our star name will be Richard Findley. Richard has been around woodworking for over 20 years. Through his career, his passion for woodturning led to being accepted on the Register of Professional Turners and the Worshipful Company of Turners. Anyone who reads the Woodturning Magazine will have seen his very popular "Diary of a professional woodturner" along with many other articles over the last 7 years.

Richard will be performing four turning masterclasses, each session will be a different project and last around 1 hour 15 mins, with plenty of opportunity for a Q&A session after each session. Seating as always is limited for these sessions and a minimal fee applies to each session.



Our supporting demonstrator is popular woodturner, Margaret Gerrard. Margaret has almost 20 years experience in woodturning. Margaret is a member of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain and the Worshipful Company of Turners. Margaret has had her work on display in a number of galleries. Margaret is always keen to pass on her knowledge.



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Woodturning

Issue 319 on sale 17 May

Pat Carroll explores turning and decorating a tall vase

New Series:

Editor's challenge

Richard Findley is tasked with creating a staved box

Mark Sanger provides a step-by-step guide to turning a Oriental-inspired supported lidded vessel

Colwin Way creates a chuck and jaw stand

Stuart Thomas shows how to turn a table lamp



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAT CARROLL

Community letters

Here are some letters the Editor has received from you, the readers



Similar situation

Hi Mark. I just wanted to share a situation where I did something similar to what Alan wanted in your letter from the editor in issue 315, February. I was attending a craft show and met someone who made Windsor chairs. For about the same price as a finished chair he would make a sack-back chair with you. So we did that. I realised early on that our goals differed. I, like Alan, wanted the experience of making the chair. He wanted to teach me to make chairs. I love our chair and had a great time making it, but have not made another. I might, but might not. But at least for this reader of your magazine that approach 'satisfied' me, even if I never make another sack-back Windsor chair.

I enjoy your magazine. Geoff Kennedy

Déjà Vu

Hi there Mark. I look forward to your editorials but it's not often that one gives me a really freaky feeling of déjà vu as the one in the February edition did. You reported an overheard conversation about someone who wanted to learn a particular set of skills, which included some quite difficult turning, to achieve a specific end and nothing more.

From my experience, I could understand the skills that the person you had heard about would require to make the item – and they would not be something that

could be achieved in a day's course as there seemed to be a turned element, some segmented work and some carving. So, the main problem seemed to be that the person wanting to make the specific piece had no understanding of what turning actually involved – and the person on the receiving end of the request must have found it difficult to offer advice because it is not the way most turners seem to start.

The feeling of déjà vu happened because I had received an email (with my secretary of Surrey Association of Woodturners hat on) a few weeks before from a woman who wanted information about having a series of about six one-hour lessons in the evenings to learn carving and woodturning. She did not indicate why she wanted the lessons.

I try to respond to queries and hate to be negative, but without further information I did not feel I could help her because, in my experience, such 'lessons' are not generally available. I perceive both turning and carving as journeys, where you gradually gain skills through practice and, in most cases, shared experience and advice.

Her next response clarified the request a bit. It seems that she had just returned from a holiday in Peru where she had been inspired by many of the crafts she had seen, especially by some woodturning and carving. She had no workshop – nor had she any desire to set one up. Her experience of other crafts was that you found someone who did taster sessions or short courses where all the materials and tools were supplied and you worked on making a couple of finished items.

When I thought about it, I have often done this to try out a craft – especially one that might be used on wood. The evidence for it can be seen on my 'craft' shelving in my dining room. I have silk painting materials, rubber stamping, card cutting, parchment work tools, glass painting etc. I am not proficient at any of these crafts – but they are all accessible at the basic level in an hour or two and need very little specialist equipment to make and finish an item. Most of us would think that woodturning is definitely not like this – but it is very difficult to explain to someone who has not experienced turning why this might be.

I am sure many of your readers will have started turning because they watched

someone demonstrating either live or on a YouTube video, decided they would like to try it and then bought a lathe and some tools and spent a lot of time making shavings. Some turners naturally find that they can get wonderful clean cuts from their tools – but, I think, most decide they need some help and find a local club to join and a course with a professional turner to get them started. However gifted a turner is (and I know some of you will groan when I use the 'j' word again), he or she is on a journey. Generally, the more you practise and the more inspiration you take from watching other people turn – whether this be at a club demonstration, at a show or exhibition or watching a YouTube video – and the more advice you get from other turners, the better you will turn.

In the case of my enquirer though, she knew exactly what she wanted to achieve. She did not want to be a woodturner or a wood carver – she wanted to make a small piece of wood she had been given in Peru, and that was precious to her, into a piece of art by turning and carving it.

I have insurance to do some teaching so I invited her to come and find out what turning was about. This proved a valuable experience for both of us. I had the privilege of meeting an extremely interesting woman and giving her the opportunity to work with a piece of wood on a lathe and I know she quickly saw that a one hour lesson would not be the best way to learn. The joy on her face when she first managed to get a cut on the timber that left the wood shining and very smooth was well worth my time.

What happens next, if anything, is yet to be. Perhaps though, as a club, we might try offering some taster sessions to members of the public who are interested in finding out more about turning. We do lots of events where visitors can see what turning is – but where offering hands-on experiences is not possible. But perhaps we should be thinking along the lines of many other crafts and take advantage of our 'experience rather than more possessions' culture. It may help us build our numbers – and possibly appeal to a younger age range. Wouldn't that be good? Perhaps some clubs are trying this approach?

Thank you for an unusual editorial that has made me think.

Best wishes, Jennie Starbuck

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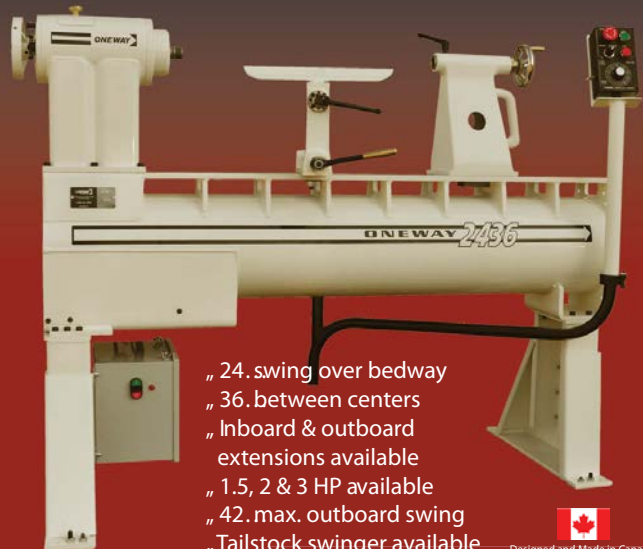
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Whistle

Chris West provides a plan for you



PHOTOGRAPH BY RITA MITCHELL

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Spindle roughing gouge
- Spindle gouge
- Skew chisel
- 8mm drill bit
- Drill chuck

If you are a grandparent this is a wonderful opportunity to get your own back on a son or daughter for previous misdemeanours. Giving a whistle to a grandchild at the end of a visit will bring a smile to you and the child. One further

comment: they are a great seller at craft fairs when there are children around.

