

Woodturning

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Espresso cups

Andy Coates shows how to make functional drinking cups



PROJECTS Nutcracker • Vase with finial • Apple box • Pierced hollow ring • Christmas trees **TECHNICAL** Carving on turned work • Jigs for three-legged stools • Inlay on curved surfaces

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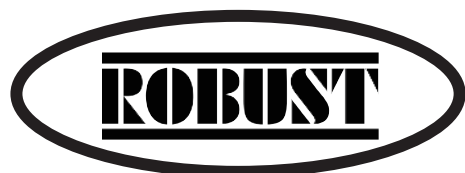
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Better presentation and promotion



There's no escaping the fact that Christmas is coming. The shops are full of things they hope will attract, entice or intrigue you enough to get you to part with some money. Let's face it, the shops are very good at marketing, packaging, presenting and pricing things and they spend a lot of money, time and effort on sorting it all out. I must admit that the marketing and display aspects of goods fascinate me.

No doubt you are now wondering where I am going with this. Well, if someone wants their goods to be seen and noticed, introduce themselves to a wider audience, sell things – whether through the web, directly or within a gallery environment – it will not come about unless they market themselves and their work effectively and appropriately for the target audience they are aiming for.

It takes a lot of thought as to what to do, when and how much time and money to invest in such things. But if one invests too much or too little of any of

the aforementioned things appropriate to the market one is aiming at, then it can seriously hamper the efficacy.

Many turners will, at some time or other, sell work. Most do so for charitable events. Some turners, although few in relation to the turning population in general, generate part of their income by selling work. Fewer still make a living solely from selling work. Some may want to teach or demonstrate, some will write, some will work closely with industry. Even a stand full of club members' work needs to be shown well and look good to attract people.

Before I get shot down in flames regarding this, I know that if people search for my name a website that a friend of mine started for me some while back has, due to my lack of sending material for them to complete, never been completed. A big fail on my part, so rest assured I know what it is like to make mistakes or not get things done.

I know some of you will think that none

of this concerns you, but even if you give presents to people, and this is the time of year when we do make gifts for others, the packaging and labelling still have to be thought about. I am not going to wrap a fragile present I have spent ages making in old newspaper and expect it to be well received – or even get to the person intact.

How we present ourselves and our work to others matters and has an impact in one way or another, even if it is a piece of work that gets broken in transit.

Let me know what you have made and let's start looking forward to Christmas.

markb@thegmcgroup.com



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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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Espresso cups with saucers

Andy Coates shows how to turn a matching pair of handled espresso cups



Considering I spend so much time making purely decorative objects, it may come as a surprise that I like to make things that have a specific utility value. I like utility in turning. I like objects you can make to be used. Of all the things I ever make, I think these kinds of objects give me the greatest pleasure of all. Being able to make something beautiful that you can actually use on a daily basis is a real privilege.

Bowls are obviously the most commonly made utility object, and while I love making bowls there are only so many you can use on a daily basis. Something we all use on a daily basis is a cup or mug for tea or coffee. I have a number of these at home and in the workshop in different styles and a range of sizes. Some I make on a regular basis to sell, and they are a popular item.

Recently I have been asked to make very particular styles

and sizes, some of which have been quite challenging, but they are always fun and seem to be well received.

As a coffee lover it occurred to me some time ago that one style was missing from my wooden selection: an espresso cup. This is where this project derives from – it's my wooden version of an espresso cup. And, as espresso cups usually come with a saucer, I make a saucer to match. It seemed appropriate to make them in matching pairs, although I also make them in contrasting pairs.

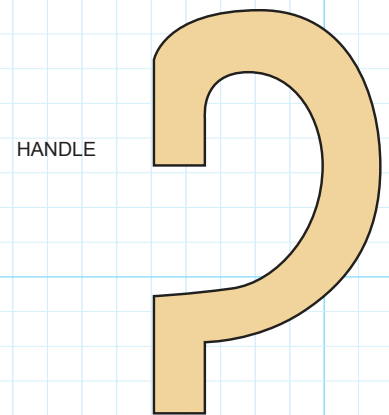
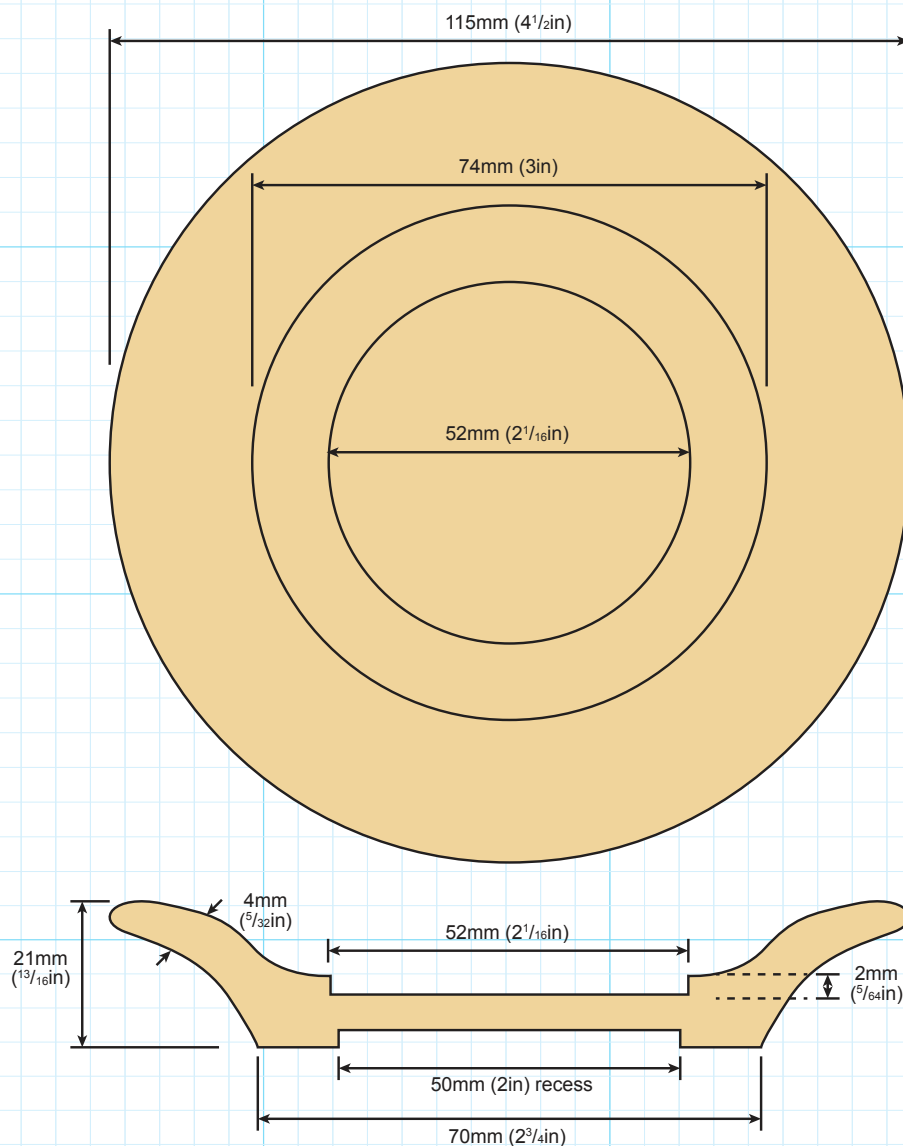
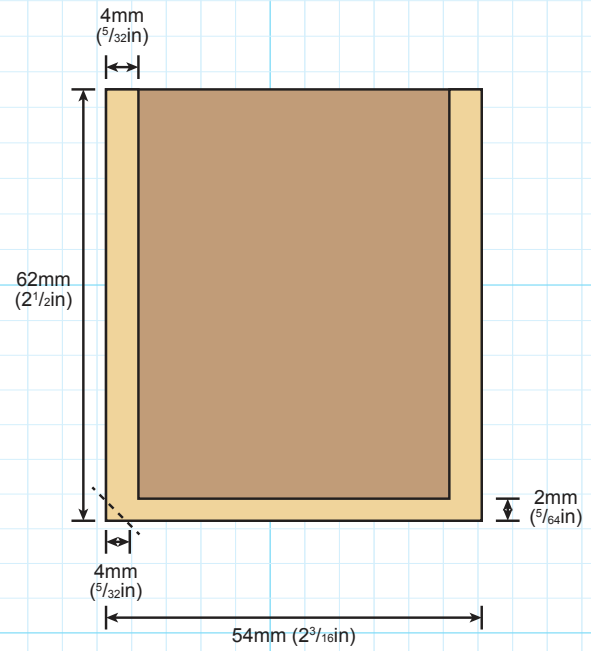
This project is for a straight-sided set, but there are many possible variants, and they can be customised and modified to suit need and design ideas. One of the best things about the project is that it requires very little in terms of materials, and often you will find offcuts that will do to produce a set.

TOOLS

- 10mm bowl gouge
- Two-sided negative rake box scraper
- Thin parting tool
- Beading & parting tool
- 8mm round carbide-cutter tipped-tool
- Forstner bit
- Jacobs chuck
- Bandsaw
- Pillar drill
- 6 & 8mm drill bit
- Bandsaw
- Bobbin sander
- Bandsaw, scrollsaw or coping saw
- Rotary carving tool with drum sander
- Metalworker's scribe
- Carpenter's hole-marking pen
- Callipers

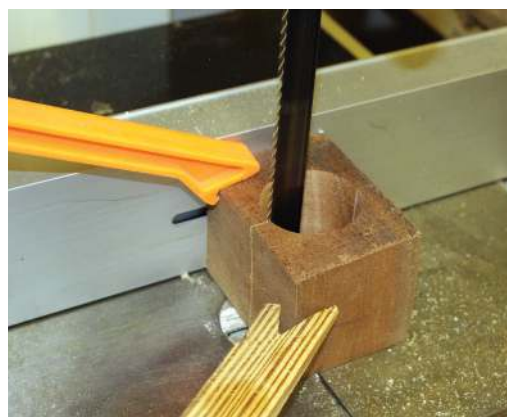
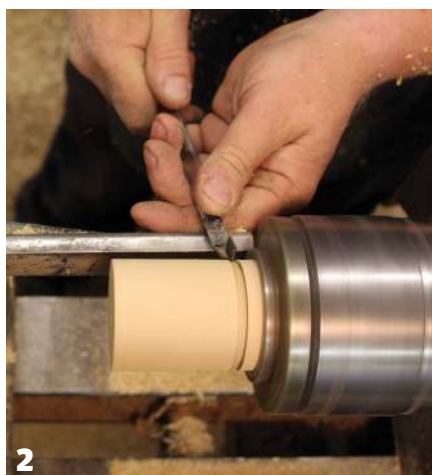
MATERIALS

- Rubber bands
- Foodsafe two-part lacquer finish
- Foodsafe oil finish
- Adhesive
- Abrasives down to 320 grit
- Oak (*Quercus robur*), two pieces 65 x 65 x 80mm
- Oak, two pieces 25 x 115mm diameter
- Black walnut (*Juglans* spp.), 15 x 70 x 70mm from which two handles will be formed
- Four pieces of 6mm-diameter dowel, 12mm long



Holding jig

You may also wish to make a holding jig for drilling the cups. A block 75mm x 75mm x 100mm of any scrap wood will do. Drill a 54mm hole all the way through the blank from the side-grain side and then cut through the line of the diameter of the hole. You will be left with a 'half-pipe' jig sized to hold the cup for drilling.

**1****2****Turning the cups**

1 Mark the centres of the cup blanks and mount the first between centres. Rough down to a cylinder and then, at the tailstock end, cut a tenon to suit your chuck. Immediately after the tenon use a parting tool to set a 55mm diameter on the remaining stock and rough down to this diameter along the remaining length. Repeat these steps for the second blank.

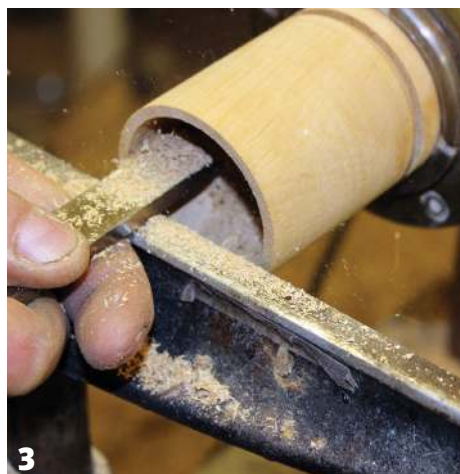
2 Mount the first blank in the chuck. Mark a line 62mm back from the front edge. Make a shallow parting cut, 4mm deep at this mark. Mark 2mm back along the blank and then cut a chamfer from this mark to the base of the 4mm parting cut. This creates a shadow line at the base.

3 Now you are ready to hollow the cup out. This can be achieved by several methods: spindle or bowl gouge, carbide tools, box scraper, or by using a Forstner bit in a Jacobs chuck. Hollow the cup out to a depth of 54mm, and to a wall thickness of 4mm. NB: the wall can be slightly thicker but NOT thinner. Ensure the base is perfectly flat.

4 Now abrade inside and out. You need to ensure that the diameter is precisely 54mm. Remember, you made it 1mm larger at the sizing step in pic 1. If you have made a holding jig for the drill press you can use this to check the cup is the correct fit and adjust as required. Abrade the interior down to 240 grit. The exterior can be as fine as you wish. Round over the top edge of the cup with the abrasive to ensure a good 'mouthfeel' in use.

5 Once abraded the cup can be parted off. As this is an end-grain vessel it is best to part almost to separation and then finish with a pull saw with the lathe stopped. This prevents an end-grain sprue pulling out of the base and ruining the vessel.

6 On the resulting waste block turn a tight fitting jam chuck to take the cup.

**3****4****5****6**

7 Mount the cup on it, clean up the base. Mark 4mm in from the edge and cut a slightly concave area then abrade. Repeat the above steps for the second cup, making sure the cups are identical.

Turning the saucer

8 A screw chuck and spacer are used to reduce the required depth of the mounting hole used. Drill a hole to suit your screw chuck, 8mm deep, and mount the blank. True-up the edge to create a finished disc diameter of 115mm.

9 Use a beading and parting tool, cut 10-20mm in on the headstock side of the blank. This is to ensure a flat and true top edge to provide a reference edge for checking the final depth of the saucer.

10 From the back face take the blank down to 21mm finished thickness. Scribe a 50mm circle on the base and then one at 70mm diameter. Cut a 4mm holding recess in the 50mm circle. Make a mark on the side edge 4mm back from the front face. Using a gouge, form a curve between the 70mm mark on the base and the mark on the side edge. Aim for a flowing curve.

11 Abrade, seal and wax or oil the underside of the saucer. Once done, repeat all the above steps for the second blank.

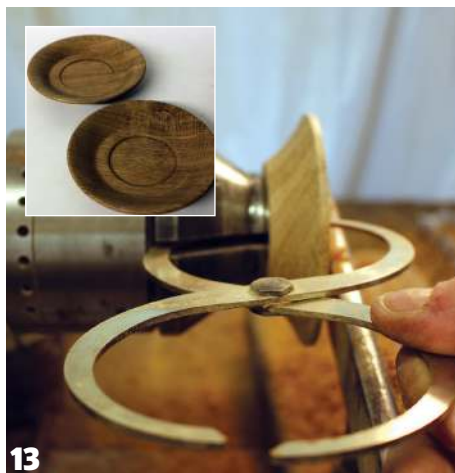
12 Reverse the blank on to small jaws. The outer 10-20mm of the front face was cut earlier. Mark a circle 4mm in from the edge on this clean face. Using a gouge, begin to turn from this mark to centre until the screw mount hole is turned away. The base thickness should be 8mm.

13 With the lathe stationary, use callipers to check this dimension. Now turn from dead centre outwards, creating a flat base. Mark a 52mm circle on this flat base and use a parting tool cut a shallow, 2mm recess. NB: this recess should take your cup. Now, from the edge of the recess, form a further flat surface to a diameter of 74mm. Cut the remainder of the saucer wall down towards this diameter, aiming for a 4mm-thick wall, and blend the wall shape into the flat area. Abrade, seal and wax or oil the saucer.

Repeat steps to create the second saucer. The saucers can be reverse-turned on a jam plate chuck to remove or soften the edges of the chuck recess.

Creating the handle

14 Take a flat section of timber the right thickness, draw the handle shape on some paper, cut it out neatly and glue it on the face of your timber and cut the handles out using a scroll or coping saw.

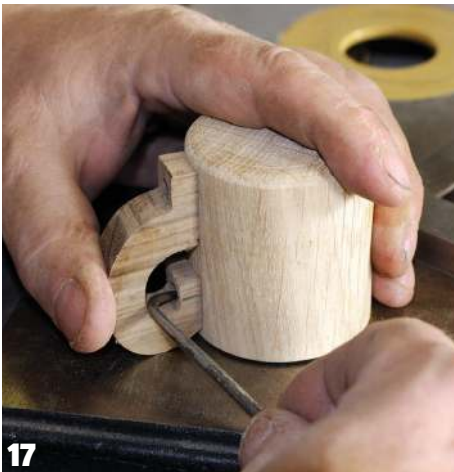




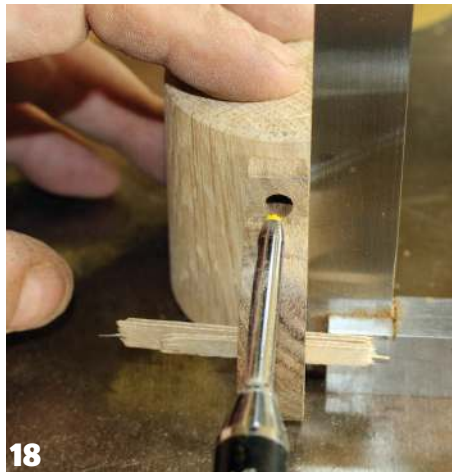
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15 Mark the centreline along the two flat faces and mark the middle. Centre pop with an awl. Use a press vice and drill through carefully with a 6mm drill bit.

16 Next, use a bobbin sander, or the heel of a bench sander, to create a curve on the face of the flat surfaces to match the curve of the cup outer wall as closely as possible. This can also be achieved using a mini drum sander on a Dremel-type tool.

Fitting the handle

17 Turn the cup upside down and, using a square, set the position of the handle. An engineer's scribe with a crooked end is ideal to get in and mark the position of the top dowel in the restricted space. Place the cup horizontally in the cup-holding jig and set the drill press for a 2mm hole, holding the cup drill carefully.

18 Push a 12mm-long dowel into the hole and place the handle on the cup using the dowel to locate it. Check for square and use a carpenter's hole-marking pen to set the drilling point for the lower dowel. Remove the handle and set the cup in a jig and drill a 2mm deep hole.

19 Apply glue to the dowels and back face and set the handle, ensuring the dowels locate correctly. Use rubber bands to clamp and clean away excess glue and allow to cure.

20 Cut off excess dowel with a small saw before clamping the cup down and finishing the shaping of the handle using any suitable tools. Abrade it smooth.

The final stage

21 For my own use I do no more than oil the cups with two or three coats of Danish oil and allow it to fully cure before first use. However, to be certain that they do not leak, three coats of a two-part food-safe cold-cure lacquer can be applied to the interior and top edge. Allow it to fully cure between each coat. The exterior is given three coats of a food-safe oil.

Conclusions

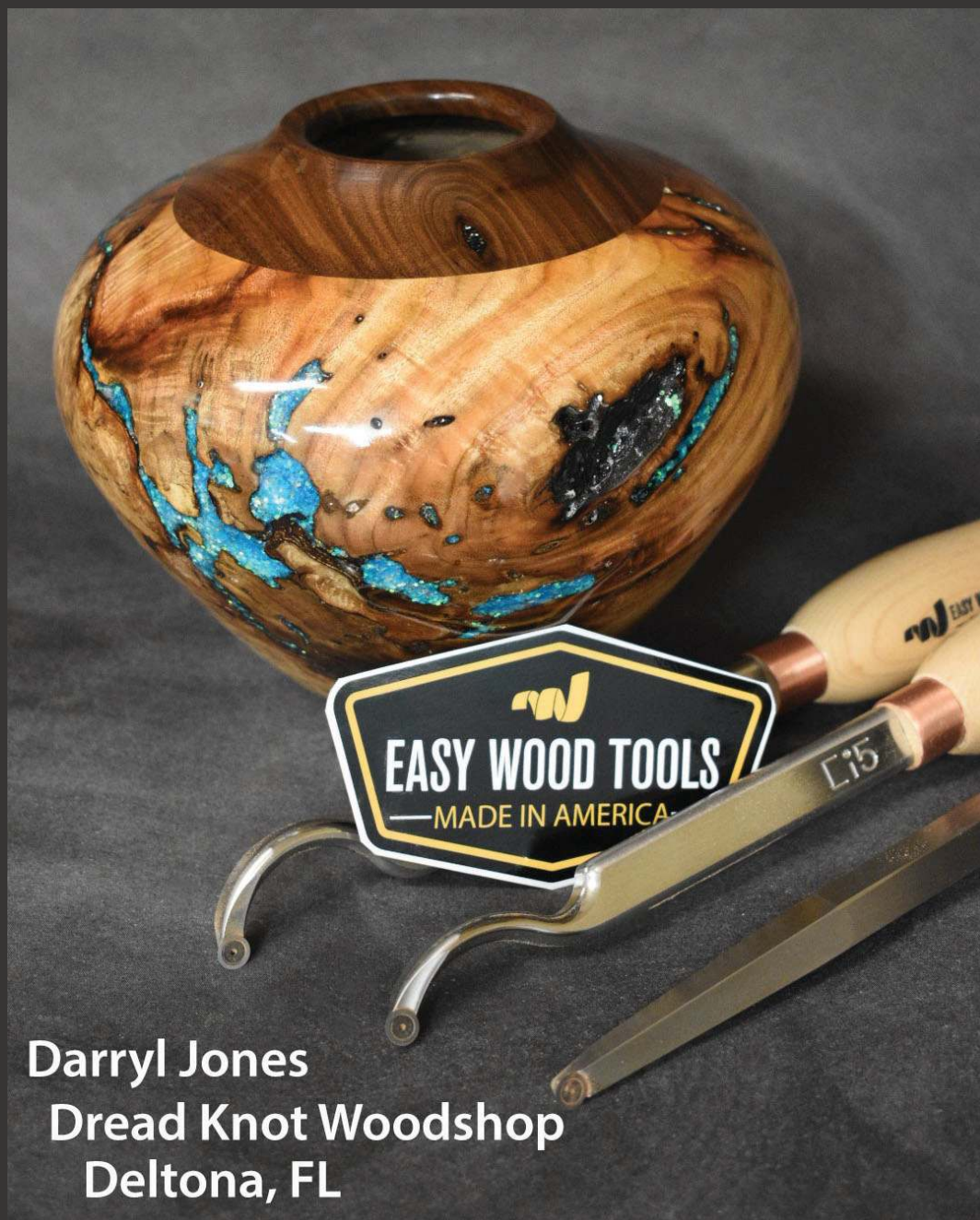
22 If you are making these to sell or give as gifts at Christmas, then you should also provide care instructions appropriate for domestic woodware. In truth, these are remarkably robust objects. They bounce when dropped, are fine for hot tea and coffee, and will only look better as they patinate with use. I use mine all day long, every day of the week, and each time they provide a tiny moment of smugness. I made this and it's beautiful and useful. It's my coffee smug. This picture shows some variant designs too. ●



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Simple carved textures on forms

Mark Sanger explores integrating carving on turned work



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SANGER UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Since buying my first *Woodturning* magazine back in 2000, exploration of surface decoration through carving, texture, colour and mixed media has grown massively, as has the selection of tools, materials, paints and sundries available. Regularly something new is being manufactured to enable us to texture and decorate our projects. While surface decoration has been well practised by many turners long before I picked up a gouge, carving and decorating wood has been practised for thousands of years in one form or another and today the options available to us for adding texture and colour to our projects are as many as they can be confusing.

From a simple, subtle, carved highlight on the rim of a pure wood bowl to the fine texture and fully coloured items that are produced by many today, there is often a technique and tool available – so much so that I have tried to stop buying more tools and materials as I have run out of room. It is not that what is available today is not valid or worth buying, but I so often find myself picking up the most basic of tools I have in my armoury for my style of work. Often that's a simple wood chisel and/or reciprocating carver or rotary tool that produces stunning effects at minimal cost. In this article I am going to introduce the basic carving tools and techniques that I

use to decorate my projects in the hope that you will try them for yourself. In the next article I will be expanding on this to show in more depth the sort of project in which you can include some of these techniques and ideas as well as exploring the subject deeper.

Colouring is not the focus of this article, but I have included some basic colouring to help illustrate some of the effects produced as well as including examples of my own and others' work where relevant to connect the techniques to the result. As ever, the possibilities are endless so give them a go and see what you come up with. Above all else be safe and have fun with what you make. ►

Types of carving chisels



A selection of traditional hand-carving chisels



Two power carvers and a selection of chisels that can be used with them

Traditional carving gouges are great to work with. There are many types and makes available and they can be used either solely by hand and/or in conjunction with a carver's mallet to produce fine detailed textures as well as heavy deep textures. They come in a variety of styles, sizes and cutting-edge profiles.

To get started three profiles – a V-shaped cutting edge, one with a deep, narrow, curved flute and one with a wider shallow curved flute – will give you a great start without spending lots of money.

In addition to hand-carving gouges there are power carvers available that hold and drive specifically designed carving gouges. These work by creating a fast

percussive/hammering action to achieve a faster cut rate than by using a standard hand-carving tool and mallet alone.

There are many makes and variants on the market of two main types.

One type is a hand piece that fits into a pendulum motor unit/drop-down motor with a flexible shaft. These are effectively a motor which is hung above the work area with a flexible drive shaft that connects to various hand pieces, both rotary, and include a percussive carving hand piece in which special chisels are held.

