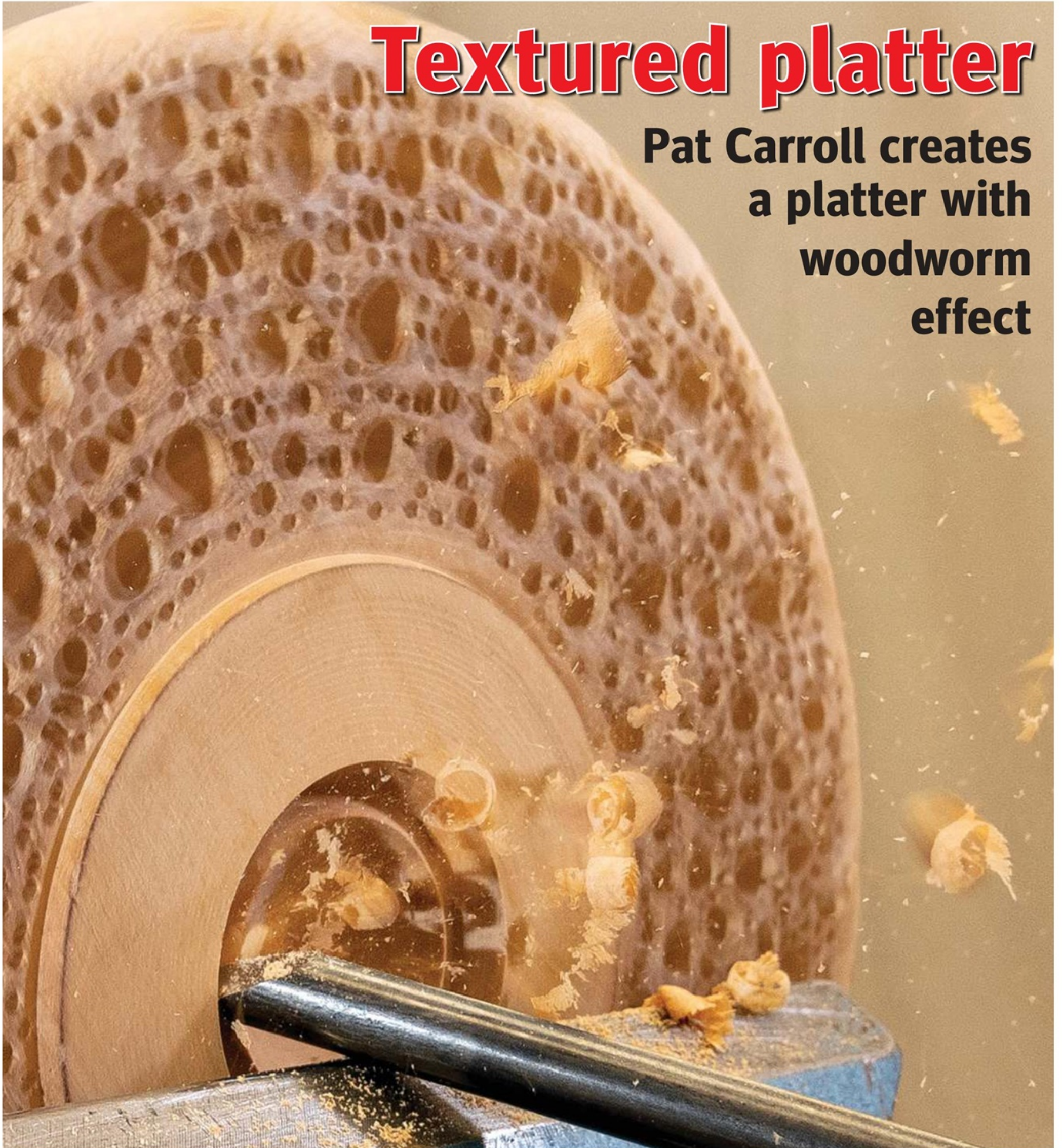


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Textured platter

Pat Carroll creates
a platter with
woodworm
effect



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Happy New Year



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK BAKER

Let me start by wishing you a happy New Year. It is that time of year when we start afresh, or rather make plans to do and change things and hope that we can bring them about. One of the projects I'm planning on – at the time of writing it is early November, so I am not sure of all the plans I will make – is to finish off all my rough and partially worked stock. I am sure I am not alone in having part-worked items that I've started and plan to get around to finishing off eventually – we probably all have items that we started ages ago and have never got around to finishing.

The kicker is that some of the part-worked older stock are shapes I no longer want, so have to hope that there is enough material for me to alter them. It is interesting that our tastes of shape change over time. It is a normal thing to happen. We start off learning how to make something – in fact, many things – and as we progress we start having a preference for some things over others and develop and refine them over time. Have a look at the work of any

professional, from their earliest to their latest and you will see the changes.

With any craft or hobby, everyone is on a journey of learning and refinement. We may walk a similar path, especially with the learning curve of how to use equipment and tools, but what we choose to do with that knowledge is up to us. We belong to a rich, diverse, wonderful sharing community of people who are willing to help and encourage and assist people to evolve their work in whichever ways they may choose.

It is true that there are no new shapes under the sun, except computer-generated fractals and such like, but it is what we do with those shapes and how we adapt them, integrate other aspects and so on that make them yours and yours alone. You may well like to create footed vessels, basket weave effects, use colour, but you have the chance to put your individual ideas to what you create and make something different.

I love shapes and spend hours poring over museum exhibits and looking at different cultures. It is interesting to

see a shape of something that comes from Africa, Asia or elsewhere and how, as these items are sold along the trade routes, those original items are adapted and altered to suit a different culture's likes. The changes may be subtle, but they are there and time and tastes also affect what shapes and decorative aspects are in vogue. It is no different when we create things. We are, whether we realise it or not, influenced by the past, but we adapt, modify and integrate new elements as we choose to create things we like. It really is a fascinating, frustrating and ultimately enjoyable thing we have undertaken to learn.

The new year is a time of change and hope and I do wish you all the very best and look forward to seeing the new things you make and changes you make to your work.

Have fun, Mark

markb@thegmcgroup.com



COVER IMAGE: Pat Carroll (see page 45)