BODY OF WHISTLE

Blank 25 x 25 x 145mm

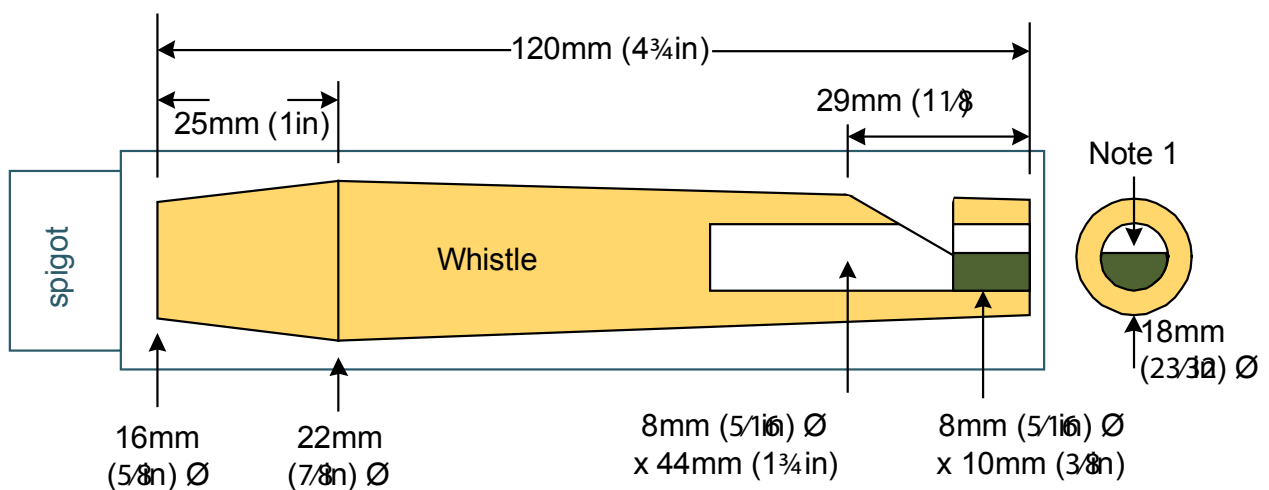
Between centres rough turn. Square off one end and turn a spigot on the other. Hold this end in compression jaws. Once running true, ensure that the wood is firmly in the jaws and drill an 8mm hole, 44mm deep. Locate a live centre in this hole and shape the whistle as shown. Using a junior hacksaw, saw the opening as shown in the diagram. Sand only or apply mineral oil or a food-safe liquid.

REED

Blank 10 x 10 x 12mm

Use either an 8mm dowel or turn one. After being cut to length, sand approximately 3mm thickness off, creating a flat area along the length of the reed.

Note: The amount sanded off will make the difference between a good whistle sound and a squeak. Dry-fit the reed and test it before gluing it in place.



Mallets

Stuart Thomas makes a variety of mallets from Lignum vitae bowls

Old lignum vitae (*Guaiaecum officinale*) bowling woods (bowls) can make great carving mallet heads. Using old bowling woods means one can recycle things and repurpose them. Lignum has been used a long while for mallets and it is incredibly dense, resists splitting and is naturally oily too. Lignum vitae is CITES listed and on the IUCN Red List so is no longer commercially available to buy, but old bowling woods are, as are other old previously made items.

Antique shops and fairs can be good sources of bits and bobs to enhance your turning. Charity shops sometimes have them, usually down on the floor or hidden under a shelf. Alternatively, try a local bowling club. Older bowling club members often have old bowls knocking around in their sheds. Do take care to check the condition of the bowls. Avoid those with major cracks but small surface checks are not usually a problem as they will turn out. If in doubt about the condition of any wood, don't use it.

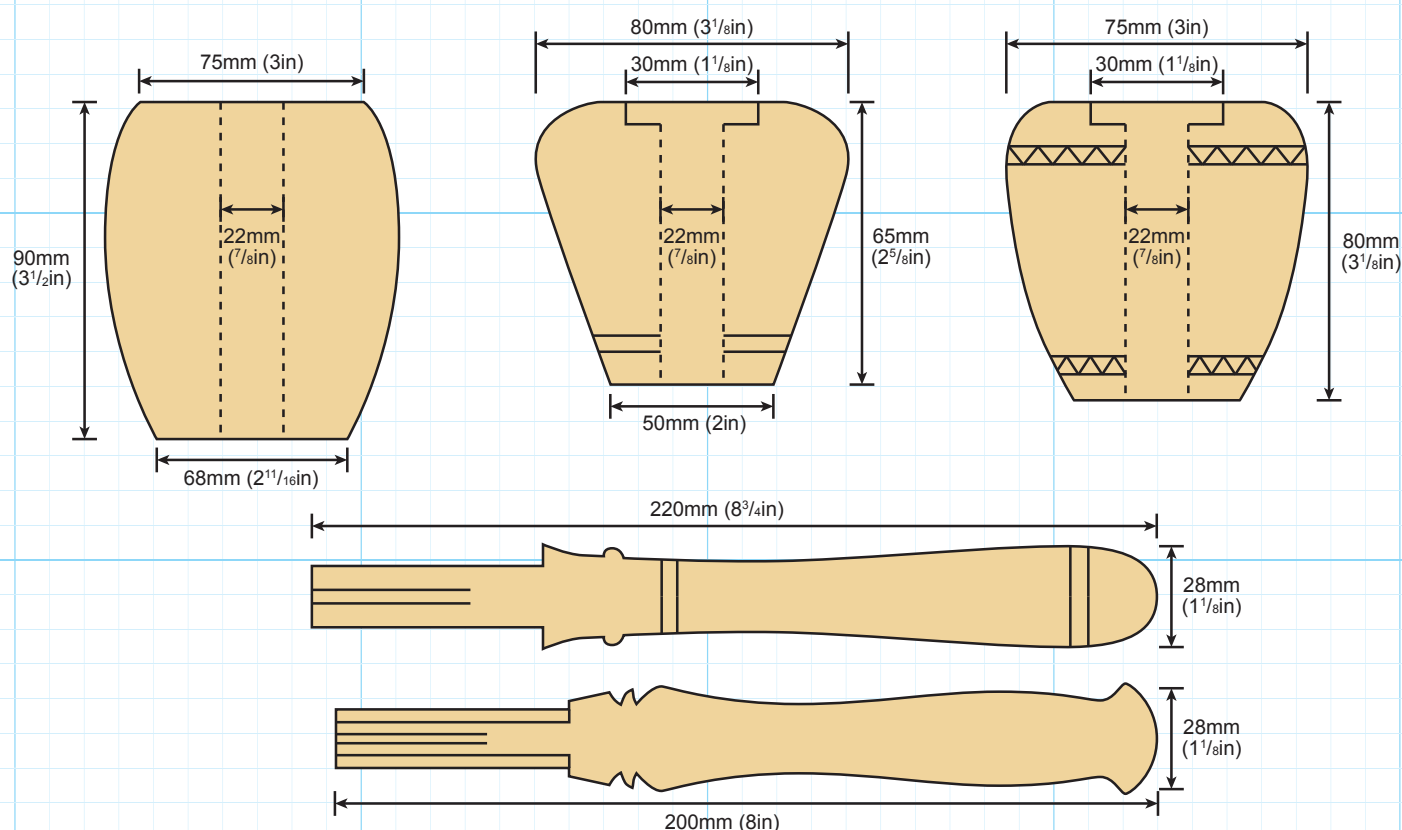
If you do not have access to lignum vitae, other dense, close-grained timbers can be used. Making your own mallets gives you a lot of freedom to tailor the shape of the head and the weight and also the style of handle shape and length so that it has the right feel in the hand and for the job it will be used for.