Due to the motor being housed away for the hand piece, it is generally a powerful motor with the capacity to deal with heavier, prolonged carving, and

the handpiece, which is small and on a flexible, shaft is easy to manoeuvre and work with.

The other type of unit is a fully enclosed one which incorporates both the motor and handpiece. There are various makes available of differing sizes. Despite being bulkier than the handpiece fitted on the flexible shaft unit, these work well and are capable of fine control, but not quite as fine a control as the unit on the flexible shaft or that which can be achieved using hand tools.

That said, the power-carving units are faster than hand tools but are noisier. Everything is a balance and, as with all tools, it takes practice to master them.

Sharpening

It is of little use to discuss the types of chisels/tools available and techniques of use if we cannot sharpen them to cut the wood efficiently and cleanly. Other than making turning and carving far easier, sharp tools make it much safer, as the force needed to cut through wood with a sharp tool is far less than with a blunt tool, greatly reducing the chance of slipping and injury and also surface damage to the wood.

SHARPENING MACHINES

Many machines are available for shaping and sharpening. These include wet wheels, dry wheels, slow grinders, CBN wheels, diamond wheels belts and strops. The variety makes it hard to know which to purchase and the wrong choice can be expensive.

The sharpening system I use, along with various jigs and attachments, is shown in the photo – a wheel which runs in water to shape the tools. I use it for hand-carving tools. The other side has a leather wheel on which micro-abrasive paste is applied. This is used to hone and strop the tools to a razor-sharp edge. The versatility, accuracy and sharpness



A wet sharpening system with a leather honing wheel

of edge produced is outstanding, but this type of system comes at a price and to get started there are many low-cost and homemade variants.

LOW-COST SHARPENING

Natural or man-made oil or water stones, diamond or ceramic stones are great for maintaining the bevel and cutting-edge profiles on chisel. Typically one works through grit grades from coarse to restore a damaged cutting edge and create/maintain the correct bevel profile, and works through to finer grits to even

further refine the cutting edge. Hones of various shapes help with maintaining the bevel.

Most chisels have a bevel already created but it may require refining and polishing to create the cutting edge. Let's assume the tool needs a little work. The rule is that the more polished the two meeting faces that form the cutting edge, the sharper the cutting edge is.

You can use power sharpening, honing and stropping systems, but a low-cost item to start the sharpening process needs nothing more than a flat, rectangular length of MDF about 150-200mm long x 75-100mm wide and about 13-25mm deep. On one side of the block stick a piece of 600 grit wet and dry abrasive and on the other side stick some 1000 grit wet and dry abrasive. Use spray mount to stick the abrasive in place. You also need a permanent marker and some lubricant. The 600 and 1000 grit abrasives will help refine the bevel and cutting edge ready for honing for the ultimate edge. While you're making the 600/1000 grit blocks create another block, and a disc if you wish to use the lathe to help create the sharp edge. Face them off with leather.

HONING A CURVED CARVING CHISEL

Most people can sharpen a flat chisel. A V-shaped carving chisel should be treated as a flat chisel by sharpening the two flat sides, but a curved one is a bit trickier as you need to roll the bevel to ensure the whole cutting edge is sharpened. To help see what is happening, mark the bevel with a permanent marker. The aim is to remove all the marker evenly and maintain the flat bevel angle.

Apply an appropriate lubricant to the stone or abrasive being used. For the 660/1000 grit abrasive, water is ideal. Then, place the heel of the chisel on the abrasive and lift until the bevel is flat on to the abrasive. Apply moderate pressure on the tool so the bevel is in contact with the abrasive. Then, with the flute of the gouge pointing to the left and starting at the lower left-hand side of the cutting edge, draw the tool back along the abrasive block. Never push the cutting edge into the abrasive. As you draw the tool back, rotate it clockwise to the right side of the cutting edge, maintaining contact throughout the process.

Repeat this procedure until all the marker has been removed and the edge has been re-established all the way up to the cutting edge.

STROPPING

Stropping is the final process used to refine and polish the bevel and top meeting face. It takes time and you must be methodical as you work, inspecting the bevel and cutting edge regularly until the perfect edge is achieved.

A homemade or shop-bought honing strop is, as described earlier, a piece of leather stuck to a piece of wood or MDF. On to the leather is applied ultra-fine abrasive and the bevel of the tool is manipulated across the leather face as many times as necessary until the bevel is highly polished.

When using a strop on the lathe, whether homemade or shop bought, I apply masking or a similar tape to the toolrest of the lathe to protect the shaft of the tool from dents. The chuck is locked on to the drive shaft to prevent it coming undone, with the spindle rotation of the lathe reversed to around 200rpm. Ultra-fine abrasive compound – either a block or paste – is applied on the wheel and the bevel and cutting edge sharpened or honed as before, with the bevel kept flat to the disk until the surface is fully polished.

THE INTERNAL GOUGE PROFILE

Finally, the top or inside profile of a gouge is honed and stropped using a combination of fine stone, diamond,



Wet/oil stones and hones of various shapes help shape and maintain the bevel and cutting edge



Diamond stone with lubricant helps with shaping and maintaining the bevel



Mark the bevel with a colour marker, then lay the bevel of the gouge flat on the abrasive and work the flat face or, in this instance, with a curved gouge rotate the blade to one side and then, as you draw the gouge back along the abrasive, rotate it until you reach the other side of the curved bevel



Honing discs for mounting on a lathe and leather strops for stropping an ultra-sharp edge



Hand honing on a leather strop



SAFETY WARNING: If sharpening, honing or stropping on a lathe, reverse the rotation of the lathe spindle so the wheels run away from the cutting edge



A shaped hone, working down using ever-finer abrasive grades, is used to refine the inside curve. Once sharpened it should cut paper

ceramic and shaped leather strops. The latter is simply a recycled leather belt, folded and glued together, on to which honing paste is applied. In the case of narrow fluted and V-shaped gouges, you can glue leather together and shape the profile to match the internal profile of the carving gouge being honed. By working through the grit grade from coarsest to finest as required, you polish the gouge profile to create the ultimate edge.



A freshly sharpened tool will cut wood cleanly when cutting with the grain. One needing stropping will not

Practising techniques

So, with chisels sharpened and ready to carve, it is advantageous to practise the cutting textures and patterns on small sections of wood, which are known as 'samplers' or 'test pieces'. Each test piece enables us to feel the cut and movement of the tool, choose the correct chisel and refine the technique prior to the final project. These samples are kept for reference, with the size and type of chisel used written on the back in marker pen. For this I use lime (*Tilia x europaea*), maple (*Acer spp.*) or sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) blanks with the grain

running through the surface cut. I create blocks about 75mm square x 10mm thick. Lime, sycamore and maple are chosen due to them being close grained, easily carved and capable of taking fine, carved detail without the distraction of the excess figure or pattern.

Create timber test samples that are either left natural prior to carving or sprayed with sanding sealer and black acrylic lacquer so the carved detail and texture can be seen clearly against the contrasting background. This helps you to decide on the final design before starting on the main project



A sample board of cuts made with a V-gouge

Textures and colour

The variation of textures, shapes and designs possible for carving and decoration is infinite, as are the possibilities open to us when adding these to our turned projects. Here I am introducing you to the initial techniques to get you started, which I will then explore much deeper in subsequent articles.

To start with, either fix the item to be carved in a vice, on a clamp or on a non-slip mat as appropriate to make sure the work is stable and will not move. I secured the blocks shown in a vice, and carved them using either a V or a tight-radius curved gouge.

Experiment to your heart's content on different pieces of wood with straight cuts, curved cuts, squiggles, geometric shapes and so on, all the time getting used to the feel of the tool and interaction with the wood, the resulting effect and any problems

with the specific design being carved. Spraying a sample board black after cutting shows the cut patterns/shapes produced clearly, as they are seen devoid of any visual distractions from the grain or wood colour.

SAFETY WARNING: It can be seen in the picture that both my hands are kept well behind the chisel cutting, as well as the chisel pointing and being used away from my body. It is critical with any bladed tool to cut away from your body as well as being mindful of anyone else who may be around us. Becoming disciplined in body position and direction of cut to always be away from our bodies is critical. If the design you are carving requires drastic movement of the tool so to start pointing towards the body, simply move the project being carved or body position to maintain safe direction of cut.



The power carving unit fitted with a V-gouge being used to create a wavy, s-like pattern on timber sprayed black



A V-gouge cut pattern on a different board where it has been sprayed black

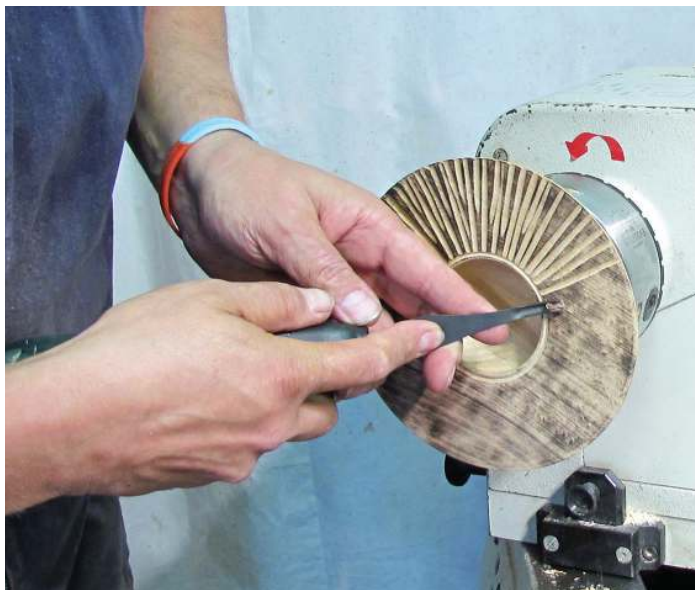
Visual contrast

Often the same carved texture will look markedly different by simply reversing the tonal value of the surface. For instance, if you were to spray the surface to be cut black prior to carving, or carve it and spray it black then sand the top surface back to natural timber, the effects created are the same as the previous ones, but will be visually very different.



Sample boards

Securing work for carving



A small bowl being held on the lathe, and locked in position using the indexing, while the face is being carved. The face was scorched prior to carving



The work is held on the chuck, but the chuck is held in wooden jaws to give better access



Work held in a chuck on a carver's vice, which has a threaded spindle to suit the chuck



Work held between centres

Versatile, secure work-holding is important when carving. Carving a flat test piece held in the vice is a relatively simple process, but our turned projects are generally in the round and often include not flat but convex and concave surfaces in a multitude of forms. This often makes it difficult to keep the same position and direction of cut while maintaining a good posture for carving.

ON-LATHE CARVING

The simplest method is to hold the form on the lathe clamped in the chuck and, by using an indexing system, you can lock the work in a given position so you can work on it. This is an effective method, especially for large platters and similar,

flatter types of work. That said, it does not give you good access to some more complicated shapes of work and, due to where and how it is held, it can be a bit tricky for your back due to bending over the lathe/work to access where you need to cut.

When carving hollow forms, vases or similar, I opt for a mixture of work-holding methods and will use various homemade items, such as friction cups and jam chucks, to suit the form being carved.

The small cherry (*Prunus* spp.) hollow form in the picture is held against a friction drive/cup, giving access to the base after the top had been carved. The friction cup has rubber glued to the front face with the form being sandwiched

and supported by the tail centre into the waste section at the base. This is a simple but effective way of holding a variety of forms and only requires scrap pieces of wood turned to the required shape to support the form on the lathe.

IN A VICE

An alternative way to hold work while carving it is to take the chuck and project of the lathe and hold the chuck boss in a wooden-jawed vice on a bench. This will enable you to more easily move the piece to work on a section at a time and to a limited degree angle it somewhat as you work on it. Again, the working position may cause problems if used for any length of time.

USING A CARVER'S VICE WITH THREAD ADAPTOR

To enable me to work on the shapes I want to have the freedom and ability the work in the exact position, which led me to invest in a turner's carving vice, which features a

threaded adaptor to allow you to fit the chuck on it. This enables the user to alter the height, angle and position freely and quickly when working, and lock the work in place, allowing for safe optimum

working. A traditional carving vice generally comes with a faceplate for screwing the work to it and may not have the facility to add a chuck thread adaptor.

Decoration



A simple, decorative carved pattern



A more complex bowl made by George Foweraker, which required the wood to be coloured and sealed prior to carving

The wide-rim beech bowl, the surface of which was lightly scorched with a blow torch outside prior to carving to add contrast to the final carved texture, gives a similar but organic effect compared to the black acrylic spray.

The chisel blade used for this effect is a simple, curved chisel with a slight bend in the shaft for easier access to where I needed to carve, and this was fitted in a power carver. After the carving was completed the top of the texture was gently scorched to add greater contrast, resulting in a simple but effective texture.

The wide-rim sycamore bowl by George Foweraker was first sealed with sanding sealer and sprayed with acrylic paints to achieve the desired effect prior to being carved into with the small V-profile chisel in a power carver. The beauty and impact that a striking colour and simple carved effect can add to a simple form is, for me, well worth the effort.

Carving on any form need not cover the entire surface. Often a carved area adds impact to only a small area, greatly enhancing the finished piece as shown in the close-up picture of the carved



Carved neck of a hollow by George Watkins



A more complex carved form by George Watkins

neck of the opening of a spalted beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) hollow form by George Watkins, where a small V-profile chisel was used to carve this detail.

The fumed oak (*Quercus robur*) vase by George Watkins is an example of the entire form being carved and the impact this can imbue. It was carved using a power carver with a standard curved blade which was held in the chuck of the lathe. Initially, George produced a waste section at the base of the form that, when held in the chuck, could be turned down as carving progressed, with the piece then being reversed on a rubber-faced friction drive that fitted down inside of the form, held in place with the tailstock centre.

CONCLUSION

The possibilities even with the few chisel profiles and forms shown here are huge, add colour and expands further to open many opportunities to enhance our turned projects. In the next article I will expand on these techniques, incorporating them into a project that will create a visually stunning centrepiece. ●



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Community news

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.

WOMEN IN TURNING (WIT): A Community of Women – A Committee of AAW

The American Association of Woodturners (AAW) is a nonprofit organisation dedicated to advancing the art and craft of woodturning. Since its formation in 1986, 90% of its members have been men. This statistic has pushed the organisation to examine its member engagement plans to attract more women and diversify its member demographics.

Boosting the percentage of female members is a complex task as women continue to face obstacles participating in traditionally male ventures. For example, a woman attending her first woodturning chapter meeting might feel intimidated by the large number of men present. She might feel like an unwelcome outsider. She may not have had the same access to training about relevant woodturning processes and knowledge of tool use, equipment, and machinery that her male counterparts have experienced. In some cases, gender-based stereotypes



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDI WOLFE

Marie Anderson, Ana Lappegard and Pat Reddemann turning

might lead her to feel patronised. These factors and others could potentially lead to an unwelcoming and disheartening experience for a female woodturner.

Promotion

To help promote and nurture women's participation in woodturning chapter meetings and the AAW, the AAW board of directors formed its Women in Turning (WIT) committee in September 2015. The WIT committee is composed of seven female members dedicated to encouraging and assisting women in their pursuit of turning. They are also focused on sharing ideas and processes to further women's skills and creativity, and increasing participation of women in the field of woodturning.

Along with local chapter champions, both male and female, WIT pursues a variety of tactics designed to bring more women into woodturning.

- It works with AAW's chapters to identify how each chapter can attract and

welcome more women.

- It offers grants to support local AAW chapter outreach to women, including educational conferences to improve women's turning skills and women-only exhibitions.
- It works to increase visibility of female demonstrators who serve as role models and magnets to attract more women to woodturning.
- It cultivates dynamic, collaborative situations based on mutual respect, where women feel they can thrive.
- It encourages supportive, nurturing learning environments that accommodate different learning styles and explain both the 'whys' and the 'hows' of woodturning processes and use of tools, equipment and machinery.

Recent workshop

A recent workshop is a case in point. In September 2018, 39 women gathered at the Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts, Gatlinburg, Tennessee, for three and a



Inspiring
Happiness:
collaboration by
Marie Anderson,
Sue Janis Bergstrand,
Lou Kinsey

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDI WOLFE

half days. Dubbed the AAW WIT EXCHANGE, the event focused on sharing ideas, techniques, and fellowship, as well as building woodturning skills and confidence among women. The workshop emphasised process, not product. During the days of the eXchange, women of various skill levels worked collaboratively in groups of three to create turned pieces inspired by two words: a noun and a modifier. The outcome was 35 remarkable pieces, increased confidence and skills, and an empowered community of engaged women woodturners.

For further information about the American Association of Woodturning visit: www.woodturner.org



Connie Rayburn and Kathleen Duncan in discussion

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY WOLFE

SHOWS AND EVENTS

The Toolpost Open House

When: 3-4 November 2018
Where: Unit 7, Hawksworth, Southmead Industrial Park, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7HR
Web: www.toolpost.co.uk

Handmade Chelsea

When: 9-11 November 2018
Where: Chelsea Old Town Hall, Kings Road, Chelsea, London, SW3 5EE
Web: www.handmadeinbritain.co.uk



PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS WEIR

King size bed in oak and maple spindles by Lomas Furniture

North of England Woodworking show

When: 16-18 November 2018
Where: The Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, HG2 8QZ
Web: www.skpromotions.co.uk

Christmas Market

When: 23-25 November 2018
Where: Weald & Downland Museum, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0EU
Web: www.wealddown.co.uk

2019 events

Tennessee Woodturning Symposium

When: 25-26 January 2019
Where: Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Franklin, TN, US
Web: www.tnwoodturners.org

Florida Woodturning Symposium

When: 8-10 February 2019
Where: Lake Yale Baptist Conference Centre, 39034 County Rd 452, Leesburg, FL 34788, US
Web: floridawoodturningsymposium.com

Oregon Woodturning symposium

When: 15-17 March 2019
Where: Linn Country expo Centre, 3700 Knox Butte Rd, Albany SE, OR 97322, US
Web: www.oregonwoodturningsymposium.com

Midlands Woodworking & Power Tool Show

When: 22-23 March 2019
Where: Newark Showground, Lincoln Rd, Winthorpe, Coddington, Newark, NG24 2NY
Web: www.nelton.co.uk

Turnfest

When: 29-31 March 2019
Where: Seaworld Resort, Seaworld Dr, Main Beach, Queensland, Australia
Web: www.turnfest.com.au

Totally Turning

When: 30-31 March 2019
Where: Saratoga Springs City Centre, 522 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866, USA
Web: www.totallyturning.com

Craft Supplies Open Day

When: 6 April 2019
Where: Unit 2, Faraday Close, Harworth, Nottinghamshire, DN11 8RU
Web: www.craft-supplies.co.uk

Woodworks@Daventry

When: 10-11 May 2019
Where: Daventry Leisure Centre, Lodge Road, Daventry, NN11 4FP
Web: www.woodturner.org

Utah Woodturning Symposium

When: 16-18 May 2019
Where: UCCU Events Centre, 800 W University Parkway, Orem, UT 84058, US
Web: utahwoodturning.com

AAW Symposium

When: 11-14 July 2019
Where: Raleigh Convention Centre, 300, Salisbury, Raleigh St, NC27601, US
Web: www.woodturner.org

UK & Irish Woodturning Symposium (UKIWS)

When: 20-21 July 2019
Where: Doubletree Hilton Hotel, Coventry
Web: www.ukiws.co.uk

Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium

When: 14-16 September 2019
Where: The Ranch, Larimer County Fairgrounds, 5280 Arena Cir, Loveland, CO 80538, US
Web: www.rmwoodturningsymposium.com

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Box with finial

Andrew Potocnik shows how to turn a small treasure in Australian blackwood

I had a small, highly figured piece of fiddleback Australian blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) begging to be converted into a small, hollow, lidded container, so it was put aside with notes on suitable forms. Those notes were added to with later notes dated and sketches indicating possible finial forms, and further notes also showing possible base forms. Here's my problem. I'm precious about wood to the point where I don't get started until I get a kick up the backside that tells me to get going and make the most of that piece of wood. I am also mindful that big is not always better or beautiful. So I set about maximising timber use to make something small that still had visual impact.

With a final prompt it was time to get this project underway, so I attempted to make the most of colour variations, grain features and the timber's willingness to accept chemical interception to change its natural colour.

Keep in mind that *Acacia melanoxylon* is a tree I see every day when I'm running and when I'm on yard duty as a teacher. It's a tree planted prolifically for decorative purposes, and every time I see a tree that I notice has some signs of potential internal figuring, I take note, waiting for the day when I can get my hands on the wood. I do live in hope as these trees have a decent life span...

So, as you can imagine, now was the time to make use of my small piece of this fantastic wood, but experience has taught me that blackwood can have many different hues, figuring and working qualities. It is a wonderful wood, and the fragrance is distinctly pleasant, but extended exposure can lead to sensitivity issues for some people.

For this project I used a variety of colour and figuring types that can be found in commercially sourced blackwood. There are many more variations, but you'll need to keep an eye out and count yourself lucky when that extra-special piece comes along.



Focus on Australian blackwood

- **Australian blackwood:** (*Acacia melanoxylon*)
- **Grows:** Lowlands of north western Tasmania and eastern Australia
- **Density:** 640kg M³

Australian blackwood grows to about 10-24m tall and typically the trunk diameter is about 0.5m but can be up to 1.5m. It varies from a small mountain shrub to one of the largest acacias native to Australia and grows to its optimum in the lowlands of north western Tasmania and the Otway area of Victoria, both areas of cool climate and quite high rainfall.

In the wild it grows either as a 'paddock' tree or a 'forest' tree, both of which yield different colours in the tree's wood. In fact, the growth rings, colour and figure can vary dramatically, depending on where the tree grew, the soil it grew in and how plentiful water sources are to enable rapid or restricted growth.

In open areas the tree has branches growing from low on the trunk, but in forested areas the trunk will grow tall to an overall canopy, leaving a clean, straight-grained trunk. It has been planted in many overseas counties with varying results.

The sapwood is white and up to 100mm wide. The heartwood is golden brown to dark brow, sometimes with a reddish tinge and may feature brown-black or reddish steaks. It is easy to dry with little checking and negligible cell collapse.

It is usually even in texture but may exhibit interlocking grain which produces fiddleback figuring when quartersawn. The timber can also produce burrs.

WORKING QUALITIES

Plain timber is easy to work with but the figured timbers are a little trickier. You might encounter some tear-out if using anything but the sharpest tools and best techniques. Figured timber does not respond to the use of scrapers so well as the plain forms of the timber.

It can take quite fine detail and can be carved too. It also steam bends well, nails and glues well and can be bleached white with ammonia and hydrogen peroxide and takes stains and dyes well.

The sanding dust can be an irritant to the skin and bronchial tubes of some people.

It has very good acoustic properties which has seen it used for musical instruments such as guitars.



Clear grain



Pinkish colour



Sample of fiddleback



Example of burr



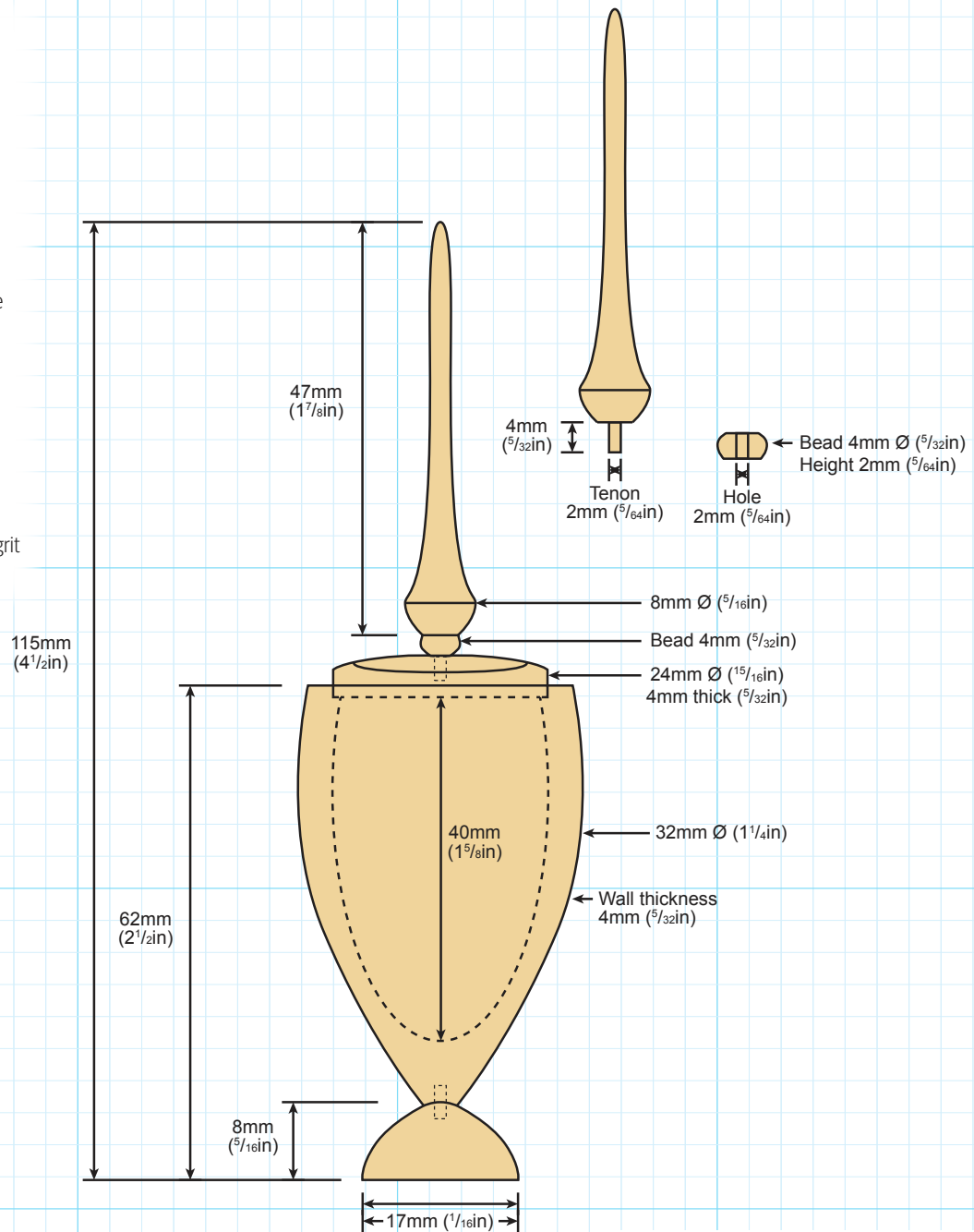
A different burr figure

TOOLS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Spindle gouge
- Parting tool
- Skew chisel
- Point tool
- 2mm drill bit
- Drill chuck
- Revolving tailstock centre
- Chuck
- Glue gun
- Callipers

MATERIALS

- Timber of your choice
- Cyanoacrylate adhesive
- Double-sided tape
- Abrasives down to 400 grit
- 2mm rod
- Finish of your choice



The main body

1 I hate to waste wood, especially when it contains figure as spectacular as this piece, so I mounted it between centres and turned a small tenon at one end that could be glued into a recess cut in a carrier made of scrap material held in a scroll chuck. Alternatively, if you have them, the tenon could be held in small chuck jaws.