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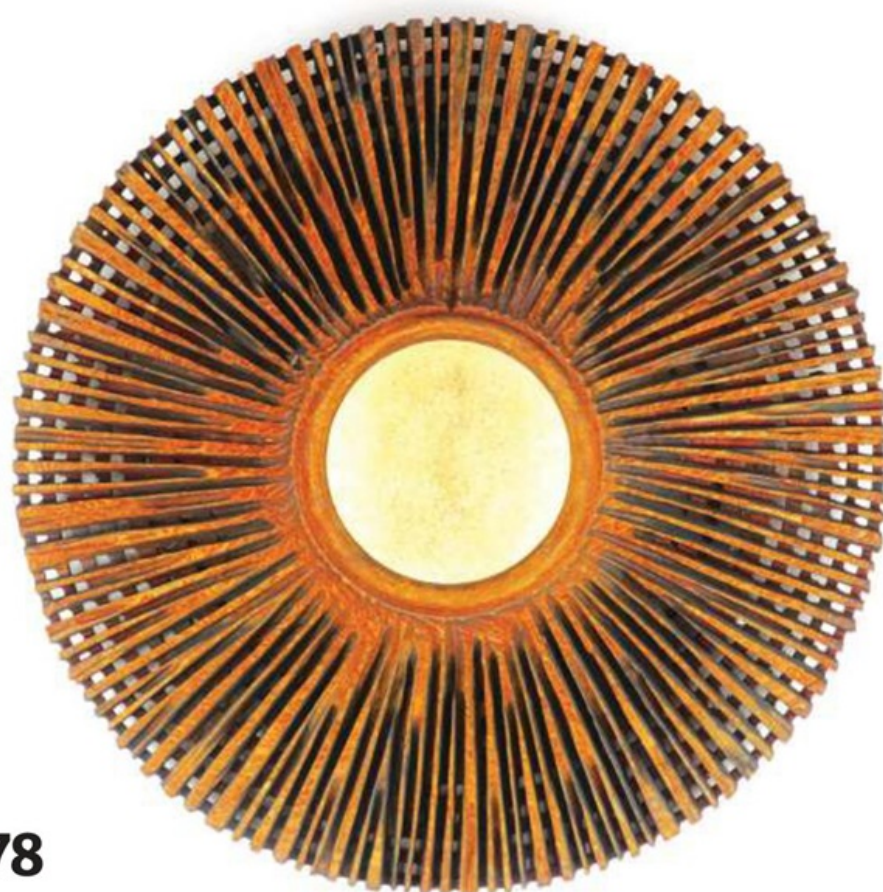


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HEALTH AND SAFETY

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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sharing expertise

Thread-chased bowl

Richard Findley takes on the Editor's challenge of hand-chasing threads in cross-grain faceplate work



This month I received a call from the Editor: 'You've done thread chasing before, haven't you?' 'Yes, but not for a long time' was my reply. 'Well, we've got some thread chasing coming from another author but it'll be for boxes. Do you think you could do it on a bowl blank rather than the usual spindle-type blank?' 'Errr....' Before I could formulate a reasonable

excuse for not doing this, he said: 'Great, that can be your challenge this month then.'

Like most people, I had various phases in my early turning, while trying to find 'my thing' (you'll note that as a professional 'jobbing' turner, I still don't have 'a thing', which keeps things wide ranging and interesting for me). My box-making phase

soon advanced into thread chasing, partly because John Berkeley was a member at our turning club. John was known for his threaded puzzles and was a friend of Bill Jones, whose work I have always admired. Over the years I've had occasion to use the skill for some restoration purposes, but otherwise my chasers largely hang on my tool wall collecting dust.

Planning

As soon as the phone call ends I switch to planning mode. A faceplate project with screw threads immediately says to me: lidded bowl. I've never been that keen on lidded bowls if I'm honest. I rarely see a design that really works for me so I need to find something that will work, but this is the least of my problems, the main one being that I really don't think threads will cut on a faceplate blank. From my experience, threads only work on very dense woods, boxwood being a favourite, but looking for boxwood in sizes large enough for a lidded bowl is a little like looking for hen's teeth. While threads can be cut on other, less dense woods, it becomes hard work and they will often crumble because of the grain structure, giving them no strength or longevity. On a cross-grain bowl, where there is a repeat of side and end grain and there are always those two coarse patches either side of the end grain, I am struggling to imagine that a thread would hold. The only way I can see it might work is by using a much coarser thread than is usually used for box making.

As it is, I do happen to have a pair of chasers of 8tpi, along with my standard set of Crown chasers at 18tpi. I bought these years ago from a company called Tracy Tools which specialises in engineering tools and stocks a large range of tpi sizes. My old lathe had 1in x 8tpi spindle nose and I liked the idea of making my own fittings



Thread chasing tools

for it. In reality, however, a chuck is so versatile at holding things I never actually used them for that purpose – in fact, I had to fit them with handles especially for this article.

Practise

My first job is to have a practise and see if I can remember how to do it. I mount a piece of boxwood in the chuck and have a go with my 18tpi set. I remember John Berkeley saying that the finer teeth are easier to use. I start with the outside tool, which I always used to find easier to use. After a couple of attempts I find the rhythm and soon have fine shavings coming from the tool. I

hollow out the centre of the blank and try the inside chaser with the armrest tool. Once again, after a couple of failed starts I manage to find the rhythm and make a clean thread. I part off the hollowed section, size the remaining piece of boxwood and cut another outside thread to match. Cutting threads is one thing, making a matching set is a whole other problem. After a few

attempts and much adjustment, I manage to make the two fit together. A promising start.

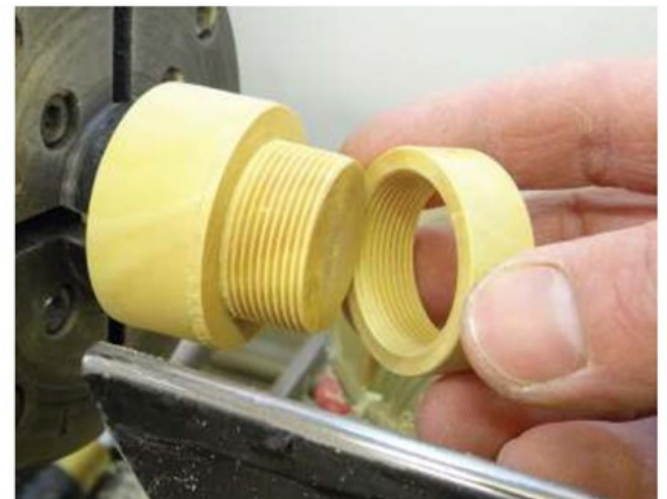
I then switch to the 8tpi set and have a try. These are far more difficult to get a start to the thread, but once they pick up the thread, they cut almost as easily as the finer set. Oddly, I find the inside thread a little easier than the outside with the 8tpi, I'm not sure why, but again I manage a thread.



Chasing the inside thread



Chasing the outside thread



The matching threads



8tpi practice on boxwood

Technique

The actual technique for thread chasing is easier to show than to explain, but I'll have a go. If you can get hold of copies of Bill Jones' *Notes from the Turning Shop* and John Berkeley's *All Screwed Up*, they're worth a read and explain the techniques involved. The main thing to understand is that the chasers have the thread ground into them, so once the first cut is made, they pull themselves across the surface of the wood. Unlike most turning tools where the turner has to move and manipulate the tool, you have to resist this urge with thread chasers and let the chaser do the work and only

really apply some pressure into the wood. The resulting motion is kind of circular, as the tool engages in the thread and is pulled to the left, you then withdraw the tool, move it back to the right-hand end and repeat. All of this is done at slow speed – I use the lowest on my Wadkin at 220rpm.

CHASERS

Chasers are scraping tools, so can be a little harsh, but as long as they are presented pointing downward slightly and are kept sharp, which is done by simply touching the top edge on the grinder, they cut well. The addition of a little paste wax to the area being chased can also help the tool run smoothly across the surface.

Using the male/outside chaser first as it's usually the easiest to get to grips with, cut a tenon and add a chamfer to the leading edge. Using the teeth in the centre

of the chaser presented to the chamfer, move the tool in the circular motion I described above. Often the first couple of attempts will just scratch at the wood, but persevere and after a couple of passes the beginnings of a thread will start. As soon as the tool pulls itself through the wood continue to repeat the circular motion but without forcing that sideways movement, and gradually bring the handle round so that is square to the wood and the thread is cutting along the tenon you have cut.