Happy hunting for old lignum bowls and, whether you use them or other timber, enjoy making a special mallet for yourself or as a gift for a friend.



TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- 20mm spindle roughing gouge
- 25mm skew chisel
- 6mm skew chisel
- 10mm three-point tool
- 6mm spindle gouge
- 22mm Forstner bit
- Callipers
- Four-jaw chuck
- Dill chuck
- Jam chuck
- Old lignum vitae bowling balls and jacks
- Cherry (*Prunus avium*)
- Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*)
- Black or contrasting timber for wedge
- Cellulose sanding sealer
- Finishing oil
- Soft paste wax



Mallet head

1 Bowls and jacks can be used to turn mallets. Plastic inlays can be seen here and there is a similar one on the opposite side of each bowl and jack. These will be turned away later. Begin by using a bradawl to mark the centres of the inlays on the chosen bowl ready to mount between centres on the lathe. No matter what timber is being used, always check to see if there are any splits, cracks or other faults present in the wood. If there are, consider carefully if you should continue. If in doubt as to whether it is safe to so, do not continue with the piece. If you think it should be OK, use lower-than-normal lathe speeds for the size of work being turned and make gentle cuts, stopping regularly to see if the piece is safe to continue with as you shape the wood. Old lignum vitae bowling balls often have cracks, many of which are small, often called micro-cracks, and often do not run far into the timber. But large cracks running longways and going deep into the wood can be present. As with all turning, wear an appropriately rated faceshield and respirator.

2 The bowls are not round – they are squashed a bit on two sides and are biased balance-wise so they curve when bowled towards the jack in the game. The grain of a bowl is spindle grain-oriented across the narrowest width. There is typically a circle or dot on the narrow sides.

Mallets, apart from the rectangular-head carpenter's mallets, usually have the grain running along the head for strength. To have spindle grain-orientation along the head, you mount the bowl between centres on the shortest width of the bowl.

Once the bowl is securely mounted between centres, start to rough out the shape of the mallet head, using either a bowl gouge or spindle roughing gouge. Keep the lathe speed down to start, say under than 1000rpm. As with all turning, making sure you use a faceshield and dust mask/respirator.

3 Having got the rough shape, now take time to refine it. A scraper will help with this as will a flat sharp skew chisel placed flat on the tool rest and used as negative-rake scraper. Have the handle high and the cutting edge angled down, lower than the handle but cutting on the centre line.

4 With the basic head shaping complete, it is time to turn the ends. Square off the end and create a spigot to fit your preferred chuck. Here a 10mm three-point tool is being used, but a small spindle gouge or skew chisel would also work well.

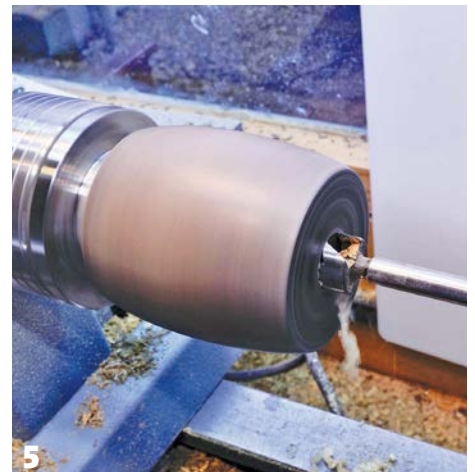
5 Having created a spigot to fit your chuck, turn the head over. Drill a 22mm-diameter hole into the head until the spigot is reached. Take care not to drill through the spigot. Keep the lathe speed down to around 4-500rpm, withdrawing the drill bit regularly to clear the swarf.

6 With the hole drilled into the head, clean up the end using a 10mm three-point tool or your preferred tool. Although the ends on this mallet have been left plain, now is the opportunity to turn some decoration if desired. Sand the shaped head down to 600 grit. It will be necessary to change the abrasive more than usual as this wood is very oily and will clog it quickly.

7 Make a jam chuck using some scrap wood held on a spigot. Use a parting tool and callipers to size the stem to fit the 22mm hole in the mallet head. The completed jam chuck is now ready to reverse-chuck the mallet head.

8 With the head now reversed on to the jam chuck, bring up the revolving centre in the tailstock for support and turn off the spigot. Remember, as this is being done, that there is a hole behind it in the mallet head and you will need to remove the tailstock and lower the lathe speed for the final cuts as you expose the hole.

9 With the head still held in the jam chuck, apply a coat of finishing oil. Lignum is so oily itself that just using a plain paper towel while the lignum is revolving on the lathe after sanding will generate a nice lustre on the wood.





10



11



12



13



14



15



16



18



17



19

The handle

10 The shape of the handle is a very personal thing as it needs to be a comfortable fit in the hand of the user, who is not necessarily the maker. The size used here is shown on the drawing. With the wood for the handle still in the square, cut off a piece around 7mm from the end. This will be glued back on later. On a bandsaw, cut a groove down the middle of the handle to about half the depth of the head. Glue the end piece back on and use to hold the handle securely between centres.

The saw cut can be seen here, which will take the wedge to secure the handle into the head. The piece on the tailstock end will be removed when the handle is finished.

11 The pencil line shows the length of spigot that will fit into the mallet head. With the handle held between centres, turn to a round using a 20mm spindle roughing gouge and the lathe speed at around 1800rpm.

12 Size the spigot to fit into the hole drilled into the mallet head using callipers and a 4mm parting tool. Care should be taken to ensure a snug fit. If the depth of the hole in the head is measured accurately and the spigot turned to the correct length there will be no need to saw off any excess when finishing. Use a skew or beading/parting tool to create the parallel spigot.

13 Keep checking regularly so that there is a good fit in the mallet head until you have a nice snug fit of the mallet head onto the spigot with just a small piece of the spigot emerging from the top of the mallet head. This will be removed when finished.