2 Once secure, create the rough shape with a gouge and, if required, a scraper can be used to refine the upper areas of the form. Notice that I use my left-hand forefinger wrapped under the toolrest to provide gentle support to minimise vibration as I refine it. Be very careful to keep fingers out and away from the spinning jaws of the chuck.

3 To hollow the form you can use a variety of tools, but I hollowed the bulk of mine with a finger ground gouge and finished it off with a scraper

Sanding this simple internal shape required nothing more than folding a thin strip of abrasive and bending it around the end of a pencil.

4 Once sanded, cut a shallow-stepped recess into the opening of the vessel to accommodate the 'drop-in' lid. Cut slowly to avoid tear-out as the shoulder and face cannot be sanded for fear of losing a neat fit with the lid later.

5 Now refine the outer shape using a spindle gouge, which enables trimming down to a narrow base, but not too narrow yet. As the base is reduced in diameter it you might consider gently supporting it with the fingers of your left hand. Once you have taken the base to as fine a thickness as is safe, sand it down to 400 grit and then part or saw it off.

6 & 7 To finish the lower end off, I created a jam chuck form scrap wood and a tenon to fit on the opening of the form just removed. Because I wanted to refine the very end of the piece, the tailstock cannot be used to that end. For security I applied hot-melt glue around the joint

Once secure, refine the shape with a gouge and then sand down to 400 grit. Do not remove this piece from the wastewood Jam chuck yet.

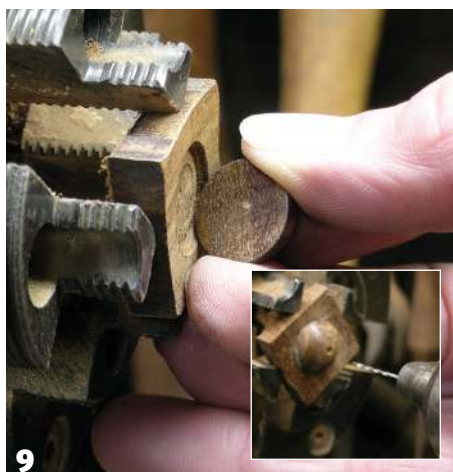
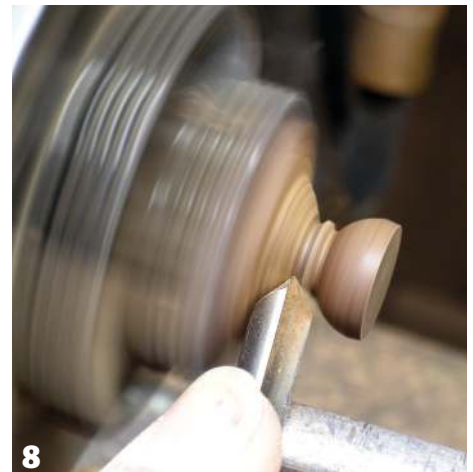
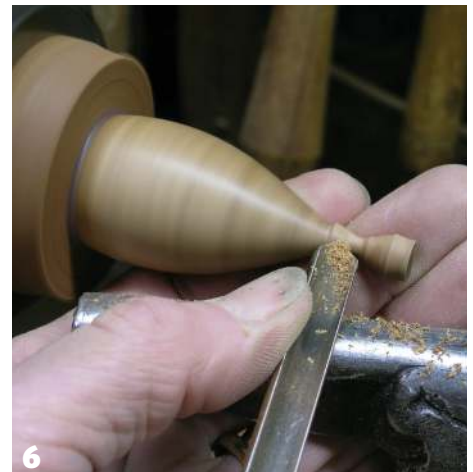
The base

8 To create a base I chose blackwood of a different depth of colour for contrast. Whatever wood you use, grip a small piece in your chuck jaws and use a spindle gouge to shape the wood as required. Undercut very slightly the bottom face of the foot so it will sit nicely on the flat surface it will be placed on later. Shape the domed section as far as you can and as safe as it is to do so and then sand the surfaces just cut.

9 Now part the piece free from the block and use the remaining wood to make a jam chuck. Cut a small recess of the right size. Vernier callipers are ideal for measuring diameters of components that need to match. Making a very tight fit may create issues in removing the piece once turned, so create a snug fit to ensure everything stays put while you make the final shaping cut with a gouge.

Once shaped, sand it then fit a 2mm drill bit in a drill chuck held in a tailstock and drill a hole just shy of boring all the way through the base. This is to accept a pin that will connect the main vessel to its base. Once done, remove the base from the carrier.

10 Remount the box body on the lathe and then, using the drill chuck, drill a 2mm hole in the lower pointed end. Cut a 2mm pin to the right length and glue the pin in place in the main body. Now glue the base onto the pin and with the aid of a small piece of MDF used as a spacer and placed against the tailstock quill. Apply gentle pressure to ensure everything is aligned properly as the pieces dry.





11



12



13



14



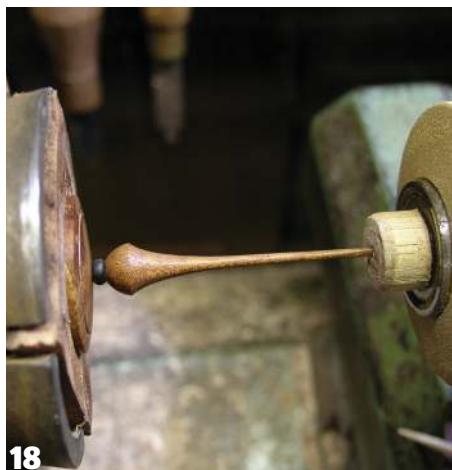
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17



18

Lid and finial

11 To make the top, mount a piece of timber in the chuck – in this case another figured piece from the length used for the base. Shape the underside of the lid using a gouge. Then use callipers to mark the right size required for the lid. Trim the width to the right size and, if you want to, add a few V-cuts for decoration and part off.

12 In the remaining waste wood cut a recess to hold the lid securely. After creating the recess in the carrier, drill a hole right through it so a dowel can be pushed through to push the lid free later.

Mount the lid in the recess. If you need to, use double-sided tape to help with the security when turning it. Once shaped, add detail as required. Now, fit the drill chuck fitted with a 2mm drill used earlier in the tailstock and note a hole for the finial. Again, don't bore the hole all the way through. A small piece of masking tape helps give an indication of how far to drill. Once drilled, leave the lid in the jam chuck but remove it from the lathe.

The finial

13 Take another piece of timber – blackwood in this case – and hold it in a set of small jaws. Using a gouge or skew, create a fine tapering point for the top of the finial. Again, I used my fingers to support the wood as it became thin.

14 Continue to shape the finial, working back towards the lower section. Prior to forming the thin spigot, sand the finial and then use a parting tool to form the thin 2mm-diameter tenon required.

15 Mount a small section of blackwood into pin jaws and, using the drill chuck fitted with the 2mm drill bit, bore a 2mm hole in it about 20mm deeper than required and rough shape the bead. Don't cut too deep to sever the bead yet.

16 When making tiny beads there is always a risk of them breaking free and disappearing into shavings. To help avoid this, remove the 2mm drill bit from the drill chuck, reverse it, insert it into the hole just drilled, and ensure it is secure. Now, form fully the bead which will stay on the shaft of the drill bit. Leave it natural or ebonise it as required.

17 Now you need to fit the bead onto the finial and the finial on to the lid. Many years ago I saw a support centre with a No.2 Morse taper fitted into the tailstock quill. The front end was fitted with a roller bearing that could support work between centres holding the outside of the turned form. I thought something like this would help with supporting the lid and finial while gluing together. To help further, I turned, drilled and fitted an additional insert that was able to hold the finial in place and centred without marking it as the glue dried to complete the lid section.

18 Here is the lid, bead and finial held between centres as the glue dries. Once dry, just push the lid out of the jam chuck and fit the lid into the recess of the main body. ●

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Constructing jigs for batch-producing three-legged stools



Les Symonds makes a popular item using a series of jigs and aids to simplify construction

If there's one item I repeatedly get asked for at my woodturning shop, it's a three-legged stool and I guess that I've made about 50 in the three years since the shop first opened. In the early days I tried a few different designs, but once I realised just how popular they might be, I decided to settle on one, giving the stool my own features and making it financially viable to reproduce.

I soon came to realise that the way forward for me was to standardise my design so that I could batch-turn components, but then also realised that it would make sense to design and make a series of jigs so that the component parts could be replicated accurately and independently.

The thinking behind my design is one of clean simplicity. The top is a straightforward disk with the legs socketed into tenons rather than drilled through and wedged. The bottom of each leg is turned into a partial sphere/ball, allowing it to sit well on the floor without the need

to mark out and cut an angled end, as is the case with square-ended legs. Each leg has a straight taper throughout its length, with its upper end having a half-cove and second taper into its tenon. Beyond that, there is a little decoration on the leg, comprising a bead atop the ball and then two scorch lines higher up, just to echo the lines around the bead. So I gave the design the name Bead & Ball.

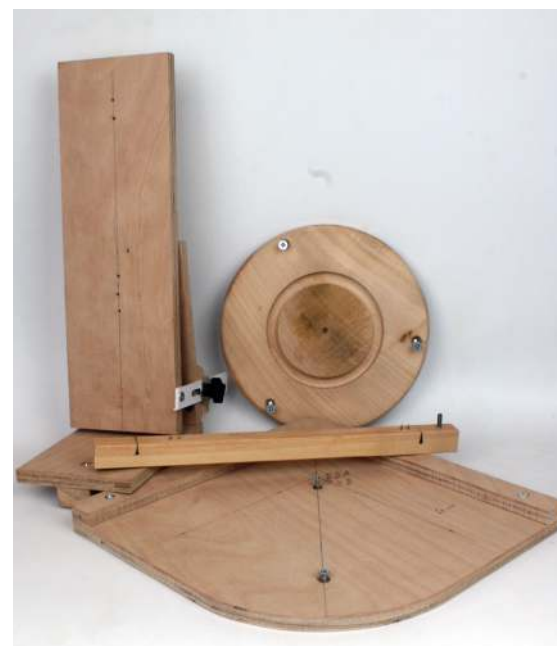
Health & safety

There are a few H&S matters to bear in mind with this type of project, both in the use of the jigs and in the making of the stool.

In any drilling operation, securely holding the workpiece should be paramount, but in this case we also have the jig to consider. When drilling the leg sockets, both the jig and the workpiece must be secured.

When forming scorch lines, never use a scorch wire that does not have handles attached to it. I have a range of gauges of wires and each has a wooden ball attached to each end.

The four jigs



The set of four jigs and aids

◀ The stool's components

I favour close-grained hardwoods such as beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) or sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), straight-grained for the legs, although I occasionally use a piece of timber with more complex grain for the top. My standard design is of a 300mm x 225mm stool, thus it needs a 230mm-diameter top out of stock to finish at no less than 30mm thick. While still in-the-board, this would be finished on one side, through a thicknesser or table sander, then cut into 23cm disks on the bandsaw. This finished side of the blank will become the underside.

The legs are exactly 300mm long out of square stock to finish at about 36mm diameter.

Making the stool-top jig

The jig for turning the top is extremely basic. It is simply a disk of a stable hardwood, so avoid any irregular grain patterns or pieces of timber with variations in density within them, such as pieces which incorporate both heartwood and sapwood, splits, cracks and/or knots etc.

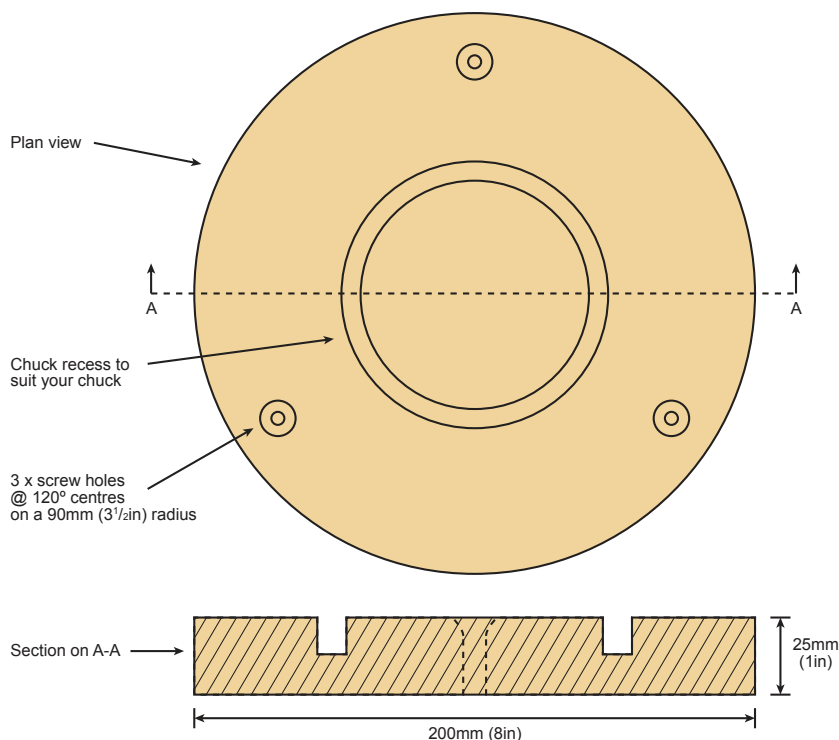
It needs to be thick enough to support the stool top and to have a recess cut into it for mounting into a chuck – mine is about 25mm finished thickness. Its diameter needs to be 30mm smaller than the blank for the stool top, so I cut mine at 200mm. To machine the recess in the jig for the chuck jaws, I mounted a chuck on the lathe with 10cm jaws in it, held the jig against the tops of the jaws and then brought the tailstock up against it to press it into place. With the workpiece revolving, the outer edge can then be cut square to the face, the toolrest turned through 90° and then the recess for the chuck jaws can be cut. I made my recess just wide enough for the jaws to slip into it, so it can therefore be used with the chuck either in compression or in expansion mode.

With the recess cut, mount the jig into the chuck jaws and clean off the outer face, ensuring that it is either completely flat or very slightly dished, preferably no more than a millimetre or two. You now need to mark three holes to accept the fixing screws, which will go through the jig into the underside of the stool top, at the locations of the leg sockets. With the jig still mounted in the chuck and the toolrest in place, use a pencil to mark a 18cm-diameter circle on the face of the jig. Around this circle we now need to make three equally spaced pencil marks, so this can be done by using the spindle lock or indexing head – if you have either of these – or by the good old-fashioned

A batch of components already underway



The stool-top jig



Specifications for the jig

way of describing arcs with a pair of compasses. Take the jig out of the chuck and drill through each of the three pencil marks with a 4mm drill,

turn the jig over and drill a countersink into each hole to accept the head of an eight-gauge screw. The jig is now ready to use.

Accuracy

Accuracy is an essential aspect of jig-making. Get it right and the process of using your jigs will be rewarding and it can save you hours of work in the future. However, even the slightest error can cause problems and render your jigs useless.

Prepare well. Clear the workbench and make sure that you have the screws and fixings you'll need, to hand. Avoid using random scraps of timber and take as much pride and trouble in making your jigs as you would in your turnings.

Turning the stool top

Place the stool-top blank on the bench, planed/sanded face uppermost, and mark a line across it which passes through its centre and runs as parallel as possible to the grain. Place the jig on top of the blank such that it is approximately centred on it and so that any one of its three holes lies directly over the pencil line, then use a steel rule to help centre the jig on the

stool top; there should be approximately a 20mm gap all round. Carefully drill through the holes in the jig, into the stool top but deep enough only to accept the fixing screws that you will use, and then fix in place – if your jig is 25mm thick, use 40mm or 50mm screws.

Finally, mount the jig and the stool top on to the lathe, turn the edge and the top face

of the timber, put a soft radius between the edge and each of the two faces then abrade to a finish. I usually apply sanding sealer while this is still on the lathe, thus the entire top surface, the edge and the first couple of centimetres of the underside will all be sealed. Unscrew the jig from the stool top and set the top to one side, taking care not to mark the finished surfaces.



Mark a line across it



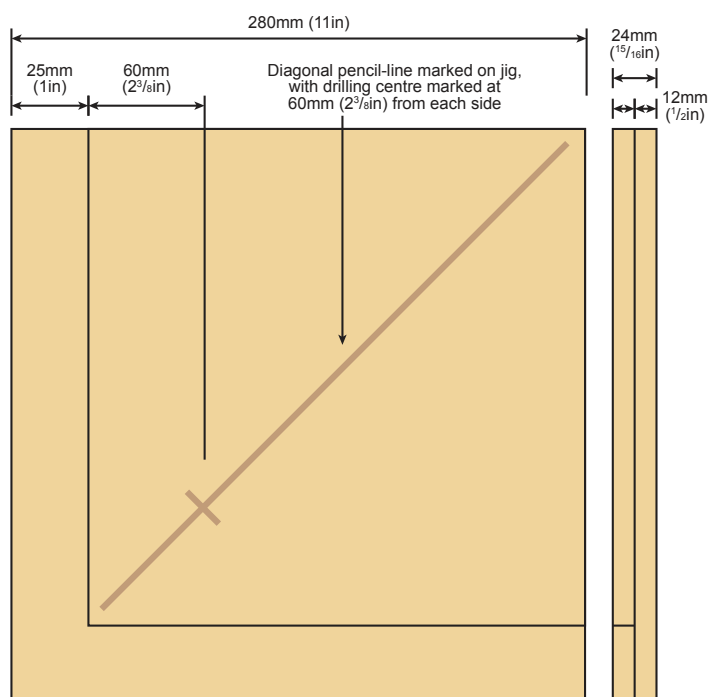
The stool-top jig, ready to go

Making the socket drilling jig

The very simple jig is designed to be used on the table of a pillar drill, but if you don't have a pillar drill, fear not as I have also designed a means to adapt this jig for use on your lathe.

The pillar drill 'socket jig' is very easy to make. It is simply a 330mm-square piece of plywood, 12mm thick. Along two adjacent sides, mark a line 25mm in from the edge, giving an L shape, which you then cut off the board in one piece. You may notice that mine has a 70mm radius inside corner – this is not essential, but just makes it a little easier to cut out on the bandsaw.

Next, take the jig and draw a diagonal line across it, then use screws and glue to fix the L shape on top of the jig with the corner of the L shape on one end of the diagonal. Finally, mark a point on your diagonal pencil line, 60mm in from each side. This is where the centre of the leg sockets will be drilled. Your socket jig is now ready to use.



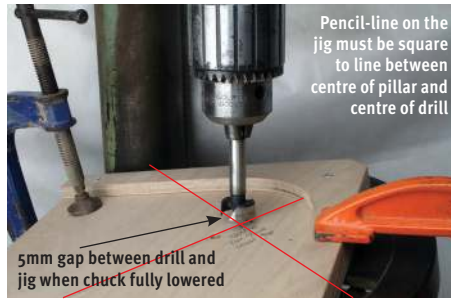
Specifications for the socket drilling jig

◀ Drilling the leg sockets

Secure a 25mm Forstner bit in the chuck of the pillar drill and tilt its table such that it slopes downward, from right to left, to an angle of 120° , and lock the table at that angle. Place the jig on to the table such that, when the drill is lowered, its spur lands on the jig's diagonal pencil line, the pencil line points to the left and is at (approximately) 90° to a line which passes through the centre of the pillar and the centre of the Forstner drill.

Clamp the jig on to the table and then adjust the table height so there is a gap of about 5mm between the drill and the surface of the jig, then lock the table at that height. This now ensures that the drill bit cannot burst through the upper face of the stool top.

Place the stool top into the corner of



Setting up the jig

the socket jig, with its three screw holes uppermost, and lower the drill chuck. Manoeuvre the jig and the stool top until the drill tip locates into one of the screw holes, then clamp the jig on to the pillar drill table, with a final quick check to ensure that your previous settings have not changed.



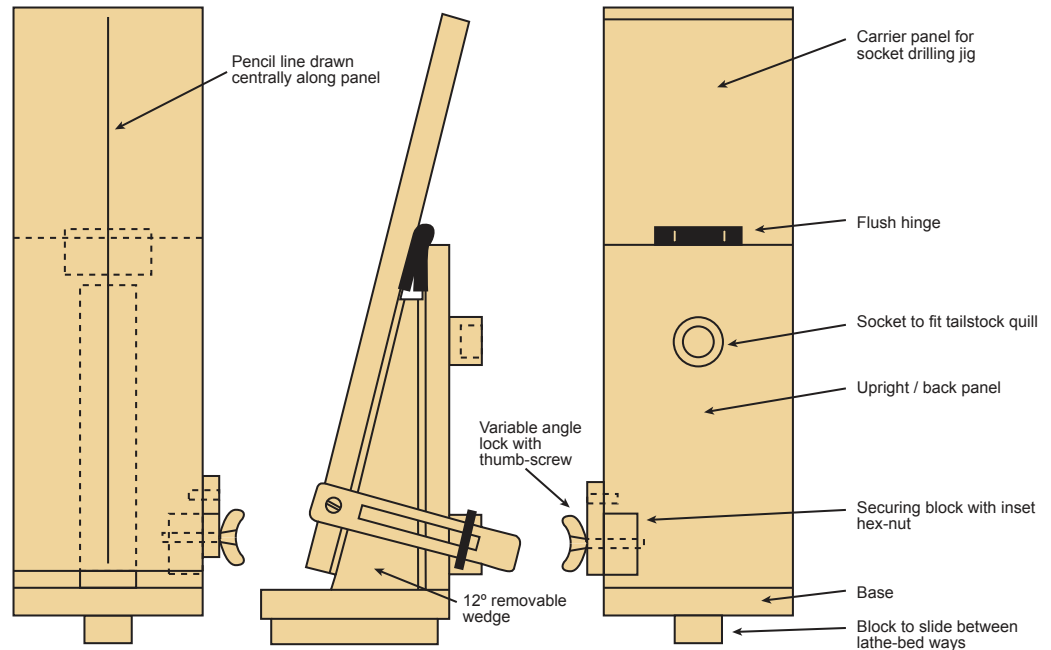
Drilling the leg sockets

Drill the first leg socket, retract the drill, switch off and clean any shavings off the jig. Replace the stool top, rotate it through 120° and lower the drill, checking that the spur of the drill once again lines up with the screw hole. Switch on, drill the second hole and repeat the process for the third hole.

Adapting the socket drilling jig to fit on to a lathe

For this purpose, you will need to make a carrier which is constructed to fit the dimensions of your lathe, so use my suggestion for the design, but impose your own dimensions upon it. This carrier is basically an L-shaped bracket comprising a base and an upright, which sits on the lathe bed. The underside of the base has a block which fits snugly between the bed-ways, screwed into place on it. The upright has a hinged panel, fixed with a simple flush hinge, which allows the panel to be tilted to an angle suited to stool legs. You will need to turn a socket to fit over the end of your tailstock quill (with the live centre removed) and then fix this socket to the back of the upright, at an appropriate height above the base.

All that is needed now is a mechanism which secures the hinged panel at an angle of 12° to the upright. I made mine from a piece of uPVC strip with a slot milled along its centreline and a screw hole at one end. The strip is screwed to the hinged panel and a thumb-screw passes through the slot, screwing into a hex nut which has been embedded in a little wooden block fixed to the back of the carrier's upright. I cut a 12° wedge out of 40mm-thick stock and this slips between the hinged panel and the upright, giving me the exact angle every time, but also stiffening the hinged panel during the drilling process.



ABOVE:
Specifications for
the lathe carrier

RIGHT: The
lathe carrier

FAR RIGHT: Note
the means of
adjustment and
the quill socket



Drilling the leg sockets on the lathe

Place a Jacobs chuck with a 25mm Forstner bit into the shaft taper on the headstock. Place the carrier on the lathe bed with the tailstock quill fully extended and located in the socket on the back of the carrier. Set the socket-drilling jig on to the carrier with its diagonal pencil line pointing upwards and with the corner of the L-shaped ledge at the bottom.

Rest the stool top on the socket jig with a screw hole at the bottom and slide the whole carrier forward. You will notice that the screw hole is somewhat lower than the centre of the drill, so slide the jig upwards until they meet up. Drill a couple of screw holes through the socket jig on its diagonal pencil line and screw the jig to the hinged panel, making sure the screws go into a central pencil line previously drawn on the hinged panel. It's now ready for use.

With the lathe still switched off, slide the carrier and the socket jig forward until there is a gap of at least 5mm between the drill and the hinged panel. Lock the tailstock in place and wind the quill back in – do not unlock the tailstock until all three holes have been drilled. Place the



Setting-up the lathe carrier

stool top on the jig and advance the quill by winding the tailstock wheel. Make any minor rotations of the stool top so that the drill spur lines up with a screw hole. Clamp the stool top on to the carrier, switch on the lathe and continue winding the quill in as far as it will go. The drill will stop cutting when there is still the 5mm gap that you previously set, so retract the drill, switch off, unclamp the stool top, rotate it and carry on as before.