The female/inside chaser works in the same way but there are two ways of using it. I have always used an armrest tool by Crown, which sits on the toolrest and supports the chaser. This is the way Bill Jones used to do it, and when looking at how things should be done, I will always look at the methods the best people use – there aren't many better than Bill. Alternatively you can bring the toolrest

across the work and rest the chaser directly on it. This feels more conventional to the modern turner but I find it a little restrictive as I'm now used to the armrest tool. The armrest tool is nothing more than a long handle with a steel shaft with a little L-shaped up stand on the end. The handle tucks under the left arm, the metal shaft sits on the toolrest and the fingers of the left hand pinch the chaser to the armrest tool. Cutting the thread is much the same as for the outside.

A chamfer needs cutting and the centre of the teeth is used to begin the thread on that chamfer. Once the tool is pulling itself across the wood, the handle of the chaser can be brought round to parallel with the thread and it can be fully cut. As with the outside, the only real pressure is applied by pulling the armrest and chaser toward the thread as that circular motion is repeated.

Tests on cross grain

My expectation is that, mostly, threads cut into cross-grain wood will be acceptable on the side grain and crumbly at best on the end grain. It wouldn't surprise me if I have to support the fibres of the wood with sanding sealer or, more likely, thin CA glue to even get close to an acceptable thread, even on a close-grained timber. In short, I am not hopeful of a positive outcome for this experiment.

I select four pieces of wood from species I have around the workshop in sizes suitable for this kind of project. I have American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), sapele (*Entandrophragma cylindricum*) and European oak (*Quercus robur*). Walnut and sycamore have the finest grain and possibly stand the best chance of any sort of success. I feel oak is far too coarse and I expect the worst results here, but I want to prove this to myself so include it in the test. Sapele is a reasonably close-grained wood but the grain does interlock somewhat, which could lead to problems. I cut a 100mm disc of each and mount them on a screw chuck, one by one, to see what happens. On each I cut the outside thread first, followed by an inside thread. The results couldn't have surprised me more.



The blanks cut for my tests

SYCAMORE

I begin with sycamore, which I feel stands the most chance of success. I cut the thread all the way across the 40mm thickness of the blank and stop the lathe. The side grain is crisp and sharp and as I rotate the lathe to search for the crumbled end grain I am gobsmacked to find that, although it is a little more coarse than the side grain, the end grain is still almost as crisp as the side. Excited by this discovery I hollow the inside around 25mm deep and strike a thread on the inside. Just as on the outside, while the end-grain areas are a little coarser than the sides, they are remarkably clean and far, far better than I ever expected they could be.



Chasing the outside thread on the sycamore blank



The results were good on side grain



Crisp, even on end grain



Chasing the inside thread in sycamore



The result of the inside thread

WALNUT

I repeat the test on the walnut with similar results. If anything I found it cut a little easier than the sycamore, although this could have been down to practise and having 'the knack' by now.



Walnut outside



Walnut inside

OAK

Next I try the oak. A little more hopeful than I had been, I still expect a pretty crumbly thread but to my amazement, even on this piece of oak, the threads are clean. If I can cut threads on an actual project this cleanly I will be more than happy.



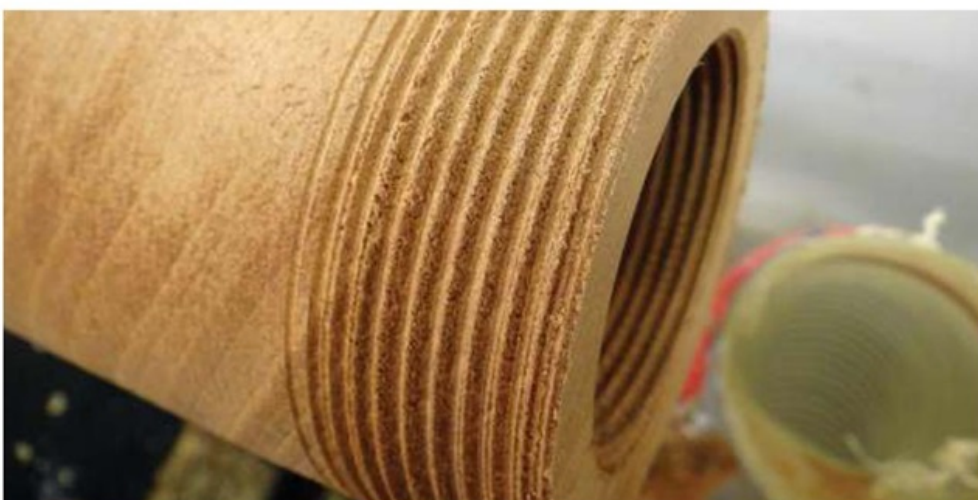
Oak outside



Oak inside

SAPELE

Lastly I try the sapele. This is the most difficult of the four to cut. The chaser just doesn't want to slide along it like it had the others and, even with it freshly sharpened and a little wax added, it is more of a battle to achieve a thread. That said, I do manage to cut a thread, but this is the least crisp of them all.



Sapele outside



Sapele inside

Project

I had fully expected this to be the end of it. I can't cut a thread in cross grain but I tried. End of article. But it seems I can cut a thread on a cross-grain blank and suddenly a whole world of possibilities has opened up. One of the things that had put me off thread chasing all those years ago had been the very few woods that would easily accept a thread, but if I can cut a cross-grain thread on almost any wood, that is very exciting indeed.

This does, of course, mean that I now need to put this into a project. I need to find a lidded bowl design that I can work with. As you might know, I am a keen user of Instagram and whenever

I see something I particularly like I will save it for later reference, which is a very useful tool on the app. I checked my saved pictures and found one of a lidded bowl by Iranian turner Azadeh Masoomi (@azadeh_msm on Instagram). Azadeh kindly agreed to me replicating the design for the article. Her original has a simple lift-off lid, but I think it will work well with a screw lid.

I check my timber stocks and select a piece of 75mm walnut and cut a 150mm disc for the bowl. I decide a contrasting sycamore lid will work well, so cut a similar disc from some 40mm stock. I will then tie it all together with a walnut finial.

Walnut bowl

The walnut turns beautifully and is one of my favourite woods. A light shearing cut produces lovely, fine, chocolate shavings and, after sanding to 400 grit, the wood glows even before an oil is applied. This shape is new for me, but is relatively simple, on the outside at least, and a joy to turn.

With the outside done, I flip the bowl over and hold it on the chucking tenon to hollow it. I run the options through my mind before fully committing, but decide the best course of action will be to turn the bowl fully and sand it, leaving an area slightly thick in which to cut the thread. I could cut the thread quite early on in the hollowing phase, but as with any work like this, it would be too easy to damage the thread, either with a misplaced tool, careless sanding or, worse, a catch.

I cut a curve into the rim of the bowl and a small ledge for the lid to sit on, leaving an area below this for the thread. I then move on and hollow the bowl. This is slightly tricky with the bulbous shape but by monitoring the wall thickness with callipers and using my steep angled bottoming gouge I am able to create a smooth flowing curve from beneath the thread to the bottom. I then sand through to 400 grit as I had the outside.

CHASING THE THREAD

Now for the moment of truth: can I cut a thread when it actually matters? As is often the case, the additional pressure we put on ourselves as turners when working on an important project can be the biggest barrier to success, so after a couple of rough starts I manage to relax and cut a good thread. I find adding a little paste wax very helpful here. I experience a little vibration in the wood which I hadn't expected, although it shouldn't have been a surprise considering I'm working near the rim of a hollowed bowl. Being critical (as I always am with my own work) it isn't the best thread I have cut today, but I believe it will be crisp enough to work.