14 Shape the handle using a spindle roughing gouge. Stop the lathe during the process to check that the handle fits comfortably in the hand. It is probably a good idea to take the handle off the lathe, slide the head on to the spigot and hold the mallet complete to check how it feels.

15 When a suitable shape and fit is established, some small grooves can be added for decoration. Here another homemade tool is used – this one is a three-point tool ground from a 6mm round HSS bar. After applying a coat of sanding sealer, cut back with web pad, followed by a coat of soft paste wax, and buff the handle with a soft paper towel. Never wrap cloth around your fingers.

16 The finished handle. The saw cut halfway down the spigot and the wedge that will be used to secure the handle into the mallet head.

17 With the head glued on to the handle, tap the wedge into the groove, leave to dry and then sand and polish the end. The mallet will look something like this. The head was hand finished with soft paste wax and buffed to bring up a good sheen.

18-19 Mallets can be made in different styles, weights, sizes and shapes of head and feature decorative effects to personalise them further. ●



PHOTOGRAPH BY JEAN GRACE

Demonstrating – to inform or to entertain?

John Plater offers his thoughts on demonstrations and demonstrating

Most woodturners appreciate the need to develop as individuals and to maintain the craft. Attending demonstrations is one avenue for the former and giving demonstrations is something which might help the latter. Gone are the days when woodwork departments in schools had lathes and taught the craft to the pupils. Giving demonstrations is one way of attracting people to try the craft as there is a strong possibility that they are seeing it for the first time. Then, at a different level and in a different context, demonstrations help people to develop their own work.

Giving illustrated talks and demonstrating live to the general public is a way of raising awareness of the processes. Especially so the demonstrator can show the level of finesse that an experienced and well-versed practitioner brings to the craft, where the 'bloke next door with a lathe in the garage who does a bit of woodturning', cannot.

Show organisers perhaps see demonstrating a craft as entertainment for their paying customers, a bit of eye candy. I quickly came to realise that demonstrating did not promote sales, in fact, to the contrary. Visitors to shows do not want to stop the demonstrator working to make a purchase. So, demonstrate or sell, both are valuable activities, but almost mutually exclusive. Some event organisers are aware of this and will offer a reduced stand fee to

those who demonstrate their craft.

Demonstrating can be very rewarding. One chap stood and watched at a show and then shook me by the hand, thanked me and said that it had been a privilege to watch. It has been interesting to talk to people after they had tried some of my methods and ideas for themselves. Over time I have met people who had seen me demonstrate at an event and gone on to pursue woodturning as a hobby, sourcing equipment and signing up with a tutor for lessons. I do not offer lessons but ought to have a flyer printed with links to the AWGB and RPT to give to people who are looking for tuition.

I often encourage others to demonstrate at club level where they are likely to have a sympathetic audience. Demonstrating is also a good way of putting something back into clubs' activities as well as developing the skills of the individual. I have said before that presenting work to an audience is a good way of developing one's own understanding.

To demonstrate is altruism in the extreme. It can take a day to prepare the materials, pack the equipment and travel to the venue before the main event. If one is demonstrating a particular process it may need to be practised, which takes time and expense. How else does one know how much work to do to

fill a given time slot? Does a Plan B need to be developed in case Plan A doesn't work? I reckon that a one-hour talk and slide show can take eight hours to produce and refine. And that is after the photographs have been taken.

How else does a person get to see others working? A picture in a book or magazine could hide lots of things. Watching a video is a one-way event. If the piece is seen being made live, 'in the round', one has a better appreciation of the quality of the product and of the skill of the maker. A greater level of engagement in the process is achieved, often asking questions directly of the demonstrator.

I have seen a good number of demonstrators, from club members at a local meeting to renowned professional and international woodturners at conferences and symposia. I enjoy seeing the relationship an individual has formed with their craft, the materials and the processes. I see tools, techniques and ideas, some of which I go away and try for myself. I also see lots of things which would never make it on to my own woodturning agenda but which can still be appreciated. I do not want to be entertained but to be informed and inspired. I do not enjoy demonstrations which are more about the demonstrator than the work being demonstrated.

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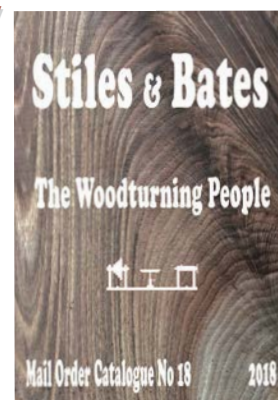
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Serious about turning

We catch up with Owen Schroder
and find out how he took up turning

Owen holding
spalted beech
(*Fagus* spp.)
hollow form



My name's Owen, I'm 15 and live in rural, Welsh-speaking Wales with my family. I am still at school doing my GCSEs this summer, and my favourite hobby is woodturning, but I also enjoy fishing and cycling.

I started woodturning around four years ago – my dad had built a pole lathe and I wanted to have a go. Prior to that I'd been interested in wood but hadn't really gone anywhere with it, just made odd bits at school. I didn't really make anything in particular on the pole lathe, just shapes. It was more about having a play.

I then got a basic beginner's lathe from Lidl for Christmas to see whether it was something for me or not. I made a few little pots but the finish on them wasn't very good and because I didn't have a chuck I couldn't really take things any further. I liked turning so spent some of my savings on a second-hand lathe, an Axminster AWVSL 900, online. This opened the door to being able to tackle a wider range of projects, and I could put a chuck on it.

I continued to learn. I learned a lot off YouTube, and basically taught myself how to turn simple projects such as bowls, lidded boxes, basic hollow forms and so on. As with my previous lathe, I began to realise the limitations of the lathe and was looking for something to allow me to turn bigger and out-of-balance pieces. At this point I went for a lesson with Phil Irons, who knew of one so I ended up getting a Vicmarc VL175, which was more stable and had variable speed.

Q&A

WHAT ARE THE INFLUENCES ON YOUR WORK?

Unique pieces of wood – I draw inspiration from what any given piece of wood has to offer. I like to work with a specific feature.

I also like the work of Phil Irons, Mark Sanger, David Ellsworth and Glenn Lucas, to name but a few.

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR BIGGEST MISTAKES AND CHALLENGES?

Not always investing in the right quality tools... trying to save a few pennies has sometimes cost me more.

Setting up everything in the workshop so it's easy to get to.

Not always leaving things thick enough when I rough turn them so they warp a bit too much and I cannot re-turn them.

Trying to get the perfect form, hollowing so that there's thin, even wall thickness in hollow forms.

DEVELOPMENT?

I want to be able to do things faster, but of course safely. I'm happy with my finish but would like to speed up. I think this will come with time and



Spalted ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) bowl

practice. I'd also like to do more on the art and design side of things and to experiment more with new decorating techniques.

HAVE YOU EVER GIVEN UP ON A PROJECT?