Socket drilling on the lathe

Production times

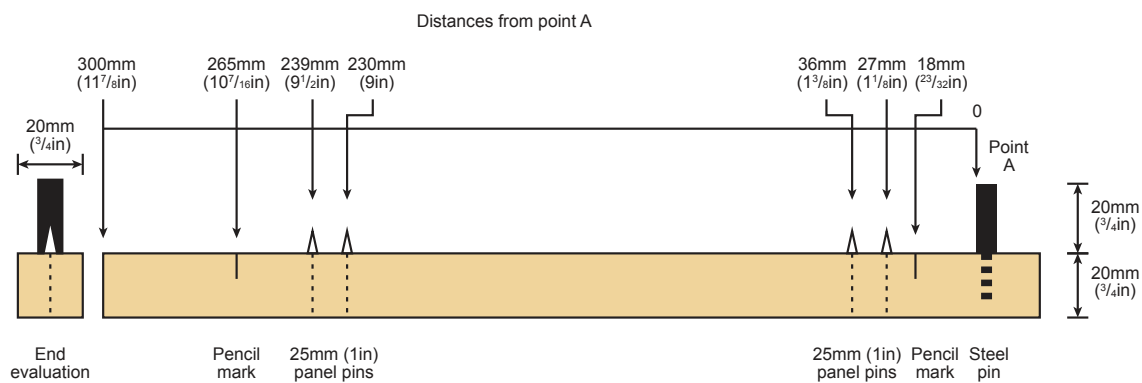
The couple of hours spent making these jigs will be repaid through the inevitable savings in production time. I'm not usually a spindle turner, nor am I a production turner, so these jigs have helped me to reduce stool production time quite considerably. I usually make them four or five at a time, from board to finished product in a half-day's work.

If you're new to jig-making, hopefully you'll see its benefits and think of ways in which you can make further jigs of your own design.

Making the rod for marking the legs

The purpose of this is to mark out the pertinent points along the length of the legs. Start with a piece of timber, 325mm x 20mm x 20mm and draw a pencil line along it, central to any long edge. Now fix a steel pin into one end of the rod, on its centreline, 25mm in from one end. I used a snapped-off 5mm drill bit for

this. Next, measure the centres for the four panel pins and then drill four pilot holes about 0.5mm diameter smaller than that of the pins. Drive the pins halfway through and spot them with CA adhesive or epoxy before driving them home. Finally, mark the two pencil lines around two faces.



Specifications for the leg-marking rod



The rod

Marking out and turning the legs

Place a leg between centres and turn it to a straight taper 36mm at the tailstock end and 30mm at the headstock end. Place the toolrest parallel to the surface, about 10mm away from it and 10mm below centre height. Rest the rod on the toolrest with its pins pointing downwards, but not touching. With the lathe running, touch the steel pin up against the tailstock end

of the leg and then gradually advance the rod and rotate it upwards by several degrees until the four pins leave scratch marks. Finally, use a pencil to register the rod's two pencil marks on the leg.

Each leg is now turned in the usual manner and a scorch wire is used to highlight the two scratch lines at the top of the leg, and the one on each

side of the bead. Finally, the tenon is cut on the top end of the leg by cutting a half-cove from the pencil line, and then a straight shaft at 25mm diameter from there to the end of the leg. Abrading and sealing are done in place and, if you're waxing the leg on the lathe, wrap a little tape around the tenon so the wax doesn't stray on to it.



Scratching the locations of the leg features



Adding pencil marks



Wrap a little tape around the tenon

Assembling the stools

One advantage of making your stool legs in this way is that they can be removed from and returned to the lathe with ease. This allows each leg to be tested for a fit into its socket and a little gentle sanding can soon change an overly tight fit into a comfortable fit.

I recommend using a two-part epoxy adhesive as, with a well-fitted leg, cramping will not be necessary, but certainly would be with PVA adhesive. A slight chamfer on the end of the tenon will help adhesive to flow around the joint and a scratch-line or two around each tenon will help the adhesive to gather within the joint, rather than be forced out when the leg is pushed home. ●



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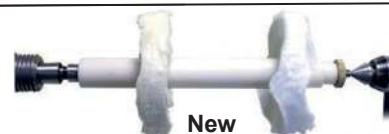
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Challenges, form and craftsmanship

Jim Piper talks to us about his work and inspiration

Wood has always been part of my life. I was raised in a logging community in south west Oregon, learning about wood and the forest around me as I grew up. In the early '80s I milled timbers for the construction of our home from trees that grew on our home site north west of Portland, Oregon. I used Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) from my property for structural timbers and a maple (*Acer spp.*) tree trunk to support an open stairway. My wife, Roberta, and I raised our two children here and we continue to enjoy living and working at our home surrounded by trees.

After observing the process of woodturning a few times over several years, I was finally ready delve into a new and exciting venture. I had imagined woodturning might capture my interest to the point of an obsession, and how true it was.

In May of 2011, my new venture began. From early in my new interest, I focused on making simple, elegant forms, as they provided the greatest visual fulfilment.

My association with artists for more than 40 years – first as a commercial photographer for 25 years, and later as a craftsman – instilled an ardent respect for form and craftsmanship, which I continually strive to achieve with my work. I believe form is often the initial element of assessment when someone observes a three-dimensional piece of artwork, and quality separates an object from deserving passing interest to one that earns long-lived appreciation.

With no experience or instruction, the first piece I turned was an enclosed form, 125mm high by 85mm wide. The neck was about 25mm high with an opening about 45mm. I'm not sure how I managed, without blowing it up, and I don't remember what the inside looks like, but I expect there's a bit of torn grain. Distinctly speaking, it may not be pretty.

Still with no instruction, and with bowl gouge in hand, I proceeded to turn a somewhat traditionally formed green cherry bowl (*Prunus spp.*). Fortunately,

I turned it thin enough to avoid cracking because I had no clue what would happen as it dried. Much to my surprise, it dried into a beautiful oval form. There's nothing like practical experience to provide some of the best and most memorable lessons in life.

In August of 2011, I received my first instruction at a two-day workshop in Portland, Oregon when Graeme Priddle visited from New Zealand. A bit of expert guidance from Graeme provided a big boost in my woodturning venture. I stayed in touch with him and in the summer of 2013 I participated in a two-week workshop with him at Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts. At Graeme's suggestion, I enrolled in another two-week workshop at Arrowmont, instructed by Jacques Vesery and Nick Agar, in the summer of 2016. Graeme and Jacques have been two of the greatest influences in my work. My appreciation for Arrowmont, and the accessibility it provides for interchange with excellent educators, is enduring.

Personal challenges

Since I love a challenge, in 2014 I submitted a proposal for work to be created for a show at the Bellevue Art Museum, near Seattle, Washington. Much to my surprise, my proposal was accepted. It involved the creation of a series of carved and embellished nesting pieces, representing the botanical cycle of life. I had no idea how to accomplish it as I had never made anything similar. Having the proposal accepted meant that I had to figure out how to produce the separate pieces that must be successful individually and must also integrate as one piece.

I spent the next several months working on textures, forms, carving, embellishing and painting to create a series of nesting pieces representing five stages of life that I titled *Return to Earth*. I was very pleased with the result and delighted to have it included in the show. I was hooked on carving and embellishment, which became a focus of my subsequent work.

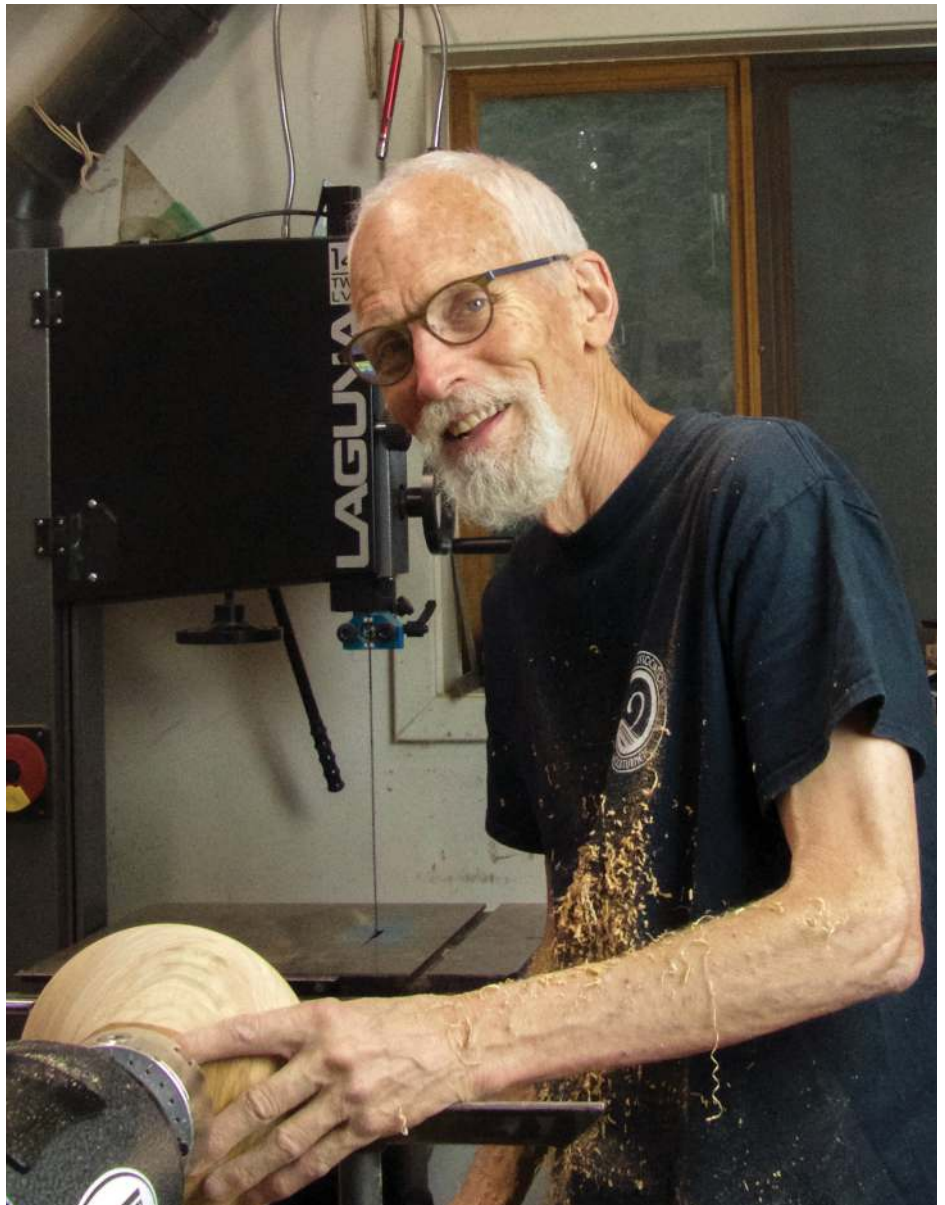
My willingness to walk the edge, move outside my comfort zone and push my limits beyond my level of experience, brought rewards. The AAW Symposium of 2017 was the first time I put work in the Instant Gallery. One of my pieces was selected for Sunday morning critique and it received praise for multiple features. Foremost was recognition of form, followed by details of the embellishment as the committee approached my piece. Another piece was selected for critique at the Symposium of 2018 but, much more significantly, yet another one earned an Excellence Award. I was extremely honoured.

Fresh and challenging ideas have never been an issue for me. I find inspiration to be omnipresent. Roberta and I recently went to Japan for nearly a month, where our experience was focused on ceramic art. She is a ceramic artist and had work in a show at the Sapporo Art Museum. We were fortunate enough to visit several artists in their homes and studios, where inspiration was abundant. We shared meals and outings that provided a relaxed and informal opportunity to discuss art, craftsmanship and cultural differences.

One of my favourite sources of inspiration is our natural environment. The Pacific Northwest provides a diverse landscape including beaches, mountains, high desert, rivers, and a variety of forests and open meadows. A float trip through the Grand Canyon in December 2016, passing through millennia of rock formations and erosion of canyon walls thousands of feet high, provided a never-ending source of inspiration and concepts that I continue to pursue.



LEFT: *Tranquility* ABOVE: *Numero Uno*, the first piece I ever turned



Jim in his workshop

Tools and timber

I am often asked what my favourite kind of wood is or what my favourite tool is. Not surprisingly, the answer is often connected to what processes I anticipate employing for the concept of the finished piece. Different woods behave differently, yielding idiosyncratic results. Choosing the right wood for each piece is crucial to achieving success of the finished work.

Without question, my number one wood for turning and carving is madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), followed closely by cherry and then maple. I find the grain to be relatively tight, consistent and easy to carve without leaving much in the way of torn fibres. Regardless of which species of wood is in my hands, when carving I seek very straight grain, as beautiful, curly grain is far more difficult to carve cleanly.

If I plan to sandblast, exposing the character of the grain, Douglas fir and oak are my species of choice. However, there are exceptions to these preferences, it depends on the specifics of the project.

Selection of a favourite tool is a much greater challenge. Different tools perform different, but equally significant, roles in my work. The process of hand carving is quite enjoyable, especially when making the final cut with a razor-sharp tool, but I often gravitate towards efficiency and pull out the power carver to begin with. The tool I find most versatile is a high-speed micro-motor rotary carver. The Ram OZ has plenty of torque, it's easy to use and is virtually silent. Its versatility contributes to the detailed design work that I pursue.

Having named my favourite tool, I would also mention that no one tool is good for every job. I have a small shop, but it's filled with tools that I often depend on. Because the space is compact, I am careful to create a place for each tool, and to keep each tool in its place. Knowing where each tool can be found and keeping each tool in excellent condition contributes to workflow and the ability to maximise my effectiveness as I work. My lathe and other larger tools are in one space; my carving and painting tools in a separate space that I strive to keep clear of dust, using an effective dust extraction system. My sandblaster lives outdoors on a sheltered patio, along with my air compressor, minimising noise in my shop.



Secrets Within



ABOVE: Celestial Fantasy BELOW: Root Impressions

Good form

Since I became involved in woodturning in 2011, I have seen continual movement towards creating art that is 'outside the box'. Every year at the AAW International Symposium, more and more pieces in the Instant Gallery push the limits of creative woodturning and embellishing. Even a walk through this area at the yearly Symposium brings fresh ideas and an awareness of techniques.

I believe we are all fascinated with what is coming next, but I am still enamoured with a beautifully formed,

classic, utilitarian bowl. While most of my work is tending towards embellished objects, I still take time each year to produce simple utilitarian work, with the same attention to form and detail. Attention to detail in the simplest piece will influence the work I produce for galleries, shows and collectors.

If I had only one piece of advice to offer other woodturners, it would be to learn to recognise good form. There are many tools and techniques available to employ while woodturning, but in the end, most

people observing your work are, first and foremost, looking at your finished work and less concerned with how you produced it. Many resources offer advice for developing and recognising attractive forms. Even a simple catenary curve (the curve formed by hanging a chain from two points) is very pleasing to the eye and easy to follow. Learn to recognise exquisite form and don't settle for 'that's good enough'. Put a little extra time into developing and refining your forms. You will be pleased you did.





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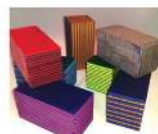
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Adding coloured inlay material to a curved surface

Richard Findley accepts another challenge from the editor, this time adding an epoxy inlay to a curved surface



When the latest challenge landed in my inbox I was initially a little puzzled. I covered epoxy resin inlays last month with my seaside-themed bowl, but there is no way the liquid resin I used on that project would work on a curved surface (which I took to mean the outside of a bowl) – it would just run away. If this is to work I'm going to need a different type of epoxy, a much thicker product, more like a filler or putty. Some research is called for.

RESEARCH

I have, from time to time, used filler in woodwork. On paint-grade jobs it is sometimes necessary, but it is usually vaguely wood-coloured and, despite what it says on the tin, I've found they very rarely colour well.

You may remember a few years ago I used a black Brummer filler to add a decorative line to some drawer pulls I had turned. This tin of filler has long

since set and been thrown away, but buying more should be a possibility, although it doesn't fit the bill as far as 'epoxy inlay' goes.

An internet search brings up a product called Milliput. This is something I've heard of but never used. It seems to have been around since the late '60s, although has more recently become available in several different colours, including a bright white, terracotta and black. Originally used for modelling, it has found many uses in many different industries as it sets hard, even under water, and is incredibly heat-resistant. Importantly, it is an epoxy-based product, so fits my brief. Perhaps black Milliput worked into some white or pale-coloured wood could work as a decorative treatment?

THE PLAN

With the epoxy putty on order, my next job is to decide what I'm going to make

and how to use the putty on it.

The brief is to use it on a curved surface, so the outside of a bowl. I need a way to add decorative detail to the bowl which will allow me to fill it with the putty. I've seen many turners use powered carving tools, such as those by Dremel, Foreman and many other makes, to add textures and decorative lines in the wood. I don't have one of these tools but do have a router which can be mounted in a jig and used on the lathe. Perhaps some lines or grooves running up the side of the bowl and filled could look good.

After a few sketches I settle on having a series of lines rising from the base of a simply curved bowl, running to around $\frac{3}{4}$ the height of the bowl. I feel that having them all the same size might not be particularly interesting to look at, so perhaps I could alternate between a $\frac{3}{4}$ height line and a lower line, maybe with another detail above it.

◀ The bowl

Looking through my stock I find a box of sycamore bowl blanks that I acquired a few years ago. They are relatively small but, as this is just an experiment and purely ornamental, size really doesn't matter. But I do want it relatively tall compared to its diameter. I settle for a wax-covered bowl blank measuring 130mm x 75mm high.

I want to turn a simple curve down to a small base, which is going to require a little clever chucking. I begin by marking my usual 56mm-diameter chucking tenon and as I shape the blank it becomes immediately clear that using this size of tenon is going to lead to a bowl with a fat bottom, which I really want to avoid. I

would go so far as to say it is a pet hate of mine to see bowls that have had their shape dictated by an unsuitable chucking point.

On a standard bowl this wouldn't be too much of an issue because I could add more shaping later when removing the tenon, but on this project I need full access to my final shape now so that I can add my decorative detail. I decide a glue chuck will be the best way forward and carry on shaping the bowl to the final shape, taking the base down to around 35mm diameter. I find a push cut with my bowl gouge gives by far the best finish to the sycamore and, once satisfied, I sand from 180 to 400 grit.



Using my standard-size tenon leads to a bowl with a fat bottom



The push cut in action



Marked improvement in the quality of the surface with the push cut



Final shape with a small base to the bowl

Routing

I have written about my router jig before but it has had an upgrade since the last time it featured in these pages.

I use a small, portable router which features a detachable base, allowing the motor unit to be mounted in a jig. The jig is a simple L-shape, made in wood and fitted to the lathe bed with a wooden T-nut.

The jig holds the router on the centreline of the lathe and allows good side-to-side and forward and backward movement. It is primarily designed for spindle work but should be suitable here too.

The depth stop is where the jig has had its upgrade, now featuring a fixed wooden cone which doesn't mark the wood in use and stops the cutter from entering the wood too far.

After a rummage through my box of router cutters, I find a 2mm cutter which will be ideal. I think a square-bottomed groove should hold the putty in place

well, much better than a round-bottomed or V-shaped groove. I set the cutter to make a 2mm-deep cut, which will allow me to make a bowl with around a 4-5mm wall thickness comfortably, perhaps with a thinner rim to give a better look of lightness.

The router and jig



The 2mm cutter



Depth set to 2mm

INDEXING

I have recently added a Paul Howard indexing jig – there are many variants available from other sources – to my kit as my original homemade setup was beginning to wear somewhat and was a little restrictive in its layout. My feeling for this job is that 12 lines might not be enough but 16 could be too many. Looking over the instructions for the indexer I find there's a ring with 14 positions, which I think will be ideal.

I start by drawing lines on the bowl using the indexer and a pencil resting on the toolrest as a guide, just to check the spacing. I'm more than happy with the look of this and follow it up by adding some lines around the bowl to guide the top of my cuts. My second set of lines look like they'll work well.

FLASH OF INSPIRATION

My thinking to this point is to have two different length lines rising from the base of the bowl. I'm wondering if the shorter line would benefit from something above it, perhaps a dot from the router (a bit boring) or a more interesting shape, maybe a star... this thought triggers a memory of seeing Nick Agar use a countersink bit as a star-shaped punch in a demo. I have a couple



The indexing jig

of different countersinks and, after testing them, settle on the seven-blade cutter used as a punch and hammered into the wood to leave a star shape which can be filled with the black putty.

Detailing



Routing in action

With the design set, I can make a start on cutting the grooves. The indexer locks the work totally solid, which makes cutting to the line a breeze. I add a pencil line to the nose cone to show me where the centre of the cutter sits, to help line up with the stop line on the bowl. Great care is needed to ensure I alternate the lengths of the cuts and use the right lines, but it all goes well.

Adding the punched stars is equally simple and effective. I follow this up with another light sanding at 400 grit to remove the pencil lines and any fluffy bits left from the routing. I also completely flatten the base, ready to add the glue chuck later.

SURFACE PREPARATION

I have occasionally added black paint to a sycamore or maple bowl for detail so am very aware of the possibility of unsightly colour bleed from the black into the wood.

I have no idea if Milliput is susceptible to this kind of colour bleed or not, but I decide it is best to try to avoid it anyway.



Punching the stars

I find the best methods to avoid this are to firstly, fine sand the surface, which reduces the wood's ability to absorb things. I have already sanded to 400 grit, so that's



The punch/counter sink

done, it is also good practice to seal the wood with a sanding sealer. I apply two liberal coats, cutting back in between and afterwards with more 400 grit.



Sealing the surface of the bowl

◀ Milliput

The box of Milliput contains a comprehensive instruction leaflet and two sticks of putty. Presumably one is the epoxy and one the hardener. According to the instructions, I need to mix equal amounts of both sticks with my hands. The leaflet suggests wearing gloves, which seems to be a good idea as the gloves are soon blackened by the putty. I have to knead and roll the mix with my fingers. One of the sticks is jet black, the other an ivory colour, so it is easy to see when they are fully mixed together. The instructions tell me that

after five minutes they should be fully mixed, but another minute is recommended, so after a thorough mixing I have a smooth ball of black putty and I'm ready to apply it to the bowl.

I find the easiest way to apply it is to tear off a small piece and press and push it firmly into the slots and stars. Once the detailed areas are fully covered in putty, I go over the surface again, double checking and pressing it all down well. Satisfied, I add the glue chuck.



Two cut pieces of putty and hardener



Beginning to mix



Fully mixed



Applying the putty to the grooves

Glue chuck

Having the ability to work right down to the base has been essential for this bowl, but I do need to be able to reverse it safely for hollowing so, rather than try to buy a tiny set of dovetail jaws (which I may or may not ever use again), I pick up an offcut of tulip which happened to have already been planed flat and cut it into a disc of around 75mm on the bandsaw. I simply add white wood glue on one face and bring up the tailstock, placing it in the centre mark left from drawing the circle with the compass, and apply firm pressure. I can now leave the glue and the Milliput to harden overnight.



Glue chuck added

Turning

The next morning, the first job is to true up the glue block and turn a chucking tenon. I then turn my attention to the now rock-hard putty. I have no idea how well this will turn. The normal wood filler I use sets in a similar way but is virtually impossible to turn and needs to be sanded away, so I'm prepared to do this if necessary, but I'm hopeful this will work more readily. I use the wing of my bowl gouge in a shearing cut. I am

pleasantly surprised as to how well it turns. I stop the lathe a few times to check the progress and I'm happy that there is no pulling or chipping, so I continue until the wood is clear of excess putty. The lines look crisp and clean, although freshly cut, the Milliput looks a little grey, but I'm confident that under a finish it will return to jet black.

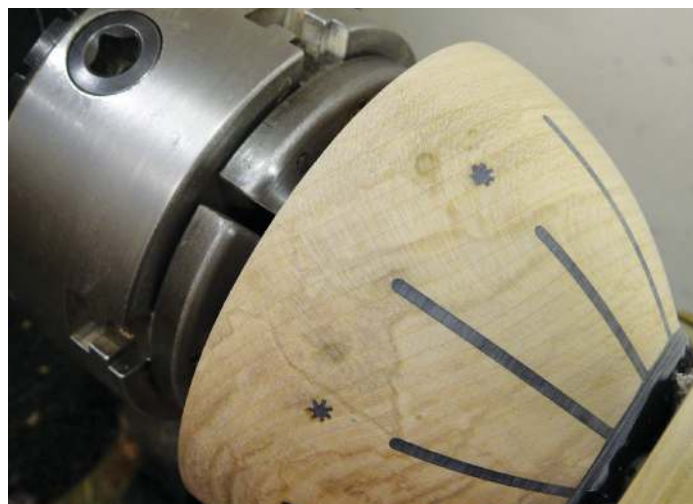
Some of the stars look just as I

intended, although some are less crisp. On closer inspection the best ones are punched into the firmer side grain, whereas the stars punched into the slightly softer face grain seem to have crushed the grain more and left less of a star-shaped impression – something worth remembering for the future.

I then fully re-sand the outside of the bowl from 180 to 400 grit and I'm ready to hollow it out.



The glue chuck is turned and the Milliput turns well



Some of the stars have worked better than others

Inside of the bowl

Turning the inside is a relatively straightforward process. The thing at the forefront of my mind is that the grooves are 2mm deep, so if I want to keep the inside showing only wood, I need to be sure to keep the thickness above 3 or 4mm. As I begin to turn, the rim looks good at 3mm, but to be on the safe side I intend to allow it to thicken a little as I approach the base, trying to stay below 5mm to ensure it doesn't feel unexpectedly heavy. To achieve this I regularly check the wall thickness with my Hope callipers, which appear a little strange

at first, but are easy to use and have a millimetre scale which allows me to closely monitor my progress.