Satisfied with the bowl, I mount the piece of sycamore on a short screw chuck and cut a chucking tenon on the top, flipping it over into the chuck to cut the thread. I measure the lid tenon, which



Working the outside of the bowl



Turning the inside of the bowl



Waxing the thread to smooth the cut



Chasing the thread



The finished thread



Cutting the thread on the lid



Testing the fit of the threads

will take the thread, against the thread in the bowl and cut it slightly over size, both in length and diameter, and make a start on the thread. This one goes much more smoothly and once the thread is cut I try the bowl against it. The thread begins the grip and then quickly tightens. On closer inspection I realise the tenon isn't completely straight, so I adjust it and re-cut the thread. I bring up the bowl and adjust

the fit and the diameter of the lid to perfect the fit a few more times before it is just right.

I shorten the threads on the lid a little as no one wants to spend too long unscrewing a lid, no matter how well the threads have been cut. By pure luck, the grain of the lid and bowl line up perfectly, although this is relatively easy to adjust by cutting the shoulder above the thread on the lid.

TURNING THE LID

Happy with the threads, I hollow the underside of the lid to reduce the weight a little and to maximise the storage space inside the bowl, although I don't go too far as I'm aware the finial will need to fit into the lid and it needs a good fixing as it will be used to unscrew the lid.

I turn the lid over and mount it as I always do to remove a tenon from the underside

of a bowl, bringing the tailstock up and sandwiching it between the centre and a disc of MDF on a faceplate. I am able to turn a smooth dome into the lid and remove the tenon, sanding it to the same 400 grit as the rest of the bowl. I take the lid to the drill press and drill a 8mm diameter hole into the mark left

The finial is a simple bit of spindle turning, taking care to cut a tight-fitting tenon where

it joins to the lid. I cut an angle on to the end of the finial carefully on the bandsaw and sand it smooth to 400 grit. I add some glue into the hole and fit the finial, which is slightly chunkier than Azadeh's as it will be used to unscrew the lid.

I apply three coats of Treatex hardwax oil to it, using a brush to ensure the threads are well oiled, followed by a light buff on my dome brush and it is finished.



Turning the top of the lid



Turning the finial



Fitting the finial



Oiling the bowl, brushing into the threads



The threads finished with oil

Conclusion

I can't express my surprise enough over how well the threads cut into the cross-grain blanks. In my mind there was no way this would work but I am really pleased with how this has turned out. The shape of the bowl is very pleasing and the contrast between the walnut and sycamore is lovely. I will be interested to see how this ages and if it moves, as this is always a potential issue with threaded work. For the same reason I don't think I'd like to go too big with a threaded project. In an ideal world I suppose this would be rough turned and left for a few weeks to truly settle, but this isn't always viable.

I think I need to experiment with thread chasing on this type of work more and I might yet find 'my thing'. ●

The finished lidded bowl



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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.

2020 SHOWS AND EVENTS

Tennessee Association of Woodturning Symposium

When: 24-25 January 2020
Where: Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, Franklin, TN, US
Web: www.tnwoodturners.org

Florida Woodturning Symposium

When: 7-9 February 2020
Where: Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center, 39034 Country Road 452 Leesburgh, FL 34788, US
Web: www.floridawoodturningsymposium.com

Turnfest

When: 27-29 March 2020
Where: Seaworld Resort & Water Park, Main Beach, Queensland, Australia
Web: www.turnfest.com.au



The Midlands Woodworking Show

When: 27-28 March 2020
Where: Newark Showground, Lincoln Rd, Winthorpe, Newark, NG24 2NY
Web: www.nelton.co.uk

Totally Turning

When: 28-29 March 2020
Where: Saratoga Springs City Centre, 522 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866, US
Web: woodworker.org/about-totally-turning

Les Forgaxes Woodworking Festival

When: 24-26 April 2020
Where: Pravia, Asturias, Spain
Web: www.forgaxes.com & www.tornyfusta.com

Woodworks@Daventry

When: 15-16 May 2020
Where: Daventry Leisure Centre, Lodge Road, Daventry, NN11 4FP
Web: www.tudor-rose-turners.co.uk

AAW Symposium 2020

When: 4-7 June 2020
Where: Kentucky Exposition Center 937 Phillips Lane, Louisville, KY 40209, US
Web: www.woodturner.org

Saskatchewan Woodturners Symposium 2020

When: 17-19 July 2020
Where: Regina Trades & Skills Centre 1275 Albert St, Regina, SK, S4R 2R4, Canada
Contact: James (Bryan) Milne
Email: jbmilne@accesscomm.ca

Turn-On! Chicago 2020

When: 24-26 July 2020
Where: Pheasant Run Resort, 4051 East Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174, US
Web: www.chicagowoodturners.com

Woodturning Weekender 2020

When: 1-2 August 2020
Where: Orchards Event Venue, New Road, East Malling, Kent, ME19 6BJ
Web: www.chestnutproducts.co.uk

SWAT 2020

When: 28-30 August 2020
Where: Waco Convention Centre, 100 Washington Ave, Waco, Texas, US
Web: www.swaturners.org

Yandles Woodworking Show

When: 11-12 September 2020
Where: Hurst, Martock TA12 6JU
Web: www.yandles.co.uk

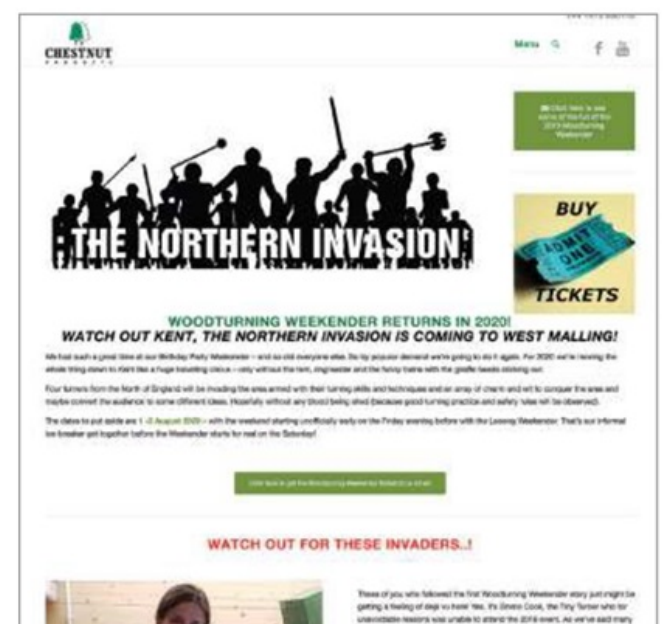


AWGB Seminar

When: 9-11 October 2020
Where: Yarnfield Training & Conference Centre, Yarnfield, Stone, ST15 0NL
Web: www.awgb.co.uk

Virginia Woodturning Symposium

When: 7-8 November 2020
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Saving wood from a bowl blank

In part one of a two-part series, Andy Coates looks at reclaiming wood that would ordinarily be turned to shavings



It probably has not escaped your attention that wood prices have risen, and continue to rise. If your wood-buying habits are restricted to one or two blanks every now and again this may not be an issue for you, but if you are a heavy user then the increases are probably having an impact on the quantity that you buy, so it makes sense to use what you do buy to its best advantage.