Yes. Sometimes I can tell if something's not going to work, sometimes I stick with it and get there in the end, sometimes I leave it and come back to it and it works. But some pieces just go nowhere and I have to abandon them.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE TYPE OF TURNING?

Bowls and hollow forms.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

I'd like to have my own woodturning business, though I realise that I might have to have another job with a more regular income. To have a workshop kitted out with everything I need and to have plenty of time to make things. I'd also like to try out new things – new ideas for decorating work and so on.

WHAT ARE YOUR LIKES AND DISLIKES REGARDING THE WORLD OF TURNING?

Likes: Working with nice bits of wood, not just using bought bits but finding and preparing my own. Being able to get a good cut with sharp tools.

Dislikes: Sanding can be a bit time-consuming and repetitive.

WHAT HELPFUL ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHER JUNIOR TURNERS?

Try turning different things to see what you like. Go and spend some time with someone who knows what they're doing, and practice, practice, practice.

TOP HINT/TIP FOR FELLOW TURNERS

Finish something to a standard that you're happy with, i.e. to the highest standard you can, even if it takes time and you have to do it numerous times. Keep coming back to it. As my granny would say: 'if a job's worth doing, it's worth doing properly.' ●

Instagram: [o.s.wooddesign](#)



Burr elm (*Ulmus* spp.) bowl



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Sharp Turners need Sharp Tools

If you're going to make the grade as a woodturner then you are certainly going to need to master the 'art' of sharpening. That means that you are going to be needing the best grinding wheels and the best sharpening jig too. For very good reason, many folk get more than 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 frequently left with the impression that this is the 'proper' way to sharpen. Nonsense! The 'correct' way to sharpen is the one that enables you to get the best edge, quickly, accurately and repeatably.

That way, there's nothing to fear and nothing to discourage you from sharpening as often as necessary 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 make it easy: always sharpen using a jig - and use the best jig available for bench grinders: the Oneway Wolverine. This



is a jig developed by turners for the benefit of turners and produced by one of the most respected engineering companies in the business. The basic system satisfies all standard turning 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 (left), including setup and operation DVD: £85.67. Varigrind jig accessory for Celtic profiles (right): £51.18.



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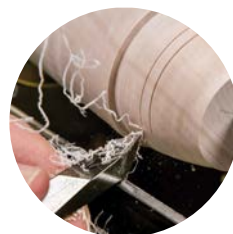
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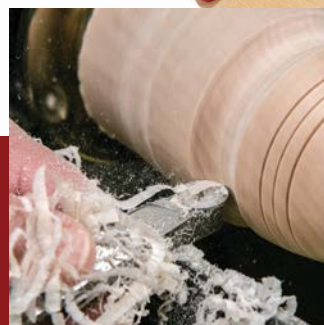
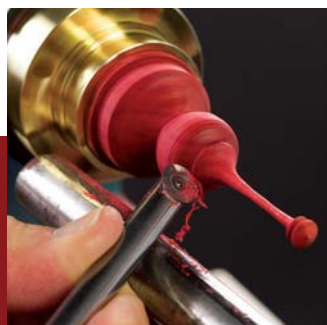
Keep the tool flat on the tool rest and level to the ground for fast stock removal and basic shaping cuts.



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Woodturning on the Isle of Mull

Peter Williams shares with us what the Isle of Mull Wood Turners are up to



TOP: Some of the Isle of Mull Wood Turners club members



BOTTOM: New member Tony Francis under instruction

Woodturning began on the Isle of Mull in the seventh century when the monks at Iona Abbey made food bowls and other utensils using woodturning techniques.

Their woodturning skills were mentioned by Abbot Adomnán in his *Life of St Columba*. During excavations in 1979 by Professor Charles Thomas, parts of three bowls and a quantity of wood waste were found at the bottom of a ditch in the Iona Abbey grounds. One of the bowls that was recovered is now in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Nothing is known about woodturning on Mull in the following years for, as one would expect, little or nothing would have been documented about craftsmen on the island. No wooden items remain to remind us of the lathes used or the array of domestic ware made on them.

Today, there are woodturners working away in sheds and workshops in every village on the island. Most are hobby turners, sharing the enjoyment and output of their craft with friends and family. A number of professional turners sell their wares at the regular producers' markets and at some of the island galleries, while others work on a commission basis.

THE ISLAND'S CLUB

Isle of Mull Wood Turners was founded in 2014 by Ted Dowling and Peter Williams who were, at that time, members of the West Highland Wood Turners club based in Lochaline, on the nearby mainland. Unfortunately, they were restricted by ferry sailing times and, at times, bad

weather, so could not always attend meetings. Their answer was to set up a club on the Isle of Mull to bring together turners who were working in isolation. The aim was also to use and share existing skills with people wishing to find out more about the craft and try woodturning before committing themselves to the purchase of expensive equipment.

The club started with just four people meeting on Sunday afternoons in a member's workshop, using a donated lathe and tools.

The group soon grew out of the arrangement and after some searching converted an under-utilised room in the village hall at Craignure – conveniently at the main ferry port and accessible from all parts of the island – into a small, dedicated workshop. With the help of club funds, grants and donations of equipment, including a lathe and timber, the club was soon able to offer a range of activities.

Members' skills range from professional to absolute beginners, but all have the same aim, which is to improve skills by sharing ideas and promote fellowship through club events to islanders and visitors. The club now has 18 regular woodturning members and a growing number of supporters.

The workshop has four lathes set up in the workshop and two additional ones that can be loaned out to new members for a trial period. Full chip and dust extraction is fitted and slowly the club has acquired a range of tools to use. Members make a variety of items, many of them are

turned from local timber, mostly donated from sources on the island.

Demonstrations given at the fortnightly meeting on Sunday afternoons are videoed to link to a large-screen television, making it easier for all to see the detail. The weekly Wednesday morning meeting allows members to work on their own projects with help if necessary from more advanced fellow members.

From time to time, there are also evening training meetings by arrangement, while the workshop can be made available at any time to any member without their own facilities so that it can be used for individual practice.

MEETINGS

Meetings are always open to anyone who wants to come along without commitment to see what the club does and, if they wish, see if woodturning is a skill in which they would like to be involved.