My 10mm bowl gouge (12mm bar) with a long grind of around 60° does most of the work, finishing the bottom with a 12mm (16mm bar) bottoming gouge with an angle somewhere between 75° and 80°, which makes working the bottom of the inside a breeze.

Once satisfied with the curve of the inside and the wall thickness I can sand, this time 120 to 400 grit.



Turning the inside of the bowl



Callipers are an essential tool



Sanding the inside of the bowl

◀ Finishing

I reverse the bowl, using the centre mark from the initial clamping and a disc of MDF mounted on my faceplate. Mounted between centres like this, I am able to reduce the size of the glue chuck to a relatively small peg, then tidy up the last bit of Milliput which was

inaccessible earlier, and sand it all to the same 400 grit as the rest of the bowl. I turn the base as far as I am comfortable then saw away the last piece of the glue chuck and power-sand the small base smooth.

I choose to finish with a spray

gloss lacquer which shouldn't darken the pale sycamore too much, but does, as I'd hoped, darken the Milliput to a lovely deep black. Three coats, lightly rubbing back in between with an abrasive pad, leaves a lovely smooth and glossy finish.



Reverse-turning the base of the bowl



The base section ready for final adjustment off-lathe



Applying the gloss lacquer

Conclusion

This was an interesting challenge, mostly using a combination of tried and trusted techniques with the addition of the stars which I picked up from a Nick Agar demo and the Milliput, which really impressed me. I can really see potential in the product, both as a filler-type material and as a medium for adding details and textures, were I so inclined. Overall I am pleased with the result. The shape of the bowl worked

exactly as planned but I wonder if the lines look a bit too deliberate. Perhaps I needed more or perhaps at a more random pattern? The stars are pretty good, although some are less crisp than I'd like, but again I have learned from this project. The overriding feeling that I'm left with, however, is that I've made a happy little bowl with a smiley face on its side. ●





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Let's Talk – Tool selection & use: part 1

Chris Grace discusses making the best use of the tools we have



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS GRACE

Whether we like to admit it, most of us end up with more tools than we actually need. Yes, it seems a nice idea to have that new tool, and it might make doing some things a little easier, however, it's remarkable what you can do with just a basic toolkit as outlined in issue 322 (September 2018).

This isn't just for newer turners. There are pointers that may help a variety of turners. If you have difficulty with some tools, revisiting some of the concepts may be helpful for you.

Some people advocate getting to grips with all of the basics of the craft, and that's fine if you intend to make it your career. I feel that, for most of us who turn for the fun of it, it's more important

to make something we will enjoy. So choose a blank and make something your parents/partner will love. They'll probably like the first thing you make however it turns out, but they may end up being your best asset – quality control. We can work on refining the pieces later. So, get some inexpensive blanks and play before getting too ambitious with design.

We can learn in the following pages how to use each tool as it is needed. These techniques can be combined on projects to make candlesticks, goblets, boxes, vases, bowls etc. Once you've mastered the core tools and the different ways each can be used, you are only limited by your imagination and the projects you can dream up.



Apparently this one didn't pass quality control



Toolrest lower than centre facilitates comfortable bevel rub

POSITIONING THE TOOLREST

Tools should generally cut on or just above centre height on internal and external work, so adjust the rest accordingly. It should be as close to the wood as practical, allowing room to manipulate the tool. Position the rest so you won't slip off the end when turning. Scrapers should cut on or below centre on external work.

GRIP AND STANCE

Don't strangle the tool, you need a firm grip that enables fluid control. Hold the tool near the end of the handle, with your other hand taking an underhand or overhand grip on the shaft, with that hand touching the toolrest (see photos).

Stand relaxed, feet a little apart, positioned to comfortably control the tool from the beginning to the end of your cut. This may entail transferring weight from one foot to the other, moving your hips to achieve tool presentation.



Ensure a stable, comfortable stance. Note: No one is turning in this picture, the work is stationary and shows a typical working stance, therefore the person is not wearing safety equipment

Workshop tip

- When using gouges it can be helpful to hold the tool in towards your hip for additional stability.

Presenting your tools to the wood

When presenting tools to the wood we talk about the angle of presentation (which direction it's pointed side to side), whether the handle is high or low, and how the tool is rotated, using a clock face in relation to the flute – 12 o'clock is fully open; 3 o'clock is fully closed when cutting to the right.

RUBBING THE BEVEL

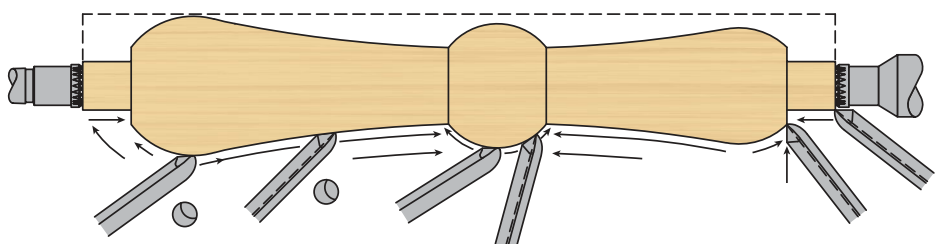
Use the gouge's bevel to control depth of cut. When the bevel gently rubs the wood behind the cut we have control. Aim to both see and feel what is going on, making small adjustments and encouraging the tools to achieve what you want them to.

CUTTING WITH THE GRAIN

Cut with the grain where possible – it's easier and produces a better finish. However, don't be afraid to break this 'rule' as sometimes it's impossible if, say, the chuck is in the way.



Flute partly open



Cutting with the grain. On spindle blanks cut downhill – from larger to smaller diameter where possible

Workshop tip

- Rubbing the bevel too hard heats the tool up and removes little wood

◀ What speed?

Typically it's easier to turn with the lathe at higher speed, but you need to be comfortable and the lathe needs to run smoothly. Wood varies in density, and even cylindrical blanks can be heavier one side than the other, which causes vibration. The solution is to turn slower. Adjust for; out-of-balance blank, less sound wood, less secure holding method, long blanks etc.

Stay safe

On a variable-speed lathe, start slow then turn the speed up until some wobble is detected, then slow down until the wobble has disappeared.

- Don't touch the sharp edges or the spinning parts
- Stand out of line of the wood when switching on
- Start on a slow speed and increase speed once you are comfortable – speed is your friend

	ft/sec	in	< 1	2	3	4	6	8	10	12
Min	12		500	1000	900	675	450	350	275	225
	20		1500	1900	1525	1150	750	575	450	375
	28		3500	3000	2150	1600	1050	800	650	525
Max	36		4000	4000	2750	2000	1350	1025	825	675

Guide for turning speeds in rpm as a starting point

Spindle roughing gouge

Main use: Roughing spindles down to a cylinder

Alt use: Initial shaping of spindle blanks

Alt tool: Bowl gouge

Workshop tip

- Place the tool firmly on the toolrest before touching the wood

ROUGHING DOWN

Mount a spindle blank between live and revolving centres and set your toolrest so the gouge's tip cuts on or above centre height with the handle of the gouge held low.

PREPARING TO CUT

Advance so the heel touches wood – you will hear a clicking sound. Lower the tip (keeping tool on toolrest) – the handle may have to come back and up a little until the tool cuts – wood shavings will then slide down the flute. Take light cuts initially.

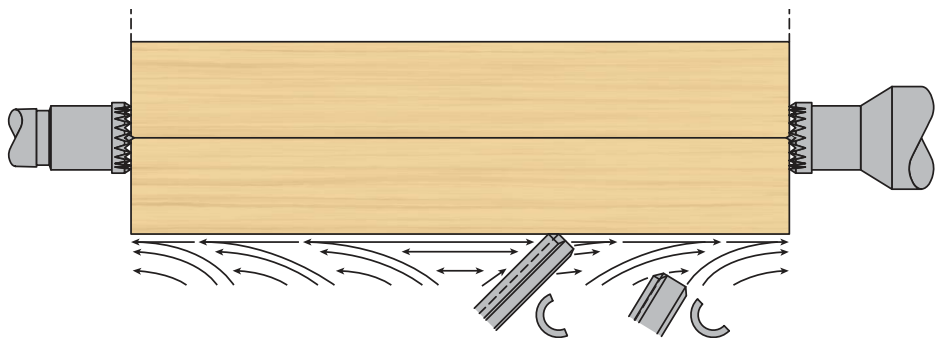
To move along the blank swing the gouge and rotate the flute so they point in the direction of travel. Traverse with firm pressure, keeping the gouge at that angle. Alter the depth of cut by changing the angle of the gouge slightly, putting more pressure on the tip or heel of the bevel.

Control depth of cut using your hand or a finger against the toolrest as a depth gauge. As your hand is soft, you don't need to change grip to take a little more off, just push against the rest a little harder and you will take a slightly deeper cut.

Nibble a little at a time off the end, minimising large splinters. Always start just back from the edge and cut towards it, moving back towards the middle, so at some point you will need to start turning in the other direction.



Gouge presentation angle with flute in direction of travel



Roughing a spindle blank down to a cylinder: rough towards the end in stages to avoid large splinters



Underhand grip with finger controlling depth of cut

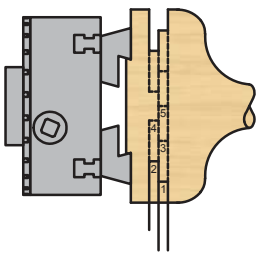
PLANING PARALLEL

This cut is a bit more refined. Lift the handle and rotate the flute a little more in the direction of the cut, so the cutting edge is at more of an angle to the wood. This 'skewed' cutting action produces a better finish.

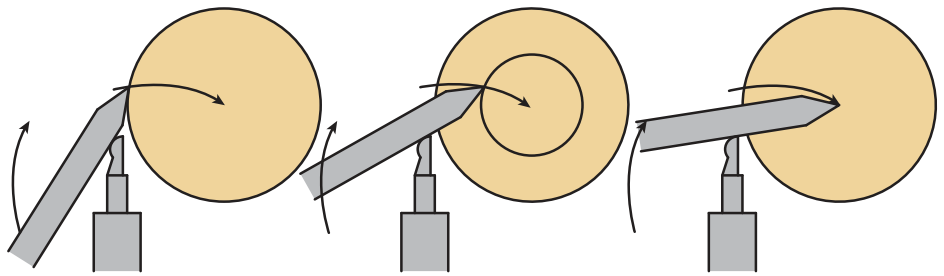
Stay safe

Never use a spindle roughing gouge for anything other than roughing spindle blanks (with the grain running parallel to the lathe axis).

A planing cut with a spindle roughing gouge

**Parting tool**

Step down in stages to avoid the tool binding in the cut



Establish a bevel rub, then step down in an arc toward the centre

Main use: Parting off

Alt use: Creating grooves, shoulders, tenons and rolling beads

Alt tool: Just various designs of parting tool

Parting tools are versatile – you can create shallow grooves, tenons and shoulders together with spigots for chucking.

When parting off, raise the handle a little while applying forward pressure. The tip of the tool should move in an arc towards the centre of the blank and end exactly on centre. You can saw off the last bit, with the lathe stopped, to stop the fibres breaking.

Stay safe

For deeper cuts, create an adjacent cut half to full-width of the tool to prevent binding.

Workshop tip

- Make space with a parting tool for shapes created with your spindle gouge

Spindle gouge

Main use: Creating detailed shapes on spindle blanks, for example beads, coves, V-cuts etc.

Alt use: Drilling and hollowing in, for example, goblets or boxes

Alt tool: Skew chisel for external shapes, for example, convex

Myth buster

- **Spindle gouges are just for traditional spindle turning**

They are versatile tools and can make interesting shapes. They are well worth getting to grips with even if you don't do traditional spindle turning. Boxes, candlesticks, finials, pens and pepper mills are projects that primarily require spindle turning when this tool will be invaluable.

To cut shapes accurately, the tool is manipulated in three axes at once. It



Practise cuts on a piece of scrap before starting on a project

sounds difficult, however it's not as hard as it seems once you get to grips with it. A major benefit is that this tool will produce a very good quality surface finish,

minimising the need for sanding.

Depth of cut can be controlled by using your finger against the toolrest as a depth stop.

PLANING

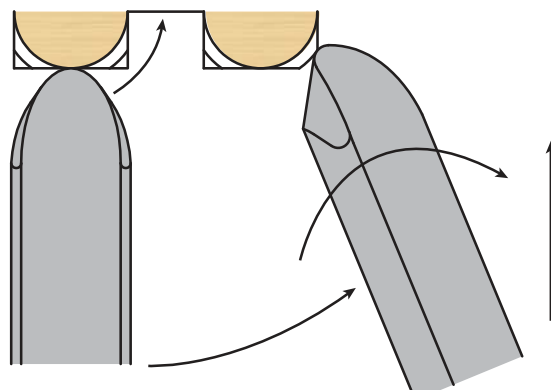
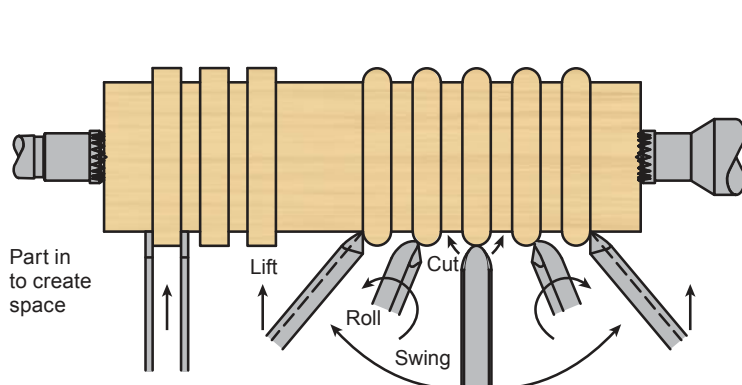
This is similar to using the roughing gouge. However, as the tool may be ground more acutely, the angles the tool is held at are a little more acute. To turn towards the left and right it is beneficial to change hands and stance so they are symmetrically opposite.

Don't worry if you don't get it perfect first time, just re-establish the cut and carry on. You can go back later and plane off any bumps. The trick is to try not to make too many divots as they take longer to remove.



Turning left and right handed is a useful skill, start on a cylinder

MAKING BEADS



Steps required to create a bead

Make space either side of the bead with your parting tool. Turn half the bead at a time and take two or three passes to get the bead to the final shape, dependant on how big your bead is.

Start with the gouge perpendicular to the wood, just to the right of your centreline. Raise the handle until it

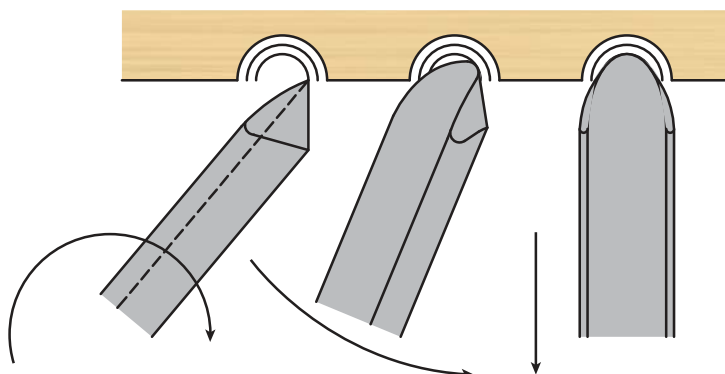
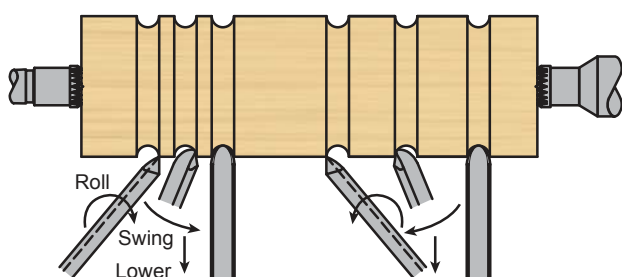
just starts to cut and immediately start smoothly rolling the tool and swinging the handle to the right, raising the handle as you go. Finish with the gouge pointed at the centreline of the lathe, swung to the right, with the flute fully closed (3 o'clock for the right half). Congratulations. Now try the opposite

half. You can perfect your bead with the help of some abrasive when you sand off the centreline.

Workshop tip

- Pencil in a centreline and try not to cut this away

MAKING COVES



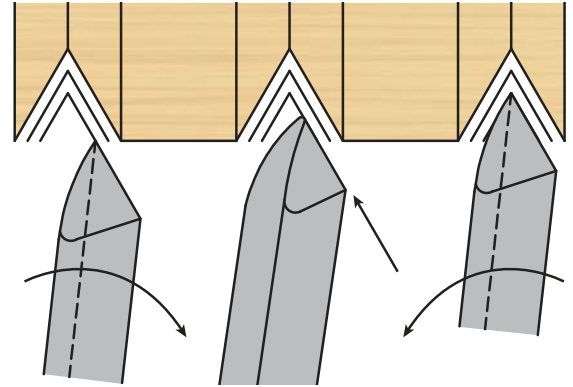
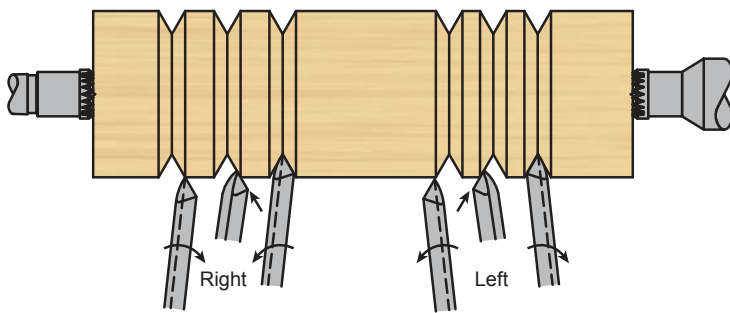
Steps required to create a cove

As with beads, take several cuts to fully form your cove. Start with the tool pointed at the lathe centreline and the flute closed (at 3 o'clock for cutting the left side of a cove) with the bevel in the direction you want to start the cut.

Push the gouge into the wood and start to open the cut from 3 to 2 o'clock, swinging the gouge round and lowering the handle. Finish, at bottom centre, with the gouge perpendicular to the wood, the flute fully open at 12 o'clock and the

handle low. Don't be tempted to go up the other side, start the other side and meet in the middle. Most other spindle-turning shapes are a combination of beads and coves or parts of each in different sizes with some flats thrown in.

MAKING V-CUTS



Steps required to create a V-cut

Hold the gouge on its side with the flute at 9 o'clock for cutting the right side of a V-groove. With the bevel pointing in the direction you intend to go, push the gouge firmly into the wood and just slightly open the flute. End with the flute closed. Alternate cuts from left and right to clear the wood away and deepen the cut.

Don't worry if you create the odd decorative spiral – you just

opened the flute too soon, or too much, or didn't have sufficient forward pressure on the tool.

Try to make your grooves where you intended, and even, with both sides at opposite angles.

Try making several beads/coves or grooves with even spacing. If they're not evenly spaced you can even them up by removing a little wood from one side.

CLEANING END GRAIN



Cleaning the end with a spindle gouge leaves a good finish

Hold the gouge on its side with the flute at 3 o'clock for cutting the right end of end grain, and 9 o'clock for cutting the left end of end grain.

Start as close to the edge as practical so you will remove only a tiny sliver of wood. Line the tool up so that the bevel will run perpendicular to the lathe axis, and firmly push the gouge into the wood while barely opening the cut to, say, half-past two (for the right-hand end). Keep the cut going until you reach the depth you want, but try not to run into the metal centres.

DRILLING WITH THE SPINDLE GOUGE



Start on centre and wiggle the gouge for clearance

It is possible to drill a hole with the spindle gouge. Often I find it quicker than finding a drill chuck and drill in my workshop if all I'm trying to do is create a clearance hole to start hollowing a goblet or box, for example.

Place your toolrest so that the tip of the gouge is just below centre with the gouge held in line with the lathe axis.

With the lathe running at a slow-to-moderate speed, push the gouge into the centre of the wood. To deepen the hole, it's necessary to wiggle the gouge handle a little to widen the hole. I rotate the handle in a clockwise direction. Withdraw the gouge periodically to clear shavings and minimise heat build-up. You may be surprised at the amount of pressure you need to put on the gouge to drill. However, when you are doing it correctly it will self-centre, and is quick and efficient.

HOLLOWING WITH THE SPINDLE GOUGE



Hollowing with the lower tip of the spindle gouge

Drilling was a precursor to hollowing. This is easily achieved with a pull cut, using the lower left tip of the spindle gouge. Simply scoop the wood out a little at a time like using an ice-cream scoop, getting deeper and wider as you go. If you need to go deeper rather than wider, concentrate your effort nearer the bottom. If you need to make the hole wider, concentrate your cuts nearer the rim.

Finally, you can use the gouge on its left side, with the bevel almost completely closed, and do a pull, shear-scraping cut to get the best finish possible. Stop the lathe periodically to clear out shavings stuck to the sides by centrifugal force, so you can better judge hollowing depth and width. ●

NEXT ISSUE: In the next issue we will consider the dovetail scraper for making chucking spigots, the bowl gouge, and the French curve scraper, all typically used on faceplate turnings

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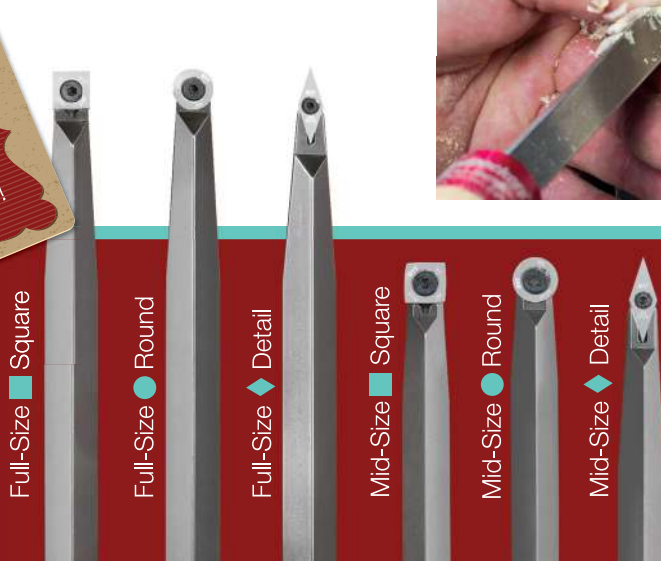
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Queen nutcracker

Colwin Way provides a plan to make a festive queen nutcracker, and gives a guide to make the all-important router box to create the slot to enclose the cracking mechanism



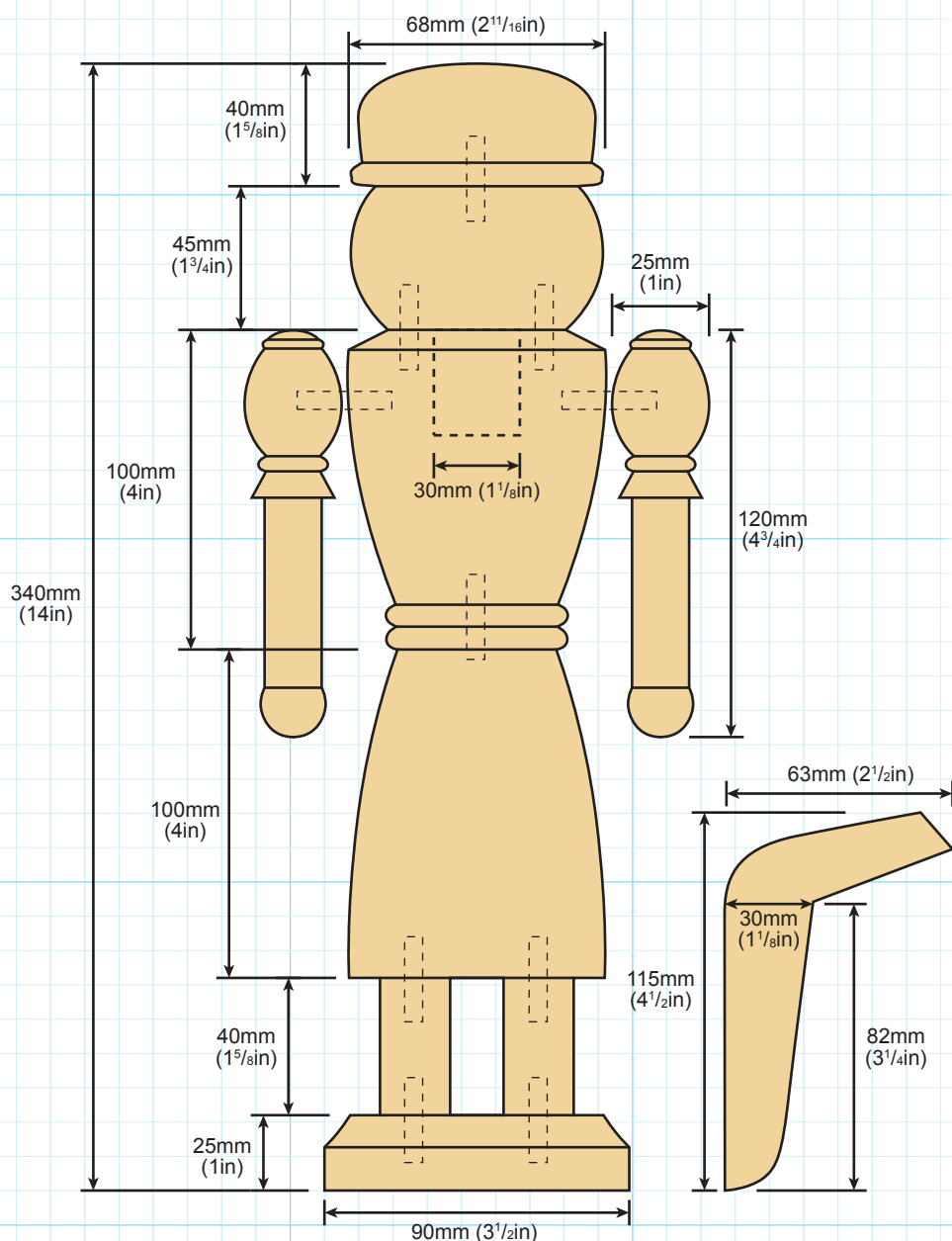
Well I've been lucky enough to have been writing for *Woodturning* magazine for three years now and have covered a long and diverse list of projects. My favourites, though, have to revolve around the Christmas period and probably the most favourite of these was my first – the German-style nutcracker figures. These figures come in all shapes and themes, but traditionally would have been figures of authority, such as Kings, queens or soldiers.