Aside from this financial imperative we should, as responsible woodturners/woodworkers, be making the most of this resource for environmental reasons. Wood, as we know, is a sustainable resource, but only to an extent. Every year there are further additions to the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) list, and every year there are species that become unavailable, or unaffordable, so it is incumbent upon us to use this resource wisely.

My own thrifty wood-using habits began even before I took up woodturning. I once built an entire kitchen from discarded wood sourced from skips around north London, and I have never lost the sense of deep satisfaction this gave me. I still look out for waste wood in skips and

will always stop to retrieve something that may come in handy at some point. A woodturning friend, sadly no longer with us, once retrieved a super-sized packing pallet from the docks because he had spotted something interesting about it. In the light of the goods shed he discovered that it was largely made from ebony.

TYPICAL TIMBER STOCK

This level of wood reclamation is not going to be something we can all aspire to, or achieve, but we can 'save' wood in the ordinary course of events. Pre-cut wood blanks are convenient and relatively affordable, and for one-off pieces the cost may be of little concern. For others it may be more cost effective to buy wood in board form and cut the blanks ourselves, but this can result in a considerable amount of money sitting on shelves and in racks. The advantage of board stock over pre-cut blanks is obvious – lower cost per blank – but it is far from being universally appropriate for the smaller user without the required machinery to process large boards. Which brings us back to pre-cut blanks.

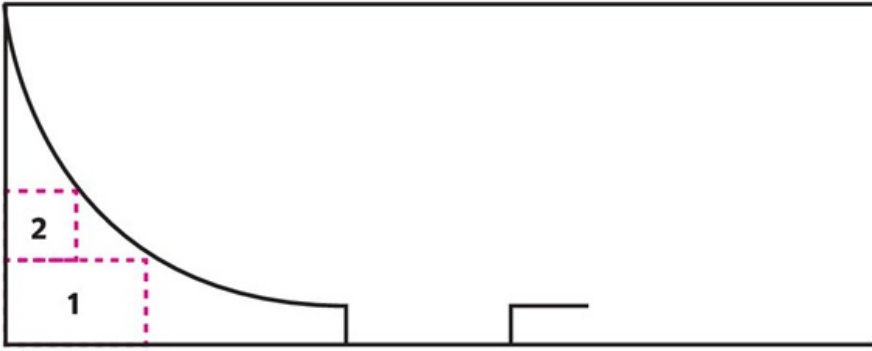
Pre-cut blanks already carry a premium cost; the boards have to be dried by kiln or air, marked up and disced off, sealed,

stored, and marketed, and these costs are transferred to the end user – you. So, if possible, we ought to maximise the potential of the blank. However, if we do this it should not be to the detriment of whatever it is we make from the blank – turning an ugly-shaped bowl because it uses more of the wood is not the answer. What we should be aiming for is recovering some of the material that would otherwise end up as shavings to be swept up and disposed of. Any decent jobbing bowl turner will already have this process down pat, having long-since realised the absurdity of creating huge volumes of shavings that are effectively money to be tossed away or burnt. So what can we achieve on a smaller, more manageable scale?

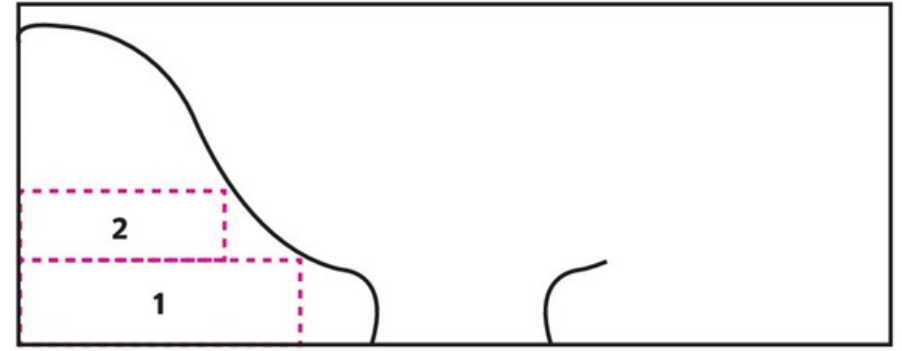
TIMBER OPTIMISATION

Most of the wood in a bowl blank is effectively wasted as we turn it away to produce the bowl. But this need not be the case as there are, depending on the design of the bowl being worked on, options to take a ring, or rings, from sections of waste on the external lower or upper areas of a bowl and also one or more cores from the inside of bowls.

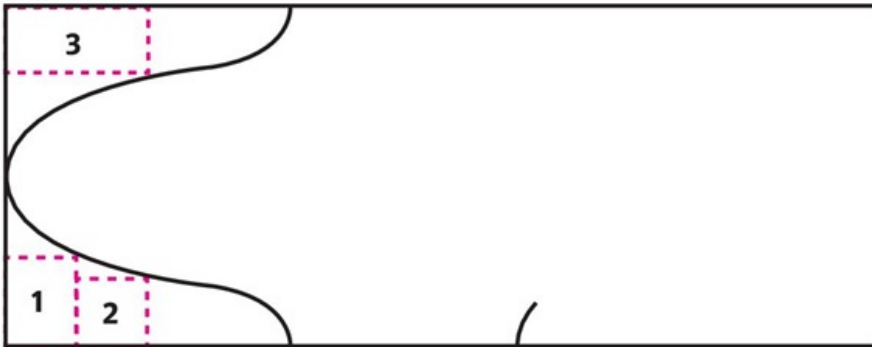
◀ Saving rings



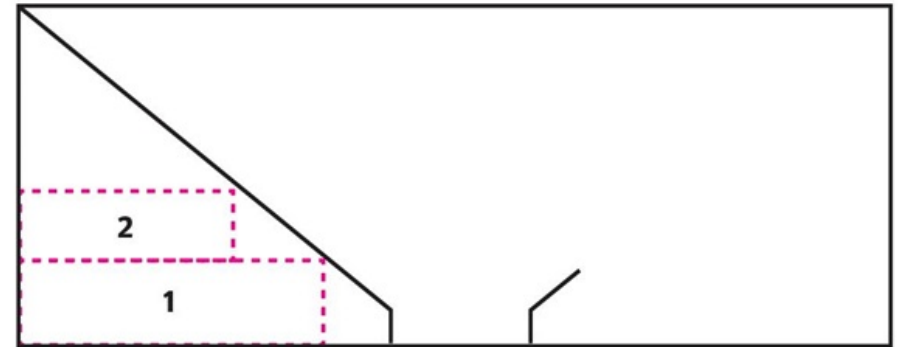
Salad bowl shape



Ogee bowl shape



Open form shape



Conical bowl shape



Some heavy-duty parting tools suitable for cutting rings



Kel McNaughton small straight coring blade. This is also the blade we will use for coring out later

TAKING A RING

NB: For photographic clarity I pre-prepped the blank by cutting tenons on both faces. Ordinarily I would do this with the blank mounted between centres and only cut a tenon on the tailstock side.