The club shares its members' skills and club equipment with the community and visitors at producers' markets, workshop open days and attendance at the Salen agricultural show. At the last two venues non-members are allowed to use a lathe under close supervision. The club also takes the opportunity to meet woodturners visiting the island on holiday, who are invited to come to the regular meeting to share knowledge and maybe throw a shaving or two.

www.isleofmullwoodturners.wordpress.com
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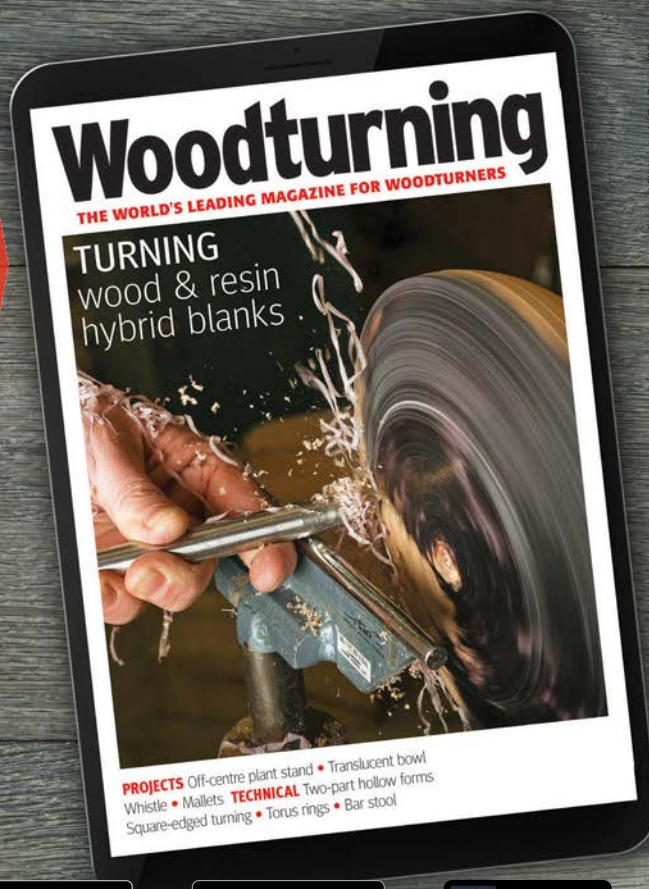
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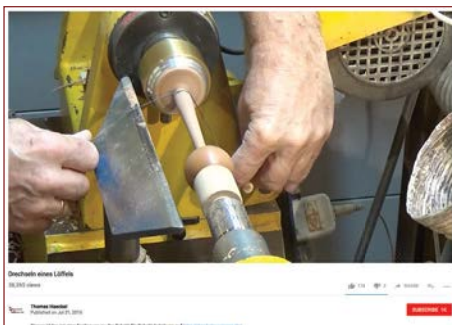
Community online

We searched the internet for the best, most interesting and fun websites, blogs, pins and pictures, so you don't have to

YouTube

THOMAS HAECKEL'S LADLE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxURLpIMUOw



Thomas shows how he creates a ladle from a single piece of wood. There is no voice explanation with this clip, just speeded up action of what he does at key stages and the chucking methods used. I noted that he has a nice set of aluminium chuck jaws to hold the ladle cup.

If you make your own, be careful of the handle spinning like a propeller blade in the final hollowing-the-ladle cup stage.

Club website

QUAD CITIES WOODTURNERS CLUB

cambridge-woodturners.co.uk



Quad Cities Woodturners Club, whose members come from eastern Iowa and northwestern Illinois area, have an interesting, easy-to-navigate site that is full of information about what they are up to and have done. The photo gallery is huge and it is interesting to see how members' work changes and develops over time. It's a nice site that gives a good insight into what they are doing as a club.

Vimeo

WOOD TURNING 1930

<https://vimeo.com/64995267>



This video from TVdays.com shows footage of a turner creating a lidded bowl in the 1930s. It gives a fascinating insight into the world of the production/jobbing turner. The core fundamentals of turning have not really changed – sharp tools, secure holding, cutting with the grain and so on – we just have a bigger variety of kit to and tools to choose from now.

From the forum

Here we share with you the pieces that readers have posted on our *Woodturning* forum. If you are interested in your piece appearing here, or would simply like feedback and advice on your work, visit www.woodworkersinstitute.com and click on the forum button.

THE DEEP

https://www.woodworkersinstitute.com/forum/the-deep_topic21758.html

Ed Oliver posted: The Deep. Sanded with micro pads (Thanks for the tip Derek). Sphere is just under 100mm (Sorry about the reflection of the lights.)

Claude responded: Wow! Beautiful!

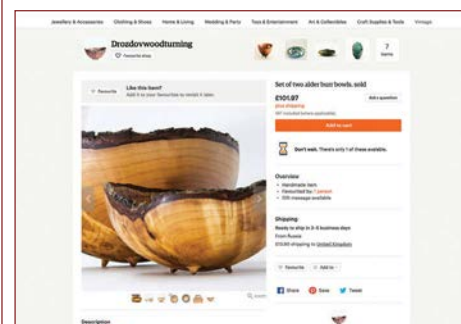
CHJ Commented: Wow! I'm still echoing Claude's WOW. That imperfection-free finish is awe inspiring. Takes some effort to get back to actually appreciating the balance of the presentation.