In *Woodturning* issue 286 we looked at how to make a bugler complete with bugle, but also showed a king and queen as finished figures. We gave you the 'how to' and diagrams to make your own, with the option of making a solid, 'for-show' figure, or a working version. I know a lot of people took up the challenge because I've seen the proof through pictures and various visits to clubs where members have made them. However, one question was constantly

asked: 'Could we show in greater detail how to make the router box that was used to make the slot through the body to enclose the nutcracker mechanism?'

Well, here goes. I hope you will find this useful and that it will inspire you to either give this wonderful project a retry or venture for the first time. I've included a finished picture and plans to make a nutcracker queen to accompany that bugler all those issues ago.

Queen



TOOLS

- Personal & respiratory protection equipment (PPE & RPE)
- 3mm parting tool
- 25mm skew chisel
- 6mm beading and parting tool
- Bradawl
- Drill and 6 & 30mm drill bits
- 6mm dowel
- Saw

MATERIALS

- Lime or other suitable timber for your figure
- Paint
- Brushes or airbrush
- Beads and cordage for finishing
- PVA & epoxy adhesive
- Abrasives

Making the queen

Turning the components to make your own nutcracker queen is fairly straightforward and achievable by a novice turner. I usually start with the base and work up. Below is a brief outline of the construction.

THE BASE

Use your four-jaw chuck to hold your base blank and turn a recess 3mm deep on the underside.

Hold this recess by expanding your jaws into it and turn the top of the base,

including any decoration you want to add.

The legs are a gentle taper with a 6mm hole, 10mm deep, in both ends for attaching to the base.

SKIRT

The skirt is a single convex taper to the waist with a single 6mm fixing hole at the top and two corresponding holes for the legs at the bottom.

THE BODY

The body is the section to be placed

into the router cradle if you intend to route the nutcracker and have the mouth moving. This body needs to fit inside the router box cradle, so measure accordingly.

The head and crown are easier made separately and joined together with 6mm dowels.

The arms are made from one piece and if you want one to be bent just cut halfway down at a 45° angle then join back together with epoxy to create a 90° bend in the arm.

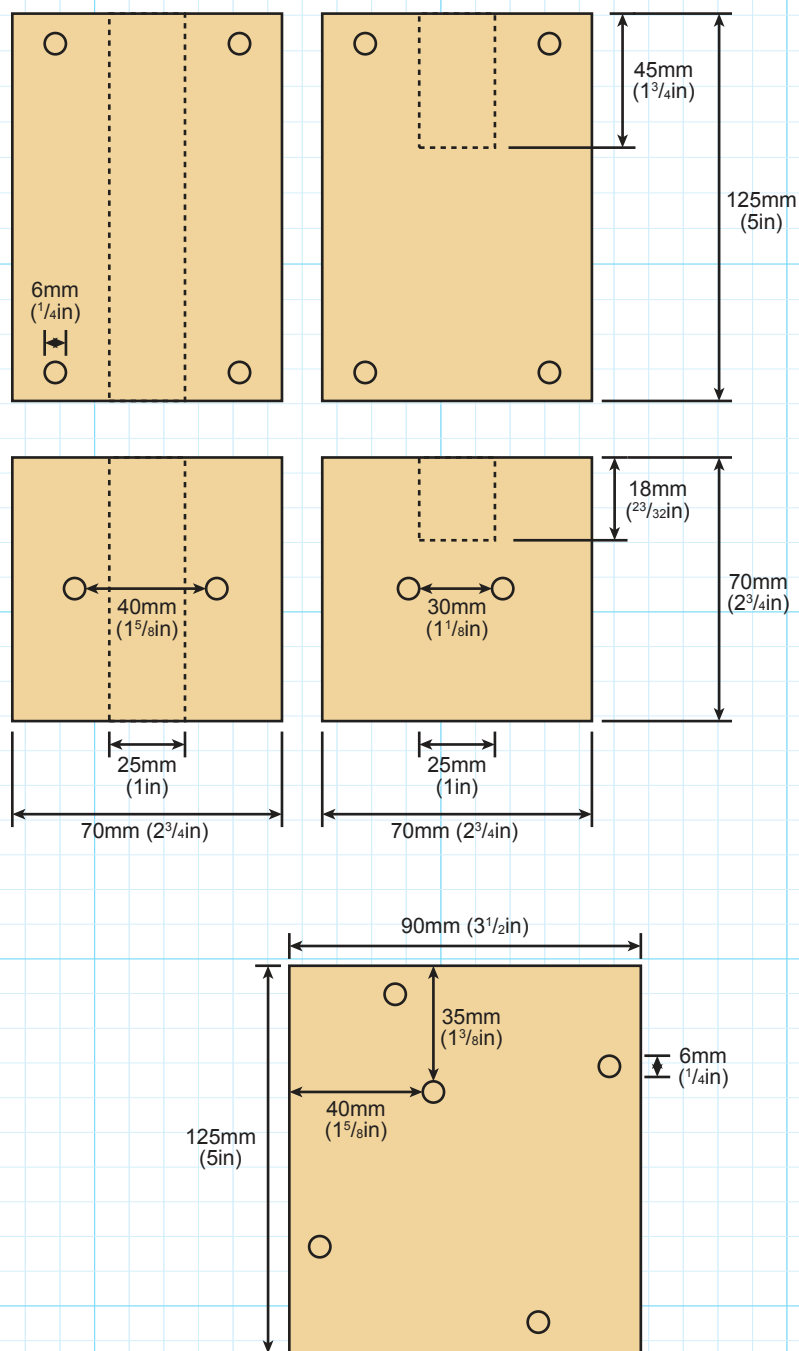
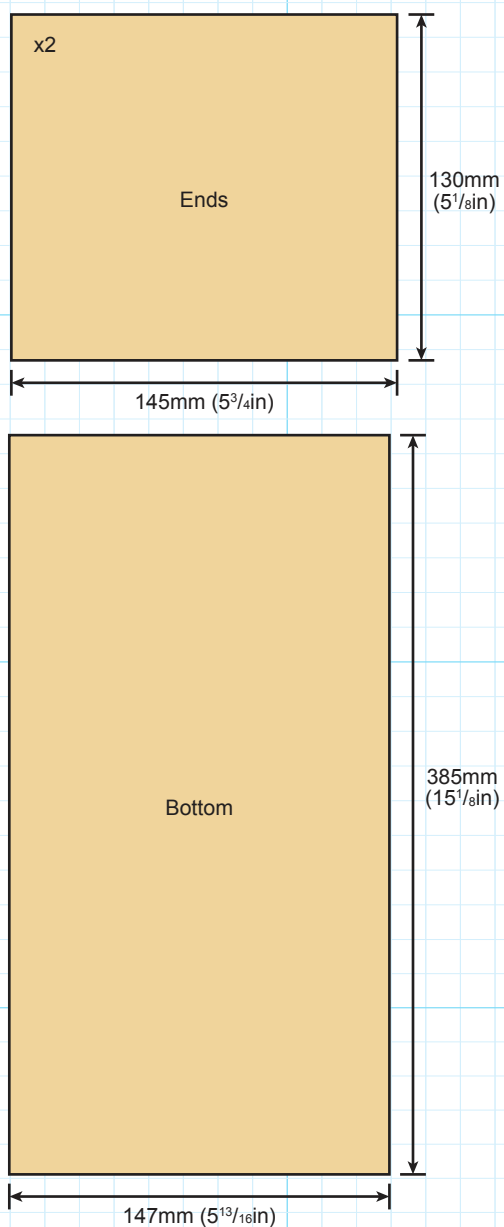
Router box cradle

TOOLS

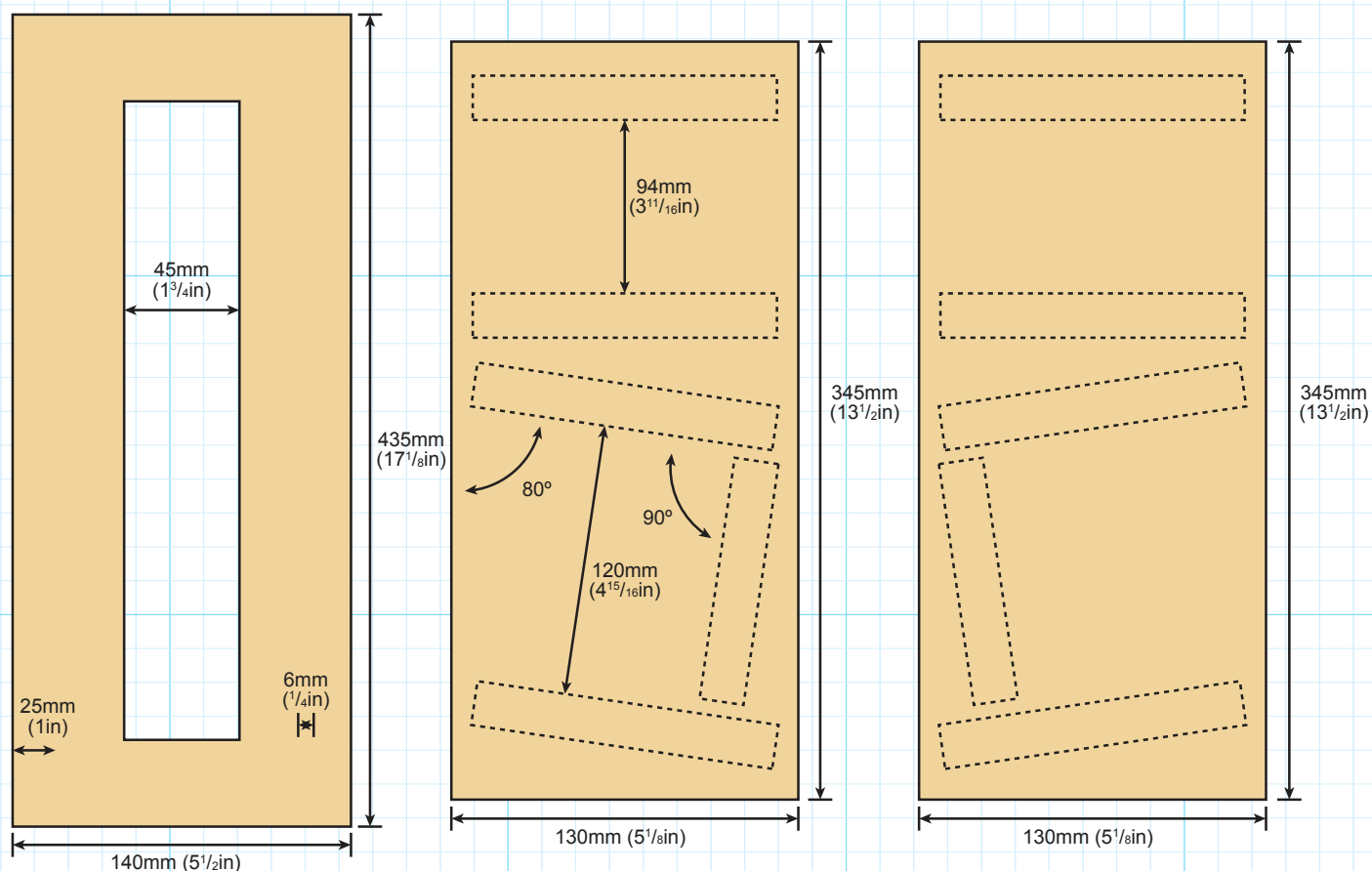
- Personal and respiratory protection equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Cordless drill
- 4 & 6mm drill bits
- Rule
- Cordless drill
- Clamp
- 40mm x 4.5 screws
- 12mm kitchen worktop router bit
- Router

MATERIALS

- 15mm ply
- 9mm MDF
- Screws
- Dowels
- Adhesive
- Wooden battens



Router box cradle cont.



MAKING THE ROUTER BOX

1 Start by cutting out all your pieces of 15mm ply or MDF for the sides and the bottom, and thinner 9mm MDF for the top. Be accurate when cutting these pieces as any errors will only increase as the build goes on. The line drawings show the exact size of the box I'm building, but this can be customised to suit the crackers you wish to build. To make the drilling easier, spend time clamping a back stop and length stop in position.

2 You will only need to drill three components – the two short ends and the one bottom panel. To stop the screws splitting the timber as you tighten the box together, countersink the drilled holes to spread the load. The picture shows the holes neatly drilled in the same position.

3 Take your side panels and mark them out ready for the slide ways to hold your carriages. These carriages are vital for holding your turned nutcracker bodies. The carriages need to slide in and out of the router box with ease while being held securely when routed. Again, the exact positioning is on the diagram, including all angles.

4 After marking out the positions you need to add small timber battens, which will act as the slipways for your carriages. These slipways are permanent so need to be glued and screwed in position. The router box will hold the carriages in two positions, first at 90° to route out the top of the body, then at 80° to route the back of the body.





5 Now you need to take a closer look at the small carriages themselves. Again, all the dimensions are in the drawings. When you first make your carriages they won't have any slot in them as this gets done the first time you route out a body. The carriages in the picture are made from 12mm birch ply, glued and screwed on all sides bar one, which needs to be left for you to be able to place your body in and out. You will also notice that the removable side has dowel sticking out – this is to ensure that the door goes back in the same place each time, which is then fastened with screws.



6 To assemble the router box it's easier to have the carriages already made. These can then be used as packers, making sure the sides are in the exact place when screwing together. It's a good tip to use a piece of thin card between the carriage and the router box to make sure that, when finished, the carriage will slide in and out easily.

7 Position the ends, clamp and screw. This is a really important part of the build and time needs to be taken to make sure all is in the correct place. The picture is showing a long clamp holding the ends securely in place while they are screwed together. I don't tend to glue the boxes together just in case they need to be taken apart for repair any time. Now turn the box upside down and screw the bottom to the sides, which will give the box some strength.



8 Moving on to the lid of the router box, this again needs to be positioned in the same place each time any routing is carried out. After positioning and clamping the top to the box, drill through both top and box to a depth of 10mm. Remove the lid and glue in some 6mm dowel. The dowel should protrude enough to locate the lid but not past as this would foul the router when slot cutting.

9 So, here's how the box should look at this point. Notice that a small piece of 50mm timber has been added to the underside so it clamped secure in a bench vice, giving a really secure routing position. Alternatively, you could make the base wide enough to be either clamped or screwed down to the bench.



10 Now it's time to route out the slot. Here I'm using a 6mm straight cutter in the router and the router fence in place. You will need to use a template guide which will dictate the size of the slot you cut in your router box. Just remember to go gently and take your time.

11 & 12 If all goes well your first router box is ready to start routing your nutcracker bodies. Mount the cracker body into the carriage – it is a nice, snug fit – then load it into the router box cradle. You will need to be able to route to a fair depth, so this means a 13mm router is necessary and I find a straight kitchen worktop 12mm router bit is ideal, as these are both long and strong and will enable you to cut the slot without difficulty. Just remember to take your time. There is no rush. ●

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Wheel Of Delicacy

Michael Alguire Shows how he produces his signature piece



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL ALGUIRE I have always been fascinated by the split-turned technique, where you turn a simple bowl or even a wing bowl, cut it in half using a bandsaw and glue the rim sections together to create a bowl. Many examples can be seen by Steven Hogbin and Marilyn Campbell, who both inspired me to explore split-turning. I came up with the idea of turning a dish form that had an outside wall and an inside wall. I would cut it in half and glue the two

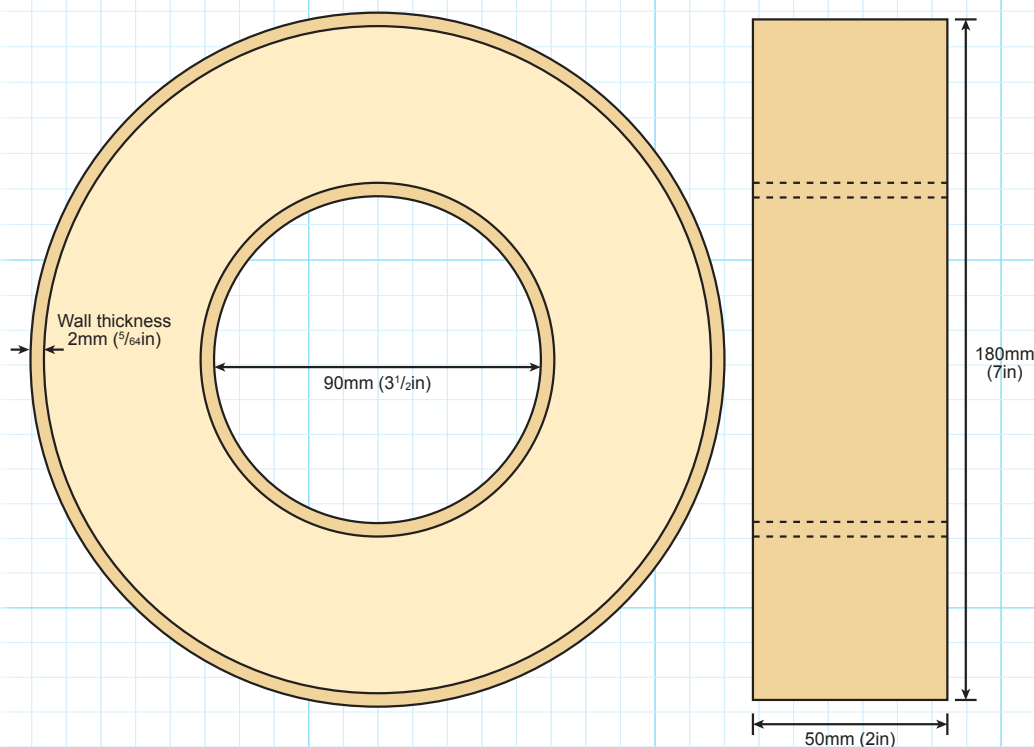
halves together to create a half of a wheel, then cap the ends with additional pieces I would have to make to fit. After the first attempt at the half-wheel I decided to make two identical dish forms to create a whole wheel and the Wheel of Delicacy was born. After much trials and error I found a process that works. In this tutorial I hope you can understand how I go about creating these pieces or will feel inspired to come up with an idea. ►

TOOLS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Appropriate extractor for pyrography and power carving
- Bowl gouge
- Straight hollowing tool
- Scraper
- Rotary carving unit/high-speed handpiece (straight and angled head)
- Square edge
- Vernier callipers
- Pyrography unit
- Callipers
- Pillar drill
- Drill bit to suit screw chuck
- Hot-glue gun

MATERIALS

- Two square wood blanks
- Steel rule
- Adhesive
- Wooden dowels
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brush
- Matt finish or sealer
- Pencil



PIERCING AND SIDE-CUTTING THE PATTERN

This project, which has thin walls, requires that there are voids/windows cut into the piece to create the decorative pattern. This involves piercing and side-cutting the wood.

This requires the use of a rotary carving unit plus the correct type of cutters. End and side-cut cutters are readily available from many sources. The type of rotary carving unit the cutters are fitted into will have a big bearing on the speed of cut and control of the cut.

Rotary carving tools

One option is to use a rotary multi-tool – Dremel is one such make, but there are others – that will accept a large array of accessories.

Another is to use a drop-down unit/pendulum unit. Foredom is one such make but again, there

are others, which feature a flexible shaft on to which various handpieces are fitted, giving a lot of options as far as to what to use when.

Both of these types of tool are great accessories, capable of doing a lot of work of varying types very well. But, since we are piecing and side-cutting on thin sections, they typically, depending on the unit selected, have a top speed of about 35,000rpm. This will be fine, but the cutting will be slower and it is not so easy to manipulate the cutters and the finish off the cuts is not as nice as that from the faster units. It is worth noting that there are increased-speed handpieces available to fit on drop-down flexi-shaft power units which run much faster than 35000rpm, but they still do not run as fast as the units mentioned in the next section.

High-speed rotary carving units

I am using special high-speed handpieces which run off a compressor. But there are some electrical variable speed units available that allow handpieces to run at significantly higher speeds than the typical rotary handpieces mentioned earlier. The speed of rotation on the very high-speed units is 300,000-450,000rpm, which makes the cutting faster and more controllable. The downside is that the high-speed units come at a much-increased cost.

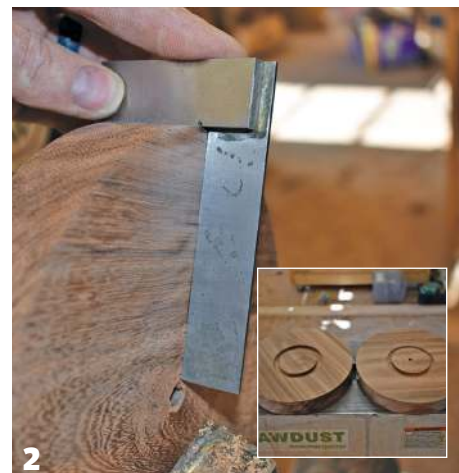
This project is made trickier still because the flat faces and inner and outer edges need to be pieced and carved, so a straight unit will work well for the outer curved edge and flat faces, but the inner section of the ring requires a handpiece with a 90° angled head to reach into this inner area.

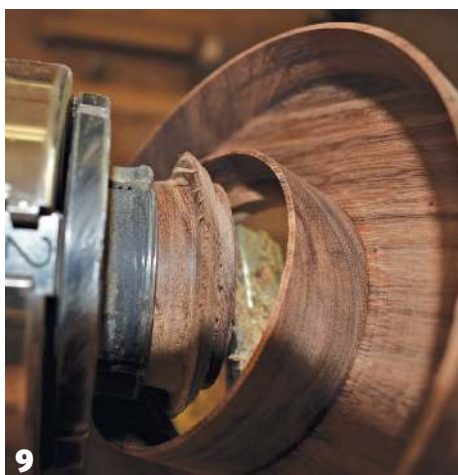
Creating the hollow ring

1 Take the blanks and drill them to accept a screw chuck. Mount one on a screw chuck. Take a gouge and true up the outside and front face until they are perfectly flat. Use a steel ruler to check.

Cut a tenon to suit your chuck jaws – just be sure you don't violate your inside diameter in the sketch provided.

2 Be sure to check if your blank is square. This will make glue-up easier and allow you to get proper measurements for the second blank. Once the first blank is created, turn a second blank identical to the one just done.





3 Next, use a rotary carving tool with a depth gauge to bore many depth holes on the outside and the face but keep clear of what will be the solid edge areas. The holes will help give you a precise wall thickness when hollowing out the inside to the correct depth.

When setting your depth gauge it should not exceed 2.5mm in thickness. Thickness of 1.5-2.5mm is ideal for piercing. Any thicker and it is hard to do the piercing and side cutting. It will also look heavy and leaden.

4 Turn away the bulk of the internal waste using suitable tools. A combination of bowl gouge, tipped hollowing tool, scraper and parting tool will work well. You will need to work down and across the area to be hollowed out so you have leave enough mass for stability during the hollowing out. If you cut all the way across in one go, you will not be able to achieve the required wall thickness.

5 Use the hollowing tool for removing the bulk and your scraper to refine your edge until light shines through the depth gauge holes you just drilled.

6 At this stage set your Verniers to the inside dimension and mark the size on the blank.

7 Turn the inside face down to your depth gauge holes, working your way to the inside wall section.

Using a set of callipers, set them to your wall thickness. Turn the outside of the inside diameter to the desired wall thickness.

On the very inner section of the blank, which is still currently solid, remove some material allowing access for your callipers. At this stage you can also create a second tenon for reversing. Continue turning the wall to the thickness. Be very careful not to go too deep – you don't want to go through the bottom just yet.

8 Now remove the piece from the lathe, reverse it and hold the inner tenon just cut. The second tenon you can start turning through until you hear it getting thin. Be very careful to take light cuts and keep your speed slow.

9 Work until you cut all the way through and sever the ring section from the waste held in the chuck.

10 Once it breaks free you can expand your jaws with light pressure and hold it, allowing you to use your scraper or sandpaper to clean up the part you just turned.

11 Having created one section of the ring, repeat the processes for the second ring to create an identical matching half.

Alignment

12 It is vital that the two rings perfectly align. To aid with this I use a hot-glue gun and apply dowels around the outside and the inside of one ring.

13 Once the dowels are in place, apply glue to the meeting edges and slide one blank on to the other. I use several hand clamps and hold it between centres using the flat face of the chuck and a faceplate held in place by a revolving centre.

The pattern

14 Once dry, remove the ring from the lathe and use a pencil to draw your chosen design. Drawing your pattern prior to burning helps minimise mistakes. Next use your wood burner/pyrography unit to burn the pattern on the piece. A variety of tips was used to apply the design, ranging from a thin wire to a tip that had a scalpel-type edge on it to incise deeply and act as an anti-bleed coloured paint barrier later.

15 Now mark the exact position of the thickness of the inner walls on the top, back, inner and outer edges. You will be cutting windows in the wood so you need to know the boundaries within which to cut.