The size of ring you take depends on the shape of the bowl you intend to make, and each bowl and ring save will be different, and requires some prior idea of the ultimate shape to be turned. This comes with practice, but the diagram will give you a starting point. Essentially you are aiming to remove the stock that would be shavings as rings. I do this as a matter of course, so give no thought to the dimensions and simply take the largest possible, often multiples, and put them to one side until they 'come in handy'. The only thing I do is to ensure that the inner and back cuts are perpendicular. You can, of course, plan ahead as I have had to do for the purposes of this article.

Start the process by truing up the blank if it is irregular. You only need to do this



Truing the blank

for the area where the ring is to be cut from, so true the outer edge and face. Decide on the depth of your cut/width of the ring and mark this with tape on the coring tool. Lathe speed should be slower than for ordinary turning. Make the cut on the centreline and pivot the tool into the cut, allowing the cutter to work without forcing the cut. Once at depth

move around to the face of the blank and mark the depth on the face. Make the face cut on the outside of the mark. You will hear a tone change as you get close to parting the ring. You can slow the lathe at this point and cut until the ring detaches. Ensure that you cut the inner face and either of the faces perpendicular. This aids the eventual re-use process.



Cut depth marked on coring tool



Making the back cut



Making the face cut

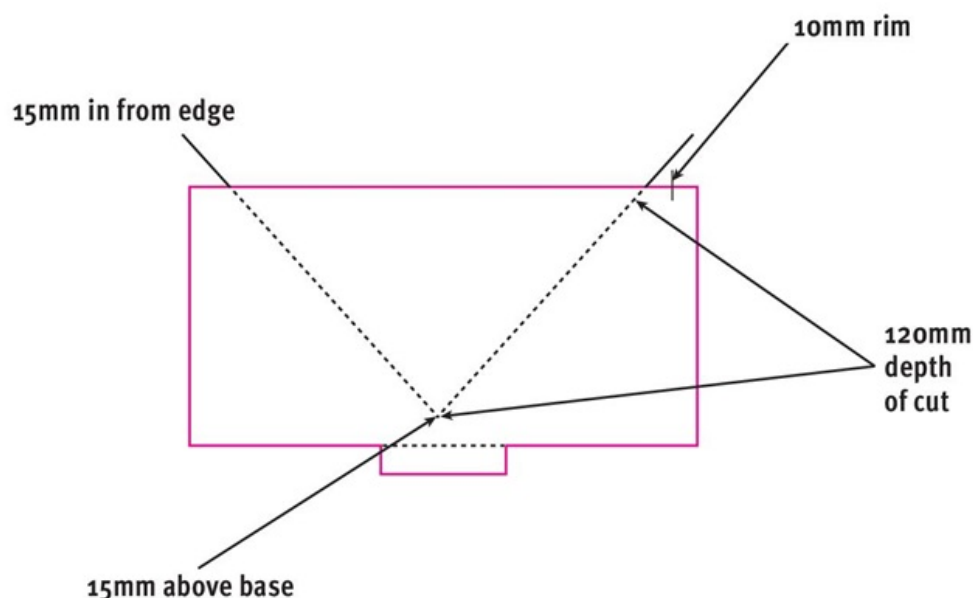


The parted ring

Taking a core

Most jobbing bowl turners will core out the inside of bowls as a matter of course, some even having a lucrative secondary market selling the cores off as part-worked bowls for the end-user to complete. This is usually only feasible because they are producing large salad bowls, which lend themselves to being cored, on large powerful lathes, and the coring process speeds up the overall production rate, so producing a saleable core adds more profit to the job. They are usually equipped with a dedicated curved-blade coring system, which makes the task relatively quick, easy, and stress free.

You can buy yourself such a complete coring system, but what if the not inconsiderable outlay is out of the question? Well, providing you are not working on anything larger than 250mm



200 x 100mm blank

wide by 100mm deep blanks there is another, cheaper, method.

It is not as effective as a dedicated curved coring system, doesn't have the depth capabilities or the flexibility to create curved core outs, and there is less wood recovered, but it will still effectively pay for itself very quickly: a straight coring bar from the Kel McNaughton coring system.

The Kel McNaughton coring system is different to the pivot-point systems in as much as the tools are held in a tool handle and used through a captivating gate. For the purpose of this article, the micro and small straight Kel McNaughton coring blades, which are ideal for blanks in the range 100-250mm diameter, will be used freehand, without the gate system, just like a parting tool, but the straight coring blade must be secured into an interchangeable metal handle of some length to provide adequate control and counter leverage. Wooden handles do not hold the blade securely enough for the purposes dealt with in the two articles in this series.

CONVENTIONAL PARTING TOOLS

It should be noted that conventional parting tools are not generally suitable for the internal coring process. What must be considered is the strength of the tool; the McNaughton coring tool is made from high tensile steel to resist shock and torsional pressure, while standard HSS tools are not designed to counter these.

Full machined-bar heavy-duty parting tools might be suitable for work for small internal cores using up to a 90mm-deep coring cut providing a long metal interchangeable handle is fitted to a suitable heavy-duty parting tool, but for absolute safety I would recommend a dedicated straight coring tool.

CUTTING SEQUENCE

The blank I used to illustrate the process was 200mm by 100mm and of sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). The blank was dry but it proved to be a little spalted and punky, which is not ideal but it worked out fine.

Before you get to the coring stage you will have turned, abraded and finished the outside of your bowl or form. In order to determine the appropriate direction of the coring cut you need to first decide on the eventual wall thickness of your ultimate turned object. Here I work to an assumed 10mm wall thickness. Begin the cut around 15mm from the outer edge and the angle should eyeball to a point around 15mm above what will be

the bottom of the bowl or form. The straight cutter obviously takes a straight cut, so you will produce a cone-shaped core.

Once again make the cut slowly and on the centreline. Remember that the tool will want to cut downwards, following the grain, and as the cut deepens you will need to push the handle gently and progressively downwards in order to keep the cutting edge on centre. Withdraw the tool from the cut often to remove the shavings. The torque on the tip of the tool is considerable and a longer-handled tool will help you control the cut much easier. We are only cutting to about 3-4in depth at maximum, depending on which tool

you are using. To go deeper would be to invite catastrophe.

Continue cutting to depth, listening to the tone of the cut. As you approach dead centre the tone will rise in pitch. Stop the lathe and look down the cut. When the remaining portion to be cut is around 10-15mm you should be able to part the core.

Stop the lathe and align the workpiece with the grain horizontal. Apply firm, sharp pressure with your thumbs on the upper or lower section and the core should snap out. Remove the core for later use. The bowl or form can now be completed as usual. From this 200mm by 100mm blank I took two rings and a core and produced a bowl. The next question is, what can we do with the saved pieces?



Lining up the coring cut



Parting the cone core



Items resulting from the process

Utilising a saved ring

Saved rings can fit a number of obvious uses, and probably many more not so obvious. A few of the obvious uses are: picture and mirror frames, inserts for bowl rims/boxes/hollow pot collars, and chapter rings for clocks. I decided to use a beech disc I had rejected due to woodworm damage and make a clock from it. I could lose the worm damage by offsetting the saved ring rather than inseting it concentrically. This is a little extra work but makes for an interesting clock.

The beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) disc was trued and a tenon turned on one face, then mounted on the chuck and the rear face and edge trued up and the surface abraded. Next the blank was aligned in such a way that I could remove the worm damage and the cardinal points marked on



Truing a disc

the face. The centre is then marked and a line struck from centre to the outer rim at one of the cardinal points. The eventual centre of a ring the diameter of the saved ring will be placed on this line.