Etsy

BURR ELDER BOWLS

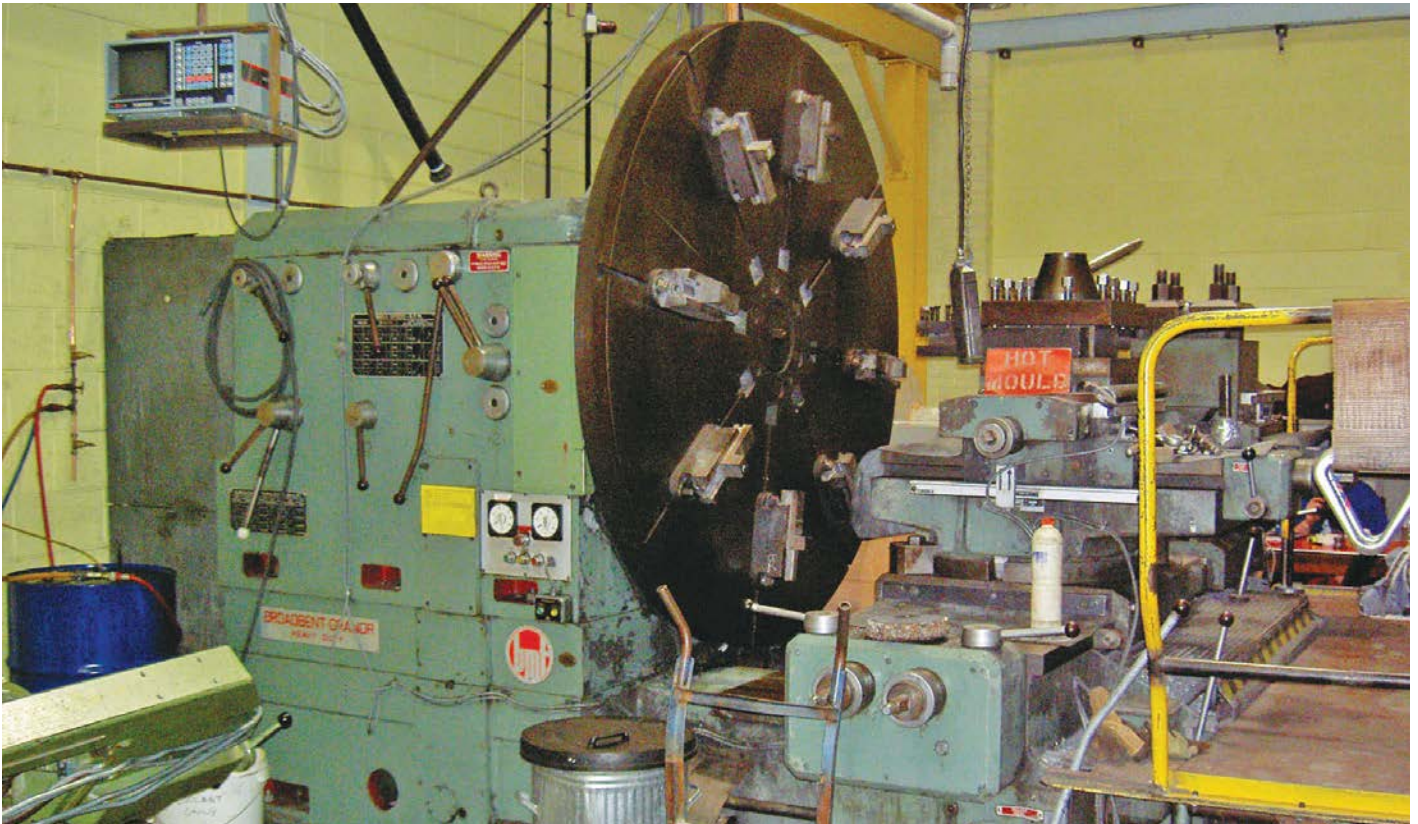
<http://etsy.me/2HaDApJ>



Drozdovwoodturning from Russia has some beautiful work on Etsy. It is always nice to see well-made items for sale and these tripod-footed natural-edge bowls are very well made and they have sold. No surprises there. There are some other delightful pieces of work too.

Yes, Your Honour

Geoffrey Laycock comments on teaching others to turn



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEOFFREY LAYCOCK

I've been asked a few times about teaching people to turn wood. Not 'would I show them how', rather 'could I get into trouble if I teach someone and they hurt themselves'. It's an interesting and not straightforward question to answer.

In simple terms, we have two legal systems in the UK, a criminal and a civil one. Get caught speeding, or break a health and safety law – criminal. Trespass or want compensation for injury – civil. If someone purports to be a competent person to instruct/train/teach at work and they are not, and the learner is injured during that process or subsequently, it could possibly be a criminal offence committed either by an employing business, individual employee, or self-employed person. That is not a 'given' and there is a substantial body of previous or decided cases that help the courts understand if the legislation applies in the specific case. Essentially, only a court of sufficient authority can decide if it is/is not applicable.

Let's forget about a work situation and consider someone has just shown an enthusiastic friend the very basics of bowl turning. They show how to mount a large, irregular blank by gluing to a faceplate. They don't explain anything about potential

timber defects, selection of lathe speeds when truing up, workpiece balance, nothing about eye/face/respiratory protection and the tailstock is not brought up to provide support. The friend has not had any practice on spindle work and has not been clearly shown tool bevel engagement, risk of catches and what can result. To add to our story, the 'teacher' has never really mastered tool sharpening and selection and gives 'friend' a badly sharpened 30mm spindle roughing gouge to get the rough blank into the round. I suspect you know where this is going and I'm painting the worst scenario possible: we have a high-speed catch with the gouge finding a hidden shake. Just to make matters worse, the blank detaches and hits 'friend' square in the face, resulting in a serious eye injury.

Can 'friend' resort to the criminal legal system? Probably not, but the civil system is a different ball game – yes, they can. Every individual has a legal duty of care towards others. In this instance, we would be looking at whether reasonable care was taken, reasonable foresight was given to what could go wrong, competence and much more. Depending on the circumstances, house insurance may provide third-party cover but, increasingly, insurers look carefully at factors such

as those mentioned and may argue that conditions within the policy have not been complied with. Not having insurance does not prevent a claim going ahead and without it a successful claim could result in substantial damages and that money would have to be found from somewhere. Of course, the most important fact is one person now has a serious injury with potentially long-term consequences.

There is at least one scheme existing designed to quantify the ability of a person to teach safely and having adequate liability insurance should be a given. Things can still go wrong but being able to show, by whatever means, competence and knowledge, plus having the correct insurance as a back-up, should not stop anyone passing on their enthusiasm and helping others to become similarly smitten with woodturning.

I have grossly oversimplified a complex subject and apologise to the law enforcers and legal professionals among us.

For those of you who do large faceplate turning, I thought I'd show a rather larger lathe used for turning aluminium billets weighing in excess of a tonne. You can imagine the importance of knowledge and competence required as a rogue flying workpiece would not be fun.



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Kit & tools

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ON TEST

Carbide cutters

Kurt Hertzog tries out a range of carbide cutters for turning tools for Arizona Carbide

With the ongoing popularity of carbide cutter tools, many tool companies that don't exclusively offer carbide cutter tools have added them to their traditional steel tool product lines. The latest entry into the carbide cutter world is Arizona Carbide (AZ Carbide). At this point only offering replacement carbide cutters, it bills itself as 'your one and only source for carbide Inserts'.

Its product line is very extensive. While I'm not sure it offers a cutter to replace every carbide cutter currently on the market, it must be close. I received its entire product line of flat-topped cutters and its contour ground cutters to evaluate. Also, I had a chance to try out its latest offering of a carbide scraper insert. Stacking them up face to face with the replacement cutters offered by the original equipment manufacturers, they match up with no discernible difference. Each one that I used fitted perfectly in the nesting (when there



The flat-topped product offering with a host of diamond shaped, square, and round sizes to fit nearly every application



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT HERTZOG

was one) and the mounting fastener fitted perfectly.

Flat-topped cutters

The flat-topped cutters, both square and round, cut nicely with no noticeable different from the original cutter. The sharp-cornered cutters were sharply cornered and the radius-edged cutters worked as the original radius-edged cutters. I didn't have any of the AZ Carbide cutters that didn't fit their

intended application. I used them extensively to see if they would wear out faster than the OEM (original equipment manufacturer) cutter but never saw a difference I could quantify. Good practices of keeping tabs on your workhorse edge and pristine edge and using them appropriately extends the lives of the cutters considerably.

French-curve scraper

The AZ Carbide scraper is an interesting



AZ Carbide offers contour ground cutters for most hollowing rigs, as well as a shaft/mounting system

bit of kit. It is big enough to be used on larger work and has many different curves that lend themselves. You never engage too much surface but rather find the best fit along the French curve of the scraper for your needs. It did a wonderful job on the faceplate-oriented grain work I used it on.