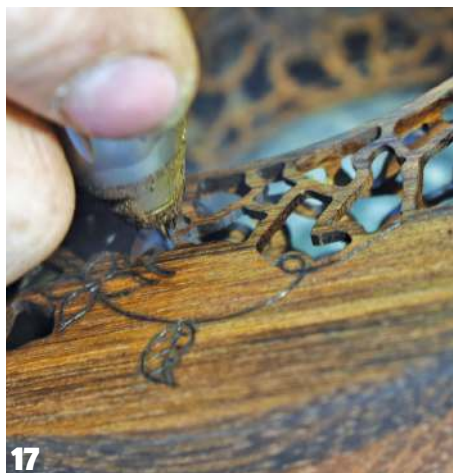
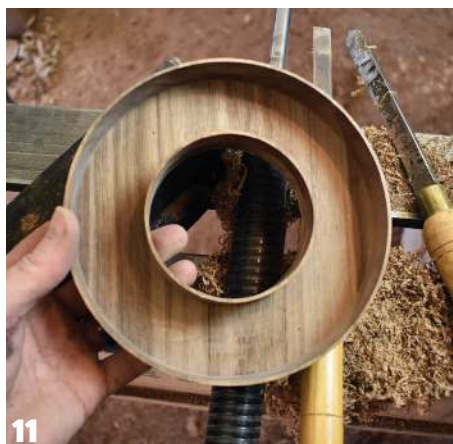
Piercing

16 Before piercing and cutting the voids draw the pattern of windows you wish you cut, you can freehand cut without marking them, but remember to leave the pyrographed pattern alone. Every void cut needs to work around the marked pattern. It is easier to start piercing the inner ring area. This requires the angled-head handpiece. Remember to keep the wall thickness between each void consistent and go slowly so you do not cut through or break a section making a much larger window. While the shape of each window is irregular, they are all a similar size.

Light pressure is a must and use pillows to rest the piece on while you cut so you don't have to hunch over.

17 Once the inside area is done, use a straight handpiece to cut the flat faces and edge areas. Again, be gentle and go slowly – one slip can ruin the piece.

18 Once the windows are cut, using your choice of colours paint in your design with a small brush. After the colouring seal the piece with a matt-finish acrylic spray or your choice of fixative. ●



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Andrew sees inspiration around him every day. He 'arrived' on the Australian woodworking scene in 1983, and since then his work has developed into areas of sculpture, furniture-making and the odd bit of cabinet work.

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ANDY COATES

Andy is a professional woodturner and has a workshop and gallery in Suffolk. He makes one-off pieces, small-batch runs, antique restorations and other strange commissions. He also demonstrates and teaches.

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CHRIS GRACE

Chris has been turning wood since 2008. He has enjoyed making things with wood and metal all his life. Chris sells his work by commission, demonstrates and provides instruction.

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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.

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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.

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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

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KURT HERTZOG

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LES SYMONDS

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MARK SANGER

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.

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MICHAEL ALGUIRE

Michael began turning in 2013, making pens and wooden ornaments. His passion has grown and he now creates intricate woodturned hollow forms, bowls, vases and abstract pieces.

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RICHARD FINDLEY

Richard discovered woodturning while working for his father as a joiner. He makes all kinds of work to commission, and offers demonstrations

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STUART THOMAS

Stuart has been woodturning for more than 25 years, doing work for joinery and kitchen firms and the National Trust as well as demonstrating. He loves turning smaller items involving thread-chasing.

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Woodturning

Winter issue 326 on sale 29 Nov

Les Symonds uses distressed timber to make a characterful deep bowl in yew, bound with copper wire



PHOTOGRAPH BY LES SYMONDS

Andy Coates delves into making ring-handled bowls

Richard Findley's Editor's Challenge this month is to create a vessel integrating basket weave illusion detail

Emiliano Achaval shows how to turn and decorate an amphora with separate stand

Mark Sanger explores turning and carving a bowl, vase and hollow form

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Community letters

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

Support for our service personnel

Mark,
As a Royal Navy veteran myself I was sympathetic to Gerald Meager's letter in *Woodturning* issue 323. Two thoughts came to mind. First: How can a flag pole cost in excess of £10k?, and then: We are turners and make things such as flag poles, perhaps there is something we can do to help. Does anybody have any ideas?
Many readers will not appreciate the significance of the letters QGM after

Gerald Meager's name. He was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal following his exceptional bravery in leading a team saving life onboard HMS *Sheffield* following the ship being hit by an Exocet missile during the Falklands War. He deserves our support.

Thanks for an excellent magazine.
Regards, John Birkett



Using sycamore

Hello Mark,
I bought some sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) blanks from Stiles and Bates and this is the first off the production line. I am quite pleased with the way it has turned out as I have not used sycamore before. Hopefully I can replicate this from the other blanks.
I have finished the outside of the mortar in food-safe finish and the inside and the pestle in olive oil.

Best wishes, John Moore

Use the slip

Dear Mark,
In the article *Use the Slip* in the September 2018 issue, you advocated a ring drive or slipping the drive belt to lessen the torque available to rotate the work and thus lessen the severity of any catches. Both precautions will be effective in achieving that objective, but are likely to result in a turner experiencing more catches, not fewer. Let me explain.

A tool's cutting end is stable and controllable only when the forces on it are in equilibrium. By far the most important force a turner must exert to maintain that equilibrium is an appropriate axial thrust along the tool's axis. The most common cause of catches is a failure to maintain sufficient axial thrust. If a workpiece slips when a slightly greater than average axial thrust is exerted, this will encourage weaker thrusting and therefore result in more catches. Although it's counterintuitive, if you believe a catch is imminent, thrust harder.

Mike Darlow



Use the slip

Mark Baker explores two under-used techniques for minimising the results of catches



Most people when learning to turn worry about doing something wrong, trying a new cutting technique, or working into new areas. Whether using a skew chisel, a gouge, scraper, parting tool or some other tool we can be taught and often would, there is always a risk of doing something wrong or not presenting the tool with the tool face at the point of catch at some time or other. The result can be minor or even serious, and, depending on the severity of such an occurrence, it can frighten people and put them off.

Most turners using their own tools, techniques, which take time and practice to master, have two often overlooked

and very simple methods to put you back in control and take it back down to something more familiar, and that helps you manage the risks involved when cutting on the lathe.

OPTION 1: Use a mounting ring (centre in lathe) and ring drive in the handstock for spindle work and also for lathe mounting, direct and chasing of bowls, stems etc. In the event of a serious catch, this allows the workpiece to slip or even stop, which reduces the effect of the catch.

OPTION 2: Set the lathe drive belt slightly looser than usual to allow it to slip in the event

of a catch. Setting the tension on the belt often is the simplest way to do it – you have motor power and tension on the drive chain and, as such, your work stops. You can use the handstock option in conjunction with using a ring drive for between-center work or when holding work in a chuck.

Note: The above mentioned elements are not care-free to slip away from happening. These methods will help to minimise the severity and, depending on how you set the tension and use them, and chucks, stop the work from rotating, thus reducing the severity of a slip or catch for preventing a heavy cut being undertaken by stopping the work.

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From the forum

Here is this month's selection of the postings and work from the Woodworkers Institute:
www.woodworkersinstitute.com

POLYMORPHOUS BOWL

PhilipS Posted:

Size: 9 x 4.5cm excluding base

Part turned, part CNC

Wood: walnut

Finish: black stain, patination polishes

Stewart F posted: Very nicely done – opens up lots of design possibilities. I really like the colouring work and the texturing around the face has a very organic look. I'd love to be able to pick it up.



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Spindle	M33 x 3.5
Weight	320 kg
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Spindle Length	700 mm
Speeds	80-1350 / 180-3700 U/min
Spindle	M33 x 3.5
Weight	178 kg
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Apple box

Stuart Thomas creates a fruit-inspired storage container



This project is fun to make and makes a nice change to regular-shaped boxes. It can be made in whatever timber you have available – the effect will alter depending on your choice and the box can be whatever size you like to suit the timber you have available. The sizes I went for are shown on the drawing supplied.

This apple box was turned from a piece of oak (*Quercus robur*) that I was given. As it was being turned a few cracks appeared, but they were not enough to prevent me completing the project – a little cyanoacrylate and sawdust rubbed into them before the finishing process did the trick. It is always wise to check timber as you turn it. Nasty cracks and splits may compromise the integrity of the

wood, resulting in it coming apart. If you have any doubt as to the integrity of the timber, remove it and use a fresh piece.

When turning smaller boxes I would turn them as end grain and I am sure you could do this larger one as end grain. But, for this particular size a bowl blank, a side-grain piece of timber was more appropriate as this did not have any pith in it.

That said, most bowl blanks are not deep enough, so I cut the blank specially so I could get the extra depth to make the lid from the one blank and ensure grain alignment and a full colour match as close as I could. You can, of course, use two thinner blanks, but the colours, even if using the same timber species, may be slightly different and the grain

alignment might be off a bit. As with all the boxes I turn, I believe you should part-turn them and leave them to dry out and relieve the stress in the wood. The larger the box, the more important this process becomes. So patience is the order of the day.

A large apple box like this can have many uses and we have one that is filled with dry lavender, which smells wonderful when the lid is lifted. The finish of cellulose sealer and soft paste wax I used is fine for this purpose. However, if you are thinking of keeping food items in your box you need to consider an alternative food-safe finish to use. The lid has been made to lift off easily by means of the stalk rather than being a tight fit.

TOOLS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Project template
- 13mm bowl gouge
- Skew chisel
- Round-nose scraper
- Chuck
- Screw chuck or screw chuck attachment
- Drive spur
- Revolving tailstock
- Parting tool
- Handsaw

- Drill chuck
- 4mm drill bit
- Sanding arbor

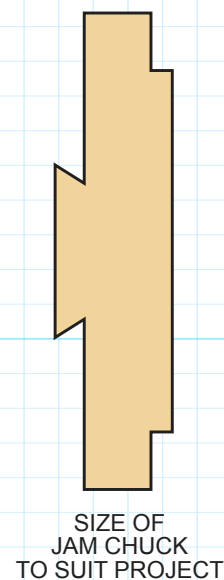
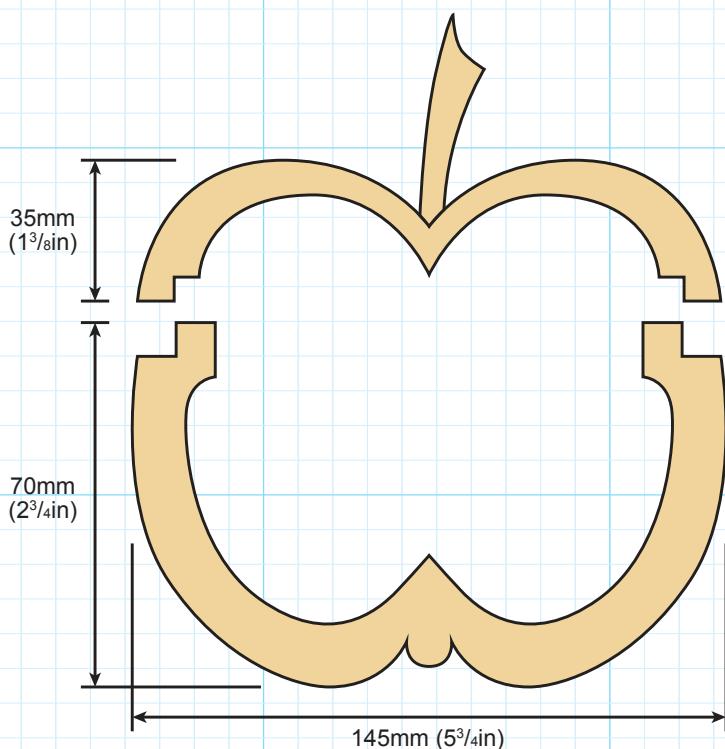
MATERIALS

- Oak (*Quercus robur*) or timber of your choice
- Piece of wood for the apple stalk
- Cellulose sanding sealer
- Soft paste wax
- Buffing mops
- Abrasives down to 320 grit
- Glue/adhesive

Jam chucks

Jam chucks are made from a scrap disc of wood held between centres. A spigot is turned on one side to fit the chuck. Then, by mounting this into your chuck, it is possible to create a spigot or recess to hold your project for its next stage of turning.

Care must be taken to get a good fit. If the fit is too slack, it can be padded out a little with tissue paper or kitchen towel. See the drawing of the jam chuck used for this project. Jam chucks are very useful for all sorts of woodturning projects.

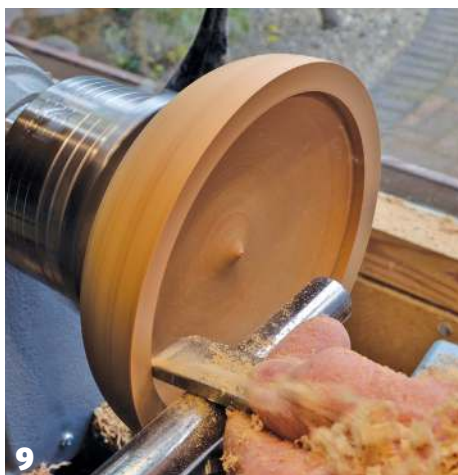
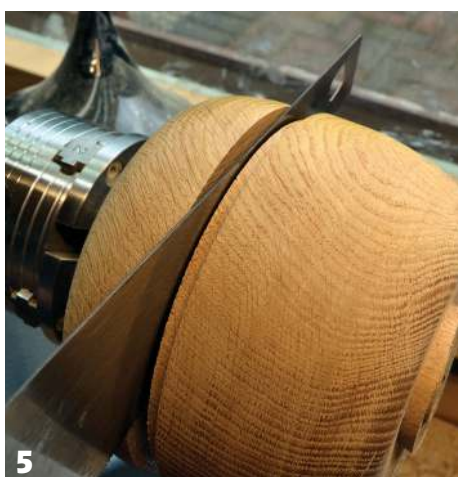


1 Mark the centres of your blank and mount it between centres on the lathe ready for turning. Set a low lathe speed, and, using a bowl gouge, true up the outer edge. As it becomes more balanced the speed can be increased a bit to help achieve a cleaner cut.

Once the outer edge is trued up, clean up the tailstock end and cut a spigot to suit your chuck.

2 Now remove the blank from the lathe and mount it securely in the chuck on the just-cut spigot. Bring up the tailstock centre for support, true up the tailstock end and cut a spigot for your chuck as before.





3 Draw a pencil line to show where the top of the box will be, then use a parting tool to cut halfway through the timber. Be sure to make the cut a little wider than the parting tool so that the tool doesn't bind.

Now rough-shape the top and bottom of the box with a bowl gouge to give you an approximate apple shape.

4 Once roughly shaped, use a gouge, scraper or other appropriate tool, refine the lower chuck spigot and shape the lower end up to the spigot.

5 Now is the time to remove the base from the lid section. Use your parting tool to cut as far as it safely can without severing the lid from the base, then stop the lathe and saw through the remaining timber section to sever the two sections.

6 With the base parted off, rough-turn the inside of the lid to shape but leave enough wall thickness so it can be set aside to dry/season before finish hollowing and refining. For this piece a wall thickness of about 18mm will be fine.

7 Having rough-turned the lid remove it, mount the base section and repeat the rough-shaping process. Again, leave about 18mm wall thickness and, using a parting tool, part-turn the spigot on which the lid will fit.

8 Now, both parts should be left to allow the wood to settle and dry. To check their progress, use either a moisture meter or weigh the parts regularly until they are no longer losing weight.

9 Once seasoned, and before you mount the seasoned rough-turned work on a chuck, check the chuck spigots you have on the rough-turned pieces. There can be a lot of movement in wood as it seasons/dries. You might need to mount the lid and base sections of the box between centres to adjust the chuck spigots a little to ensure they are round and able to be held securely in the chuck.

Mount the lid in your chuck and use the bowl gouge to true up the outside as far as you can, then turn the inside to shape and create a recess on the inner top edge that will fit on the spigot on the base section.

10 Refine the inside as required. You can do this with a gouge, but you might find it easier to use a scraper of the right shape to suit the internal form. Take gentle cuts and have the handle higher than the cutting edge. Make sure the cutting edge is cutting on or just above the centreline.

11 Once the inside is the shape you want, sand it down to 320 grit. Avoid altering the shape of the recess but do soften the internal edge of the box. Once happy with the sanding, apply a coat of sanding sealer and soft paste wax. Then remove from the lathe.

12 Mount the base in the chuck and use the bowl gouge to shape the outside as far as you can. Now use a parting tool or skew held flat on the toolrest to true up the spigot. This will be used as a jam chuck to hold the lid while you shape the top of it. Create a nice snug fit at this stage. If required, it can be adjusted later to create a slightly looser fit between the lid and base section.

13 Hold the lid on the base. With the lid on the base it's time to turn the outside of the apple box. Bring up the tailstock for added security and, once in place, use a bowl gouge to remove as much waste as possible. Only remove the tailstock when it's safe to do so and the work is secure. Then refine the top of the lid.

14 When most of the outside of the box is completed, use a 4mm drill bit held in a drill chuck on the tailstock and drill a hole for the stalk. Take care not to go too deep – the hole must not go through to the inside of the box.

15 Now complete shaping the inside of the base in the same way as the lid using the 13mm bowl gouge. If required, finish the inside of the base section by using the round-nose scraper as for the lid.

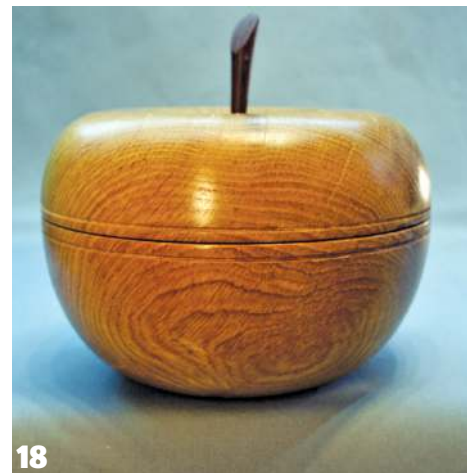
Hold the base in a jam chuck. Bring up the tailstock for added security and, once in place, use a bowl gouge to remove as much waste as possible. Only remove the tailstock when it's safe to do so and the wood is secure, then refine the last bit.

16 Finish the bottom by sanding down to 320 grit, then apply a coat of sanding sealer followed by paste wax.

17 Use a small piece of contrasting wood, held in pin jaws, to turn the stalk. Finally, shape the top of the stalk on a small sanding disc before gluing into position in the previously-drilled hole on the top of the box.

18 If all goes well, you will have a nice box that people will admire.

Note I added a couple of cut grooves either side of the join. This was done with the corner of a parting tool. You could use small beads. This tactile and visual element helps to disguise the join line. ●



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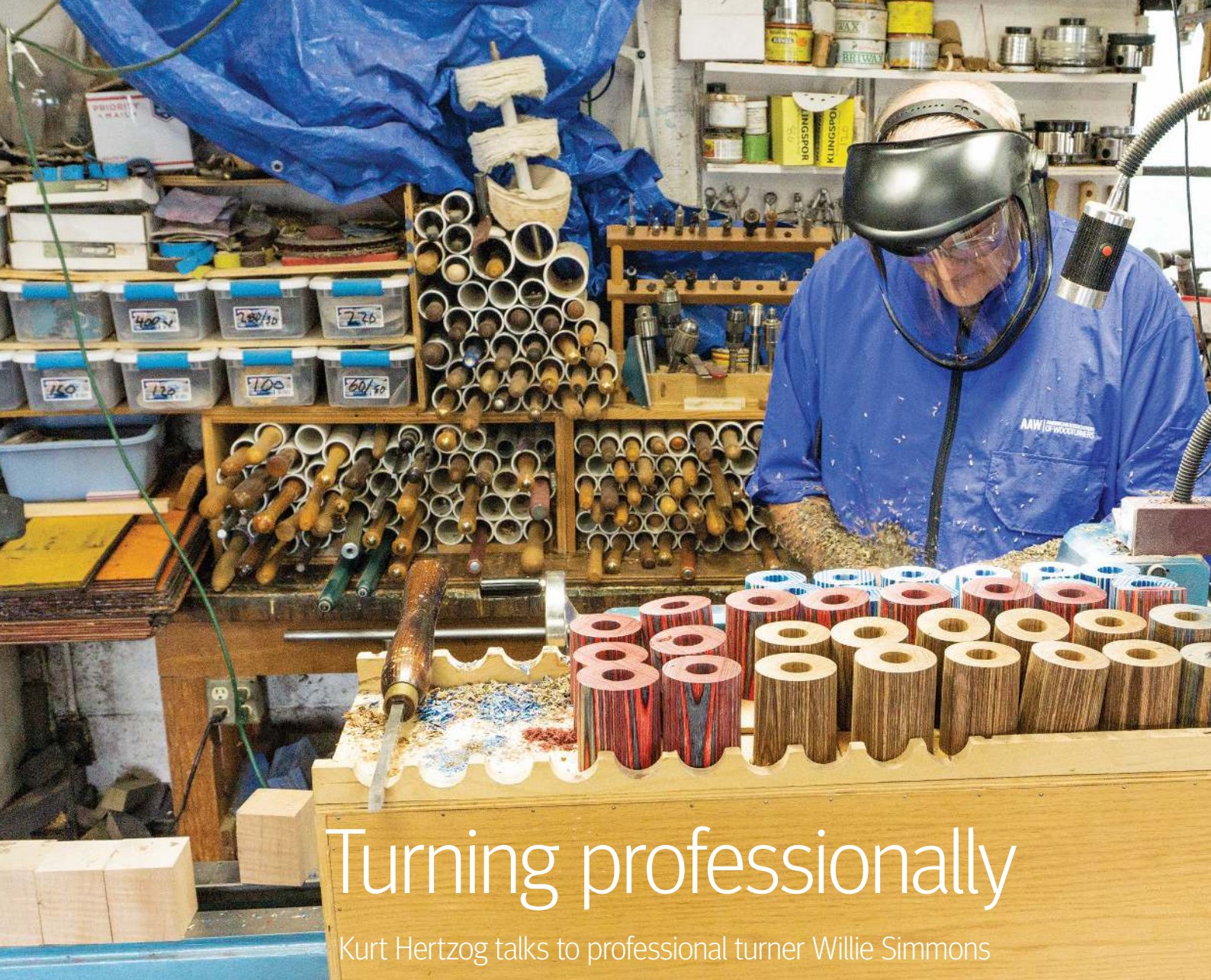
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Turning professionally

Kurt Hertzog talks to professional turner Willie Simmons

Many of us take up woodturning as a hobby and, for some, it forever remains a hobby and may or may not involve selling to subsidize expenses. However, it's rare that a serious hobbyist hasn't thought about doing it as their main job. This issue, we'll do a Behind the Scenes on a professional woodturner – Willie Simmons who is located in the small town of Fincastle, VA.

Willie Simmons' first experience with the wood lathe was in his dad's woodshop. His father was a professional woodworker who made mainly furniture such as corner cabinets. As such, his need for the wood lathe was almost non-existent. He did get a Sears tubular-style lathe and, before it even got installed, eight-year-old Willie managed to get his hand jammed in it. Smarting from this early experience, Willie didn't touch a lathe for nearly 20 years after that.

At 25, Willie began working for his father in the cabinet shop – his main task was refinishing. As the demand for refinishing chairs grew – with many needing repair–

Willie's dad pointed him to the lathe. His total training consisted of: 'Make a new rung that looks like the other rung.' So Willie did spindle turning for the first 10 years he worked there. During that time, he became a woodshop teacher at one of the local school districts, but continued to work for his dad and ultimately left teaching after seven years.

He found he could do as well refinishing chairs as he could teaching with far more satisfaction.

After leaving teaching, Willie became a magistrate for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Living in the county seat of Botetourt County with a historic courthouse, his shop is within sight of his work for Virginia. It took special permission from the state for Willie to continue his business as a woodturner and still be a magistrate. Having received the OK, Willie began and continues his two full-time careers.

With the move from teaching to magistrate, Willie and his dad separated the businesses and, though they

shared the building, each had their own enterprises. Willie eventually stopped the refinishing portion and went completely into spindle turning. Having repaired chairs for years, including making replacement parts, Willie began making chairs and stools. Upon his father's retirement, Willie made furniture while continuing his turning work, but he ultimately gave up the furniture work because it was too heavy for a one-man shop.

CRAFT SHOWS

Willie has been doing craft shows for more than 30 years, first with his father and then on his own. Back in the early '90s, Willie's product line for the shows included stools, cutting boards, bottle stoppers and pens. Over the years, he and his wife, Brenda, have done as many as 15 shows a year to as few as five. They try to keep their show commitments to the immediate region with a drive time of less than a day. While he is capable of very sophisticated turnings, Willie finds that

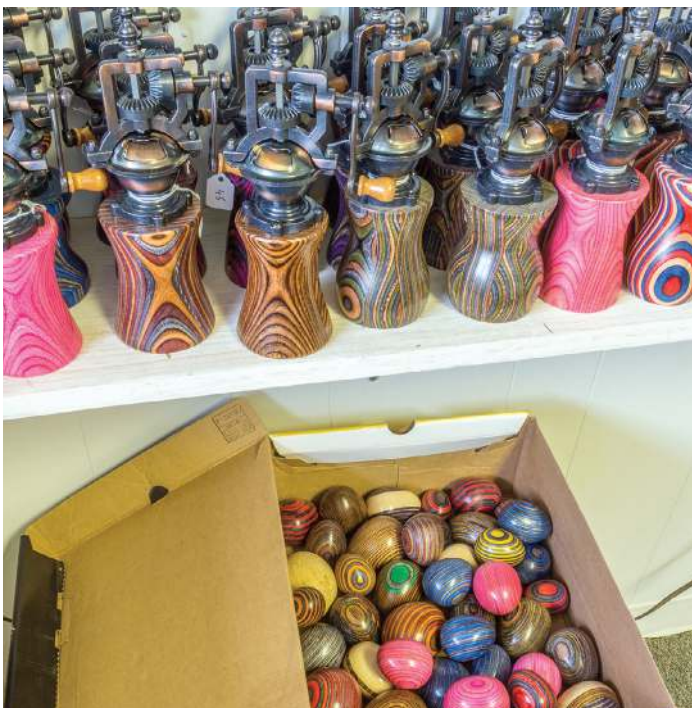


PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT HERTZOG

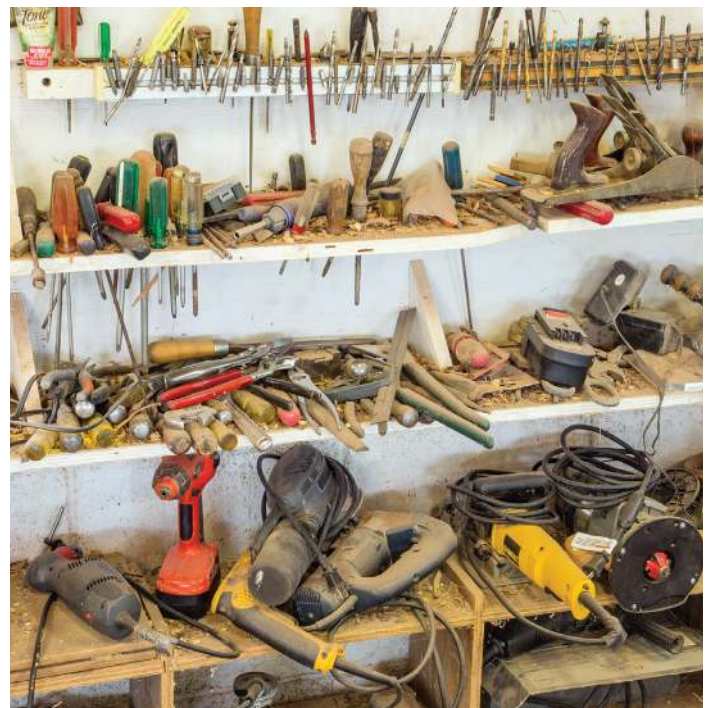
This simple, faded sign on the roof of a building along the highway is the only way you'd know there was a woodturning shop in Fincastle



Willie Simmons has been at the same location for 30 years



With a large part of Willie's turned items feeding the craft shows he does, colour ply is popular so it is the material of choice for now



As a no-nonsense production shop, tools are at hand and are workhorses. What's needed is there without any extras or fancy tools

the simple items sell best at craft shows. As a production turner, he creates items that are at a price point where they are a simple impulse buy and are small enough that they aren't burdensome to carry. The peppermills, seam rippers, cutting boards, ikebana, and the like move well and make the shows profitable.