Next the saved ring needs to be prepared. Scrap wood is used to produce a jam chuck for the ring by cutting a dovetailed step to mount the ring on to. The centre area needs to be cut lower than the ring to provide access to the inner face.

True up the front half of the inner edge until it is true and perpendicular to the back face. The saved ring is removed and the jam chuck is altered to take the slightly larger diameter ring reversed. True up the remaining area of the inner edge to match that already turned, and also the outer edge. Take light cuts due to the nature of jam chucking.

A domed face is turned on the outer face and the saved ring is abraded.



Marking the cardinal points



Scribing the centreline



Truing the inner face



Forming the face shape

PREPARING THE BASE DISC FOR TURNING

Use a Vernier to measure the precise diameters of the inside and outside of the saved ring. I was aiming to lose the worm damage here so I scribed the outer diameter in such a way as to cover the worm damage – this required that the outer edge was very close to the edge of the blank. Although this was dictated by my specific requirements it worked out very well, although extra care was required when turning to prevent breaking through the outer edge of the blank. Scribe the two circles on to the blank along the line you scribed earlier.

Next a sacrificial platten is made from scrap wood. I save tenons from parted-off pieces for this precise reason. Glue and screw a disc of scrap wood or plywood to the tenon. I used a good quality plywood that will not delaminate easily. (N.B: In a future article I will look at glue and jam chucks in detail.) Turn the platten to the precise diameter of the outer diameter of the saved ring so it fits perfectly in the scribed outer circle on the base blank.

Mount the platten in the chuck and apply double-sided tape on the whole of the face. Burnish the tape with a round-ended tool to ensure it is firmly applied. Now apply the platten to the base blank, ensuring it is precisely applied to the scribed outer circle. The whole thing can be clamped between centres with a scrap of wood to protect the face to ensure the tape has stuck properly.

While the offset was not considerable, and the workpiece not particularly

large (275mm D 20mm D), there was some imbalance. In order to counter this a 100g lead counterweight was screwed to the platten opposite the offset. For added safety the platten can be screwed to the workpiece. Ensure you screw into the space between the scribe lines on the workpiece; the screw holes can then be cut away later.



Scribing the dimensions of the saved ring



Mounting chuck



Double-sided tape applied to mounting chuck



Mating the chuck to the blank



Workpiece mated to platten with counter-balance weight

TURNING

Mount the workpiece in the chuck. Set the lathe speed slow – 500-750rpm worked out OK for this piece of work, but this will depend on the size and weight of your workpiece. Ensure the toolrest does not foul and, if possible, have the lathe controls accessible without having to move across the spinning workpiece.

Turn a recess of suitable depth and diameter to take your clock mechanism; for the type I use 75mm D and 10mm depth works well and also allows me to use the recess for reverse mounting the

workpiece. Next use a Jacobs chuck and 8mm twist drill to make the hole for the clock stem. Ensure you can see the threads on the face surface of the workpiece.

Now the workpiece can be unscrewed, prised from the platten and mounted on the recess you have just turned. Check that the scribed circles are running true, re-mark if not, and proceed to cut the precise recess to take the saved ring. Aim for a tight fit with no gaps. A very sharp, small parting tool will deal with the job nicely. I made the depth half that of the

thickness of the saved ring to raise it from the backing disc surface. Glue the saved ring in place.

I usually try to add light-coloured rings to darker backs, but in this instance I didn't have a suitable blank, so I decided to colour the saved ring by airbrushing it with black and red stain. This creates a good contrast between both the colours and the grain texture between the chestnut and beech. Fit the mechanism and mount the hands and, aside from fitting a battery, you are done. A hanging tag completes the offset clock.



Turning the mechanism/mounting recess



Drilling the clock stem hole



Cutting the recess



The saved ring mounted

Conclusions

Saving wood will always be something I strive for; it just makes sense. Projects such as this, which use saved or otherwise unusable material, will always give me a buzz. I have made something I can sell from firewood and wood that would usually have been shavings. I cannot see how this is not a positive thing. As I often say, this is just one idea, you will

no doubt think of far better things to do with saved rings – cut them up, glue them up, make vessel blanks... only your imagination will constrict you. But no matter what you do with them, you will save wood and money.

In part two of this series I will look at further uses and we will briefly revisit some aspects of this part. ●

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Table lamp

Walter Hall sheds light on a classic form



Not all projects go according to plan and wood is not always as compliant as you might wish. My intention for this article was to remake a lamp that I made many years ago to improve the design and shape and also to make a new one with a heavy, square base and a classic form. Because the oak I used to make the new lamp contained some cracks, the extent of which did not become apparent until part-way through the turning, I had to rethink the project on the fly and the new lamp ended up taking up the whole article. The remake

will have to wait for now, but may be the subject of a future article.

When things go wrong, and especially when you are working to a deadline, it is a good test of your ability to think of ways of putting them right. As the old adage goes: woodworking is one-third planning, one-third execution and one-third finding ways to correct the things that went wrong during execution. That was certainly the case with this project.

In this case the cracks in the oak meant I could not turn the beads, coves and lands

that I wanted for the top of the lamp without pieces splintering away. I did not have another oak blank large enough to start over, so I had to devise a way of making the top part from a separate piece of oak in a way that there would be no visible join and a means of disguising the remaining cracks.

The design of this lamp is drawn from classic Roman and Greek forms and has a deliberately heavy base to make it resistant to being knocked over by our cats. The heavy base could be omitted to make a smaller lamp.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