Contour-ground cutters

The contour-ground cutters matched up with the OEM cutters and were easily interchanged. The nesting fits were all good and the screw mounts fitted perfectly. I tried them on my hollowing rigs from various manufacturers and they performed identically. The cutters that fitted my existing handled tools were also mounted and tested. I could not tell any difference in cut surface finish when the cutters were new. The engagement and generation of nicely formed curls was easily attained. There was no difference in ability to feather the cut or lean into it more aggressively.

My testing wasn't scientifically designed to gauge any differences in longevity between the OEM cutters and the AZ Carbide offerings. The AZ Carbide cutters provided good life and I didn't make attempts to rejuvenate them with a diamond hone. I used them until I needed a fresh edge and then rotated the cutter. Again, doing the heavy cutting in one area and then rotating for the primo edge and back and forth as needed.

Once the primo edge becomes a bit haggard, it now becomes the workhorse cutting area and the virgin cutter area next in the rotation becomes the primo area.



AZ Carbide's newest offering is a large carbide scraper that mounts to many systems, offering a host of contours to engage

Conclusion

Overall evaluation of the AZ Carbide cutter line is very favourable. They fitted all of the applications I tried them in and cut very nicely in all. The lifetime of the edges was acceptable and the pricing of the product is extremely attractive. I recommend you give them a try in your own shop.

Prices from \$6.50
Contact: AZ Carbide
Web: <https://azcarbide.com>

MOTHER-OF-PEARL AND CALCITE INLAY

Imaginlay has introduced a range of inlay material in either mother-of-pearl, available in flake or fine grades, and crystal calcite, in coarse grade in 10z jars. Imaginlay comments that the mother-of-pearl and calcite '...can be used as is, or dyed to emulate a variety of luxurious gem stones, such as sapphire blue, ruby red, jade green and more. You can also mix it into our other inlay materials to add a shimmering translucent chatoyance effect. These grains add iridescent, colourful shimmer to any inlay design. It comes from the inner layer of the shell of some oysters and abalones.'

The website has a nice gallery of examples of work using these items and instructions for how to use and colour them.

Price \$12.95 for 10z jar
Contact Imaginlay
Web: www.easyinlay.com



Conversion chart	
2mm (5/64in)	
3mm (1/8in)	
4mm (5/32in)	
6mm (1/4in)	
7mm (9/32in)	
8mm (5/16in)	
9mm (11/32in)	
10mm (3/8in)	
11mm (7/16in)	
12mm (1/2in)	
13mm (11/16in)	
14mm (3/4in)	
15mm (9/16in)	
16mm (5/8in)	
17mm (11/16in)	
18mm (23/32in)	
19mm (3/4in)	
20mm (13/16in)	
21mm (7/8in)	
22mm (11/8in)	
23mm (23/32in)	
24mm (5/8in)	
25mm (1in)	
30mm (1 1/8in)	
32mm (1 1/4in)	
35mm (1 3/8in)	
38mm (1 7/8in)	
40mm (1 5/8in)	
45mm (1 3/4in)	
50mm (2in)	
55mm (2 1/8-2 1/4in)	
60mm (2 3/8in)	
63mm (2 1/2in)	
65mm (2 5/8in)	
70mm (2 3/4in)	
75mm (3in)	
80mm (3 1/8in)	
85mm (3 1/4in)	
90mm (3 3/8in)	
93mm (3 1/2in)	
95mm (3 3/4in)	
100mm (4in)	
105mm (4 1/8in)	
110mm (4 1/4-4 3/8in)	
115mm (4 1/2in)	
120mm (4 3/4in)	
125mm (5in)	
130mm (5 1/8in)	
135mm (5 1/4in)	
140mm (5 1/2in)	
145mm (5 3/4in)	
150mm (6in)	
155mm (6 1/8in)	
160mm (6 1/4in)	
165mm (6 1/2in)	
170mm (6 3/4in)	
178mm (6 5/8in)	
180mm (7in)	
185mm (7 1/4in)	
190mm (7 1/2in)	
195mm (7 3/4in)	
200mm (8in)	
305mm (12in)	
405mm (16in)	
510mm (20in)	
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710mm (28in)	
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The filters give an Assigned Protection Factor of APF20, suitable for use with MDF. The AIR/PRO is certified to approved standard BS EN 12941 TH2P-S for respiratory protection and BS EN166 for eye protection.

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Contact: Trend Machinery & Cutting Tools Ltd

Web: www.trend-uk.com



CBN WHEELS

The Toolpost has introduced a dual recessed 150mm diameter CBN (Cubic Boron Nitride) wheel providing 25mm width sharpening potential on grinders designed for 19mm wide wheels.

The centre of the recessed 25mm wheels is reduced to 19mm wide so that the hub width directly fits into the space occupied by a 19mm wide wheel. Provided that the grinder side guards have 3mm of space either side of the standard 19mm wheel, then the recessed 25mm wheels can be fitted. (Be aware that guards should never be removed to permit the fitting of a wider wheel regardless of whether the wheel is of CBN or AlOx type: full guarding of all grinding wheels is essential.)

This addition brings to 17 the total number of different CBN wheel configurations that The ToolPost supplies. Wheels are available in 150mm and 200mm diameters in widths from 19mm to 40mm. There is a choice of three grits; coarse, standard and fine.

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Contact: The Toolpost

Web: www.toolpost.co.uk



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Price: £259.99

Contact: Record Power

Web: www.recordpower.co.uk

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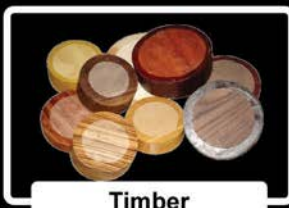
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A bowl, a wing, a foot and a leg

Les Symonds shares with us how his latest burr piece came into being



PHOTOGRAPH BY LES SYMONDS

The brief sounded simple, but proved more difficult to achieve. It was to be a bowl that was similar to an oak burr sculpture that I had on display in my shop. The underside of the bowl was to have an inscription, and it needed to be ready in a few days.

The starting point was a chunk of weathered oak (*Quercus robur*) burr, roughly shaped like a half of a pear. When marked out, it proved to be a few inches greater than my lathe's capacity, but I overcame that with an adaptation to the lathe by lowering the support

bracket for the outboard toolrest.

Work commenced with a faceplate and progressed with chucking points, and I planned to accommodate the inscription by setting a disk of a suitable timber into the chucking point underneath the bowl. However, I was so impressed by the texture of the underside that I decided to add a foot to raise the bowl and to make the texture more visible, with the inscribed timber piece eventually set into the chucking point on the foot. Turning the upper face of the wing was done first, working from the tip back towards the

bowl and, once all the old chainsaw marks were removed, the surface was lightly scraped before scorching.

Once the turning was complete, it was simply a matter of standing the bowl on its foot, choosing an appropriate point for an applied leg to provide stability, then both the leg and the foot were scorched and lime-waxed to match the detailing on the upper face of the bowl.

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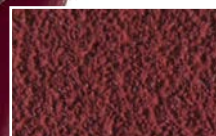
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