Willie does a considerable amount of architectural turning as well. He will take jobs turning several hundred spindles for a porch or stairwell restoration as well as custom lamps and everything in between. Often his work is contract work for high-end merchants offering custom walking sticks, designer home furnishings, or restoration projects. Currently, the architectural turnings are becoming a larger part of his business. The past mix of 80% of his business being the show circuit is changing to a 50/50 mix as the architectural opportunities present themselves.

SECURITY

With his magistrate's job providing the security of health care and a retirement, Willie can work at his turning career as he sees fit. He loves turning and takes on the challenges of projects with the joy of learning. He's learned what works for him in the show circuit. Being selective on which shows he does and catering to the price point and size of the attendees of those shows lets him do as few as five shows a year and still be successful. He does sell at the shop and via his website – both make up a small part of the business, but certainly help.

Willie has been active in the local American Association of Woodturners chapters for many years and has served as officer in those he belongs to and is a frequent demonstrator as well. Willie was a demonstrator at the AAW Symposium in Tampa and at the Totally Turning Symposium in Saratoga Springs, NY in March, 2015. ●

You can find out more about Willie Simmons and see his work at www.wpswoodturning.com



Stools, foot stools and other woven items are an outgrowth of Willie's days doing chair repair. These are inventory for coming shows



Stools and 'non-art' bowls are good sellers during craft shows and are at price points to tempt the buyer without agonising and small enough to carry



Contract work is a part of Willie's business. Here, high-end walking sticks dry after finishing



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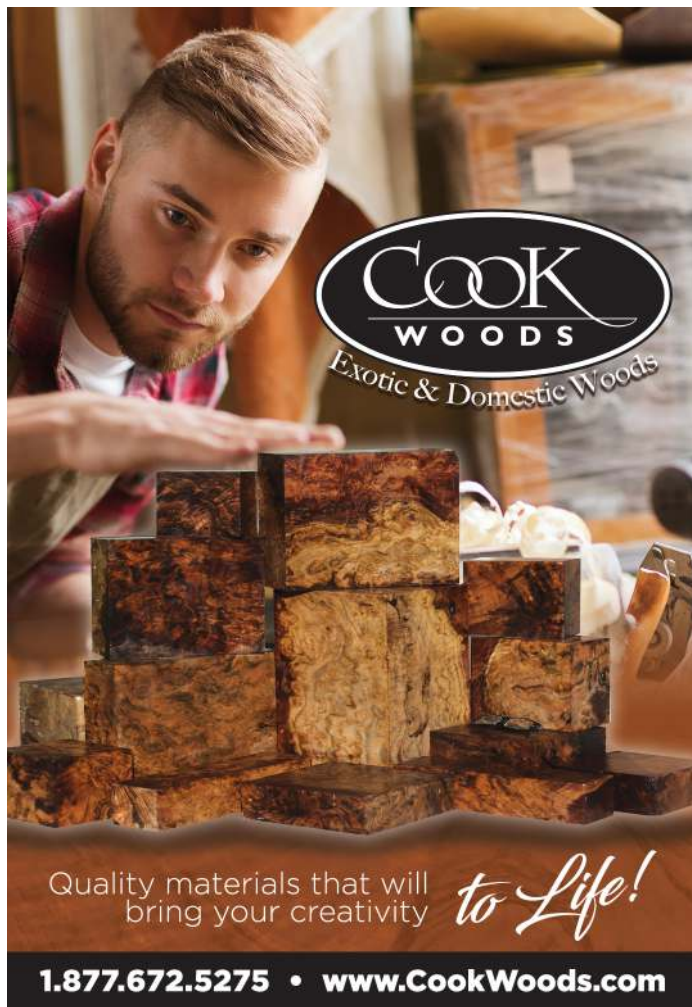
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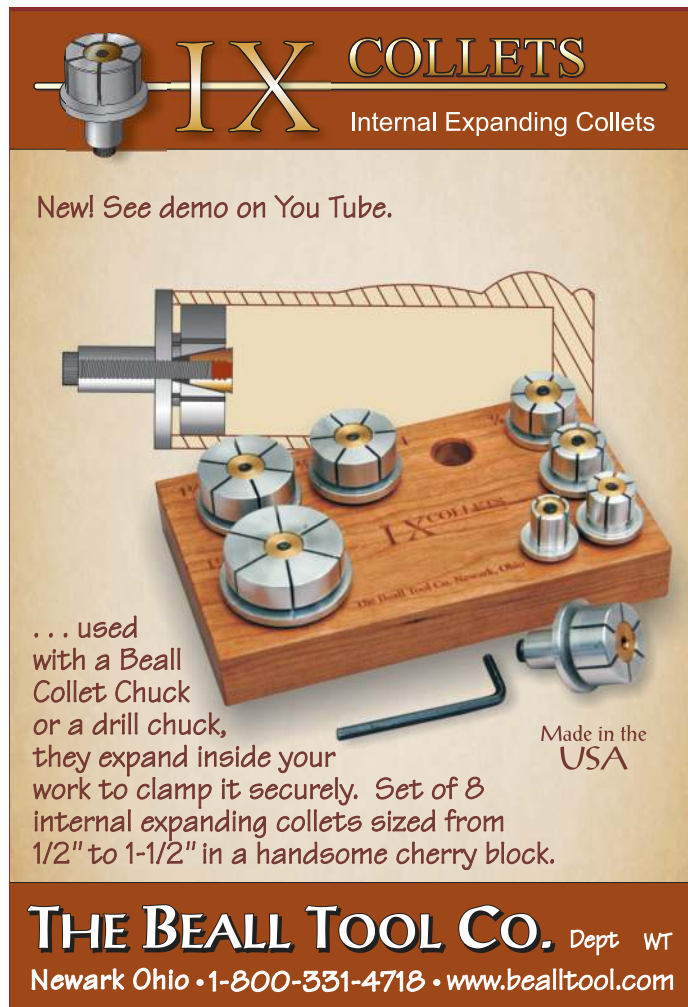
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In my honest opinion

John Plater looks at the sensitive issue of giving and accepting advice



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN PLATER

I have written before about making judgements of a piece of woodturning. It is something that one is asked to do in a formal context, such as judging competition pieces, or in an informal chat with colleagues during a club night. It might also be a part of the process of an online woodturning forum. It is easy to pick up on torn grain or tooling marks and be critical objectively. It is less easy to be critical of the design of a piece because that is very subjective and what right has the viewer to criticise something with which the maker might be happy? The maker had his or her reasons for that particular design and that can never be wrong, can it? After all, the person has engaged in a creative act and might have poured time, money and effort or heart and soul into a piece. Torn grain on a curve is a fact, a bump in a curve could be a fact, the wrong curve altogether can only ever be opinion, can't it?

GENTLY DOES IT

If one is asked to comment on pieces of turned work, it is important to look for positives in the work before any negatives. Praise where it is due. Even if it is little more than a 'well done for trying' at the start of someone's woodturning journey. Then it is important to turn any

negatives into positives with the aid of constructive comment, rather than rejecting it out of hand with destructive comment. A mistake has been perceived and pointed out. By suggesting ways in which the mistake might not have occurred or suggesting a remedy which might be applied, there is a positive way forward. Progress might be made. It is a harsh reality but it is possible to learn by one's mistakes. By definition then, I am learning a lot.

IN MY HONEST OPINION

Accepting constructive criticism is a very personal thing. Some may appreciate learning by their mistakes and may find it easy to accept helpful advice. Some may disagree with comments made and argue their case accordingly, or simply ignore them. Some are happy to listen to criticism in a one-to-one conversation but do not like any perceived failings to be discussed in a public arena. Some woodturning clubs will organise an open critique of work so that all will hear about everyone's efforts. Others will limit the public element of the critique to who came 1st, 2nd and 3rd. In this way the onus is placed on the individual to question the reasoning for themselves if they want to. IMHO, the latter approach

is very respectful of people's feelings but still offers a way out for those who want to hear why.

COMPETITIONS

By entering woodturning competitions one is offering up the work to the view of the judge. By showing a piece to others online or even offering it for sale the work is going to be looked at with a critical eye. Fundamentally, if one does not want to be criticised, don't show the work. That, however, would not recognise the power of accepting constructive criticism as a mechanism for progressing with one's woodturning. I have spoken to craftspeople who find it difficult to accept any criticism and are desperately upset by others' comments or if their work does not sell at a show. It is a fine line between needing to progress and having the strength of one's own convictions such that the views of others might be ignored.

A final thought on this topic. Working out a set of words of one's own to offer as constructive criticism to another person is itself a worthwhile exercise. IMHO, if one answers with honesty and integrity and without recourse to supposition and misplaced accepted wisdom, it is a situation which may be of benefit to both parties.

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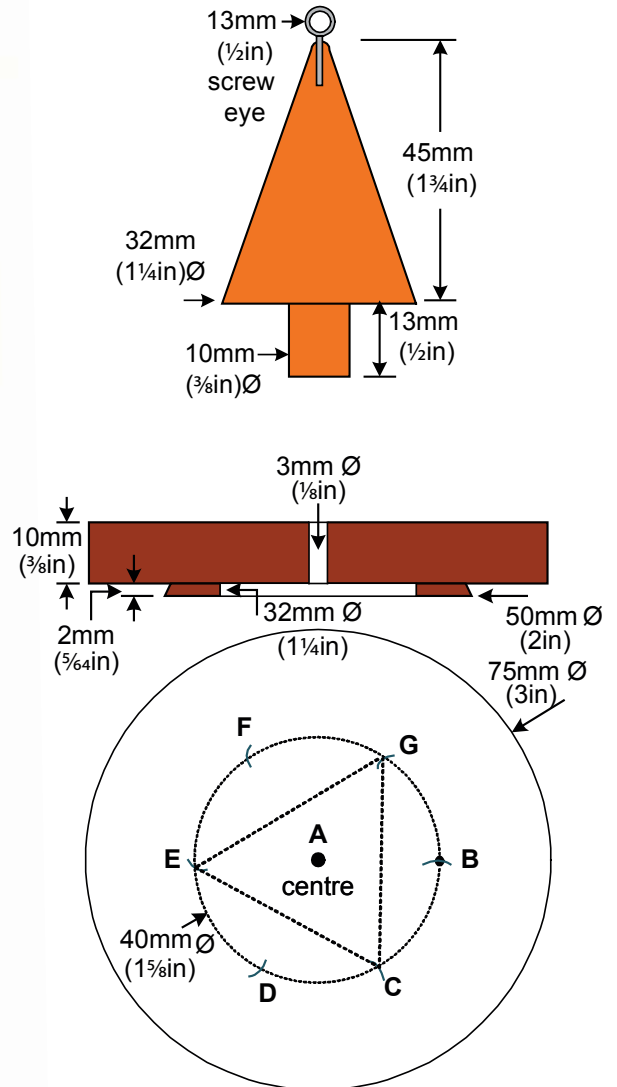
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Hanging Christmas ornament

Chris West provides a festive plan for you



TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Spindle roughing gouge
- Spindle gouge
- Parting tool
- 3mm HSS drill bit
- Three small brass cup hooks and three small brass screw eyes

TREE

Blank 38 x 38 x 100mm

Between centres, turn the outside to just over 32mm Ø. Turn a spigot or a dovetail at one end. Mount this in your chuck jaws, supporting with a live centre. Measure and mark the height, 45mm, and the trunk length, 13mm, before shaping the tree.

Form the trunk as shown. Use a small-diameter pointed tool to form a pilot hole in the top of the tree and fit its screw eye

using a couple of drops of cyanoacrylate to help. Sand, seal and apply a finish. Part off the tree.

Disc blank 76 x 76 x 15mm

Place the blank between centres. Turn the outside to 75mm Ø. Face off and turn a dovetail at what will be the top of the disc to fit your chuck jaws.

At this stage the three points for the hanging of the trees are marked. An equilateral triangle is required. Using a compass and pencil draw a 40mm Ø circle from A. Mark point B anywhere on this circle. With the compass still at the same radius, place it on B and mark round the circle the points C through G. Choose three equilateral triangle points for the trees, i.e. C, E & G. Make pilot holes for the screws.

Holding by the dovetail previously turned, form the 50mm x 2mm dovetail as shown, followed by a 32mm Ø x 2mm recess. To finish, drill a 3mm hole through the centre. Reverse, holding by the bottom dovetail, remove the dovetail on the top and face off to the width shown. Sand, seal and finish.

FINAL ASSEMBLY

Through the 3mm hole in the disc thread either a piece of wire or cord to hang the ornamental trees.

Whether you want to hang these trees from your Christmas tree or a hanging ornament stand, the choice is yours.

The three trees have been made from three different woods to add interest. However, in order to keep the disc horizontal the woods should be of similar density.



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My Wolf Cubmaster

Geoffrey Laycock takes a look at past incidents that inform present actions

In many ways it's ironic that I had a lifelong career in safety and health considering my childhood. I had a brilliant if somewhat risky one. My father was weaving manager at a Yorkshire textile mill and I spent hours there every week.

Free childcare was provided by 'overlookers and weavers' – the lovely ladies tending the looms. I learned how to 'beam' and mend warps, load shuttles, spin yarn, inspect cloth and more, all starting from when I was maybe seven years old and up to perhaps 12 or 13. Imagine that happening now. Better still, I could arc-weld before I reached my teens, I knew how to clean heat exchanger tubes in a coal-fired boiler, use a pallet truck and what a teagle opening was. Look it up. Maybe the hours I spent in noise levels of over 100dB contributed to later-life hearing loss though. And, it's possible the time I was given a hand-held mains vacuum cleaner to clean steel trusses while up a very tall step ladder gave me such respect for electricity and working at heights – I got a shock from the vac and fell off the ladder. Oh the memories. Can you believe I went on to become one of Her Majesty's Inspector of Factories? I think it was survival instinct.

Back then power tools were still rare and one very early memory was using a particular electric drill in the mill workshop. Just a couple of weeks ago that memory was brought alive at a local motorcycle show when I spotted the exact model for sale on a stand, a Wolf Cubmaster, no less. In almost perfect condition, obviously used little despite being 1958 vintage and still in its original cardboard box with original chuck key and guarantee card. I couldn't resist and, despite the extortionate price tag, I had to have it. Yes I paid £5 for it. Now I have eclectic tastes – I like very modern and high-tech or old and traditional. I have a modern variable speed lathe but also a home-built pole lathe. This drill is definitely in the second category – only 6mm chuck capacity, single speed and, for its size, heavy. I love it, just as much as my latest Festool Quadriill.

SAFETY

Last issue I wrote about electrical safety



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEOFFREY LAYCOCK

and this drill is very much in the Class 1 category with all metal casing, so I was not about to plug it in and test its integrity while holding it. So how did I tackle this? First, I carried out a full visual inspection as detailed last month. All good so far. On the casing one securing screw was a form of anti-tamper and looked untouched, so I had confidence there had been no previous internal meddling. I opened the plug and checked the connections were correct, secure and had the correct fuse. I then got my circuit tester out and checked the earth continuity between the casing and plug earth pin. I checked for any cross connection between the casing and live/neutral. I switched the drill on – still not plugged in – and checked I had continuity between live and neutral. At this point I was confident that all was well, but there was one last check available. As the switch can be latched on I did this, plugged in and applied power – with it sitting on the bench. I then tested to see if there was any detectable current between the casing and earth. It runs

beautifully and, for just £5, I have a super drill in almost new condition that I may keep fitted permanently with a drill bit for preparing blanks for faceplate fitting. And every time I pick it up I automatically remember those times with my father and his work colleagues who together helped

NOTE ON ELECTRICAL TESTING

I am not a qualified electrician but applied logic, previous training and practical experience to checking this item for safety. Know your own limitations and seek expert help if in any doubt about second-hand items obtained with absent history. Too many times to recall I have had electricians tell me they are immune to electricity, based on their experience of the number of shocks they have had with no ill effect. There is no such thing. It's all down to circumstances at the time and it certainly says something about their working practices – put the wrong circumstances together and you are dead, so please don't ever take liberties with electrical systems or equipment.

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Kit & Tools

A collection of press releases and tests showing the latest tools and products on the market

All prices are correct at time of going to press but are subject to change without notice. Products from US & overseas to UK are subject to shipping & taxes

Christmas ornament kits

Stuart Thomas tries some Christmas ornament kits from Craft Supplies USA

Craft Supplies USA offers eight ornament kits under the Artisan label: spiral, droplet, icicle, star, Christmas tree, top hat, light bulb and retro classic. Each is supplied with full instructions. All the kits except the light bulb ornament comprise a single tube, 7mm diameter, design and feature press in components. The tube design kits allow the chosen blank to be drilled to suit the tube and then fitted on to a pen mandrel ready to be turned. Suitable metal bushings are available as extras if you do not already have them, for each project kit. These help get all of the sizes right when turning ready for final assembly.

IN USE

I was sent five packs of the ornament kits. Although the kits I was sent were chrome, depending on the kit selected they are also available in antique brass, antique silver and 10K & 24K gold plating.

I must admit here that I am not into pen turning very much these days although I have made plenty in the past. However, I have a pen mandrel and, as Mark provided the bushings, I set about turning all five bodies, four of which required using a 7mm drill bit to bore a central hole to accept the inner brass tube as you would use for turning pens. The biggest decision I and other users of the kits have to make is to choose the body material, whether that be wood or an alternative, and also decide if colour or other decoration will be added.

I made simple main bodies and decided to add colour to some pieces, which enabled me to create a unique set of Christmas tree ornaments which are quite different from shop-bought ones. I have to say that I really enjoyed making these



Turning a snowman



Some of the kits ready for working on

ornaments. When it came to assembling everything together the components fitted easily with no fuss.

CONCLUSION

The kits are well made, well priced, and the instructions were easy to follow. The kits were simple to use, they didn't require a lot of timber or other equipment and when made up they looked



The Artisan droplet and spiral kits

attractive. I found them to be very nice indeed and a lot of fun to use to make personalised Christmas ornaments.

Prices: from \$3.55-\$6.95 for the kits
Bushings are priced at \$2.95-\$3.95
Contact: Craft Supplies USA
Web: www.woodturnerscatalog.com

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STUART THOMAS UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY BAILEY/GMC PUBLICATIONS

Focus on: Small and mid-sized hollowing tools

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK BAKER



CROWN MINI REVOLUTION

The Mini Revolution is designed for working on smaller end-grain forms, boxes, open vessels and hollow forms. It has a 12mm diameter x 175mm length shaft, including cutter. Total length with handle is 430mm and it is suited to hollowing to a depth of 100-125mm. It comes supplied with a shielded ring-type cutter and a bullet-shaped scraper tip.

It has an articulated link on the end of the main shaft which can be offset from the line of the main shaft, and the cutters/tips attached to the link can also be offset from the main shaft to reach into undercut shoulders of vessels.

Price: £61

Contact: Crown Hand Tools

Web: www.crownhandtools.ltd.uk



MATE#2 UNDERCUTTER TOOL

The Jimmy Clewes Mate#2 Undercutter is created from a 16mm wide x 10mm deep rectangular bar. The tool is 220mm long, which includes a 50mm long, 13mm diameter tang to fit in a handle of your choice. Jimmy recommends that the handle be at least 460mm long. The front end has a scallop-like cut-out, to reach under the rims of vessels, on the end of which is fitted a 6mm cup/contour-ground microcrystalline carbide cutter.

The cutter is set in a machined pocket at about 32°, a shear cut angle which allows for a non-aggressive, user-friendly cut when turning.

Price: about \$145

For stockist details contact: Jimmy Clewes

Web: www.jimmyclewes.com



EASY HOLLOWERS

The mid-size Easy Hollowers come in three styles. Each has a 355mm maple handle, a 6mm diameter round cutter and stainless steel tool shafts.

The No.1 is a straight tool, 573mm long overall with a 13mm square shaft which tapers towards the tip end. The No.2 and No.3 are 548mm in length. The No.2 has a shallow curve at the end and the No.3 has a tighter radius one, so you select which is right for the vessel being worked on. The shafts of these tools are made from 20mm wide x 10mm thick rectangular section for maximum stability.

Price: \$129.99 – \$139.99

For stockist details contact: Easy Wood Tools

Web: www.easywoodtools.com



MARK ST LEGER BOX HOLLOWERS

These tools from Hunter Tools Systems are designed for working the inside of boxes and hollow forms. They feature a 10mm diameter tapered shaft and are furnished with 6mm diameter diamond-finished contour-ground carbide tips. The straight tool is designed to do the main bulk of the hollowing, while the C-hooked tool will clean up the sides of the box. Finally, the back cut tool has the tip oriented towards the user to present the cutting in a negative-rake shear-cut mode to cut and refine under the top shoulder of undercut boxes or hollow forms.

Price: from \$90 each
For stockist details contact:
Hunter Tool Systems
Web: www.huntertoolsystems.com



ROBERT SORBY HOLLOWING TOOLS

The Robert Sorby Probe comprises a 10mm diameter straight shaft on to which is fitted a bullet-shaped shaped HSS cutter that swivels and can be locked in a suitable cutting position for working in restricted-opening vessels. It is 510mm overall length.

The swan-necked tool is designed for working on the undercut shoulders of hollow forms. This tool has a 10mm diameter shaft on to which is fitted a bullet-shaped HSS swivel tip cutter. This tool is 355mm overall length.

Both tool tips can easily be sharpened using a diamond stone.

Price: £38.36 & £40.07
Contact: Robert Sorby
Web: www.robert-sorby.co.uk



PROBE AND OFFSET PROBE

Axminster Evolution Series Probe and Offset Probe are suitable for hollowing boxes, small hollow forms and goblets. Each features a 12.7mm diameter shank and is 300mm in overall length, the last 75mm tapering to the cutting tip. Each tool is fitted with a round, 8mm diameter contour-ground tungsten-carbide cutter. The tungsten carbide cutter is sharp and ready to use, and replacements are readily available. The cutters can take a clean shaving and leave a very smooth surface straight from the edge.

Each probe includes a Torx wrench for the fixing screw.

Price: £36.80 & £41.00
Contact: Axminster Tools & Machinery
Web: www.axminster.co.uk



BCT SUPERCUT 2

The BCT Supercut 2, available with a 10mm or 13mm cutter, includes a stabilising arm which counteracts the rotational forces when undercutting and sidewall hollowing. With a referenced, interchangeable head, the HSS cutter is always at the correct angle.

The Supercut 2 has an overall length of 590mm. The main tool shaft is 13mm square section steel. The articulated head length is 50mm and the cutter head rotates through 180°, 90° left and 90° right from central.

The BCT Supercut2 can be supplied with or without handle.

Price: from £66 to £87
Contact: The Toolpost
Web: <http://www.toolpost.co.uk>



HOPE 6MM MINI CARBIDE BOX SET

This set from Simon Hope for boxes and small hollow forms comprises two carbide tools. One is straight and 230mm long overall, and one has a hook-type offset at the end for reaching under the rims of vessels. This tool is 215mm long. At the end of each tool there is a small tapered section on which is a 6mm contour-ground carbide cutter. The tool shafts are made from 10mm diameter stainless steel for strength. The deluxe handle is 270mm long and features an integrated pull-out end section that incorporates a grub screw to secure the tools in the tool handle.

Price: £99
Contact: Hope Woodturning
Web: www.hopewoodturning.co.uk



KELTON HOLLOWERS

These simple and effective tools allow both rapid wood removal and fine finishing cuts. The special alloy on the cutting tip creates an effective and long-lasting burr. Kelton hollowers come unhandled and are available in shaft diameters of 8, 10, 13, 16 and 19mm. The shaft length varies according to the shaft diameter – the 8mm shaft hollowers are 216mm long and the 19mm shaft hollowers are 495mm. There are three tools of different shaft profiles: straight, medium curve and tight curve.

Price from: £58.73 for set of three blades
For stockist details contact:
Kelton industries
Web: www.kelton.co.nz

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To commemorate this, we received through the Worshipful Company of Turners of London a commission from St Paul's Cathedral for a limited edition of 25 numbered bells to be sold in their shop.

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