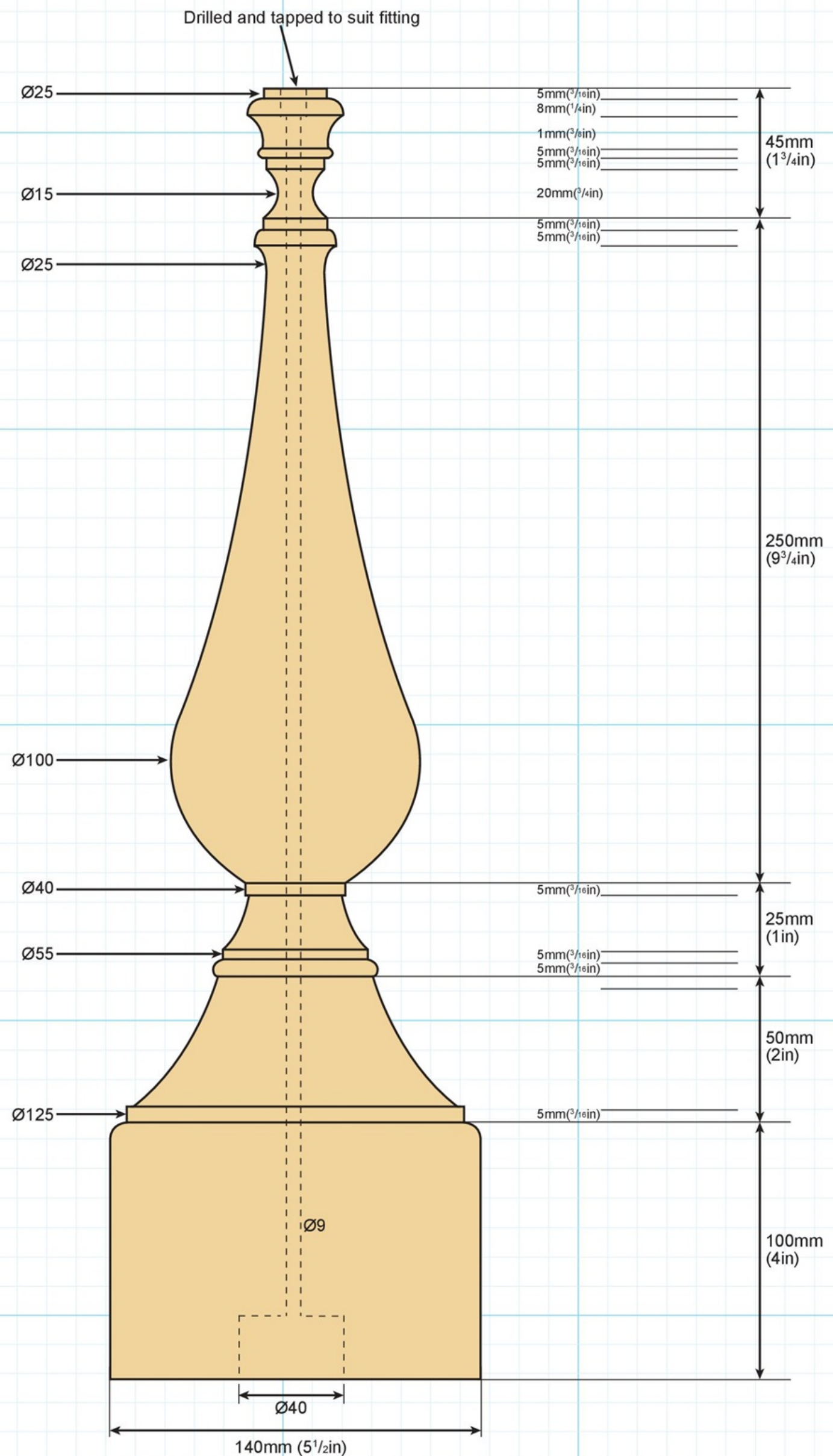
- Personal & respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Spindle roughing gouge
- Spindle gouge
- Skew chisel
- Beading and parting tool
- Hollow revolving centre
- Long hole boring shell auger
- Tailstock chuck and Forstner bits
- Taps and tap wrench to suit components
- Cordless drill and bits

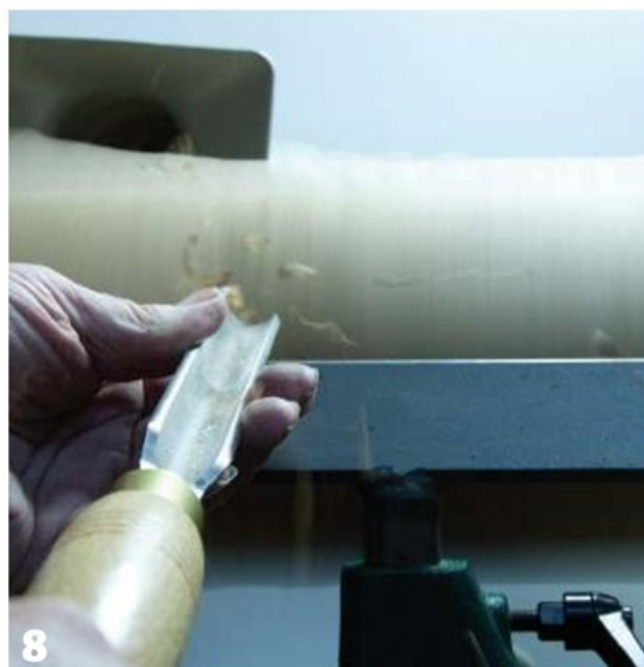
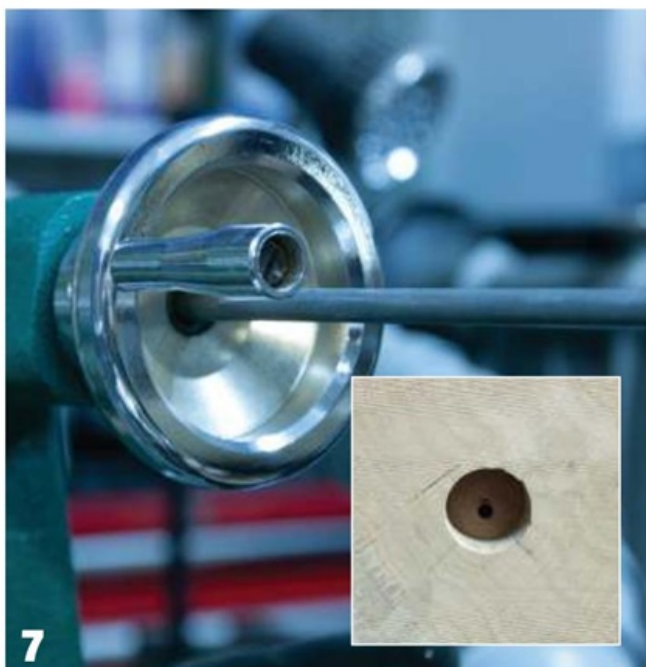
MATERIALS

- Oak (*Quercus robur*) or other hardwood blank, 140mm square minimum 500mm long
- Abrasives down to 320 grit
- Cyanoacrylate adhesive (CA)
- Acrylic lacquer spray (or finish of choice)
- Lamp fittings and cable

WIRING SAFETY

When making a table lamp that requires electrical wiring, be mindful that there are numerous regulations regarding the manufacture and sale of electrical items that you must comply with. The regulation requirements vary from country to country and possibly even regions within a country. The onus of responsibility is on you to make sure you are complying with your area's/ country's regulations.





1 If you are making a lamp with a square base you need to start with a square blank. This may seem obvious but any minor inaccuracy will be magnified when you turn the pommel to transition from square to round and it will never look right. A planer thicknesser will do the job best but I finished off by hand planing.

2 The next stage is to square the ends. The bandsaw is the best way to do this and, as with squaring the sides, accuracy at this stage will pay dividends later as it will greatly facilitate getting the work mounted square on the lathe.

3 Now mark the centre of both ends. Once again, be as accurate as possible. In this photograph you can see some of the cracks. I deliberately chose this end as the bottom of the piece where it would be less of a problem, but needless to say, the other end, which showed no outward evidence of cracks, proved to be just as bad.

4 To mount the work on the lathe and to create access for the power cable you need to drill a mounting hole in the base. If you have a floor-standing pillar drill you can use this or, alternatively, you could use a cordless drill with the work held in a bench vice.

5 The hole should be a suitable size and deep enough for the chuck jaws you intend to use. In my case this was 40mm diameter by a minimum of 20mm deep to fit a set of Record Power Mini Spigot Jaws. A Forstner bit is ideal for this.

6 Mount the work on the chuck and support the other end with a hollow ring centre with a centre point. After marking the end of the work with the centre, back off the tailstock quill, remove the centre point and then retighten the quill, ensuring the ring centre aligns with the mark.

7 Drill out the hole for the cable with a long hole boring shell auger. This passes through the hollow tailstock quill and revolving centre into the work. Drill only a few centimetres at a time and regularly withdraw the auger fully to remove the waste otherwise it is all too easy to clog the single flute and jam the auger in the work or the tailstock. The conventional method of drilling would be to drill approximately halfway, then turn the work around, mount it between centres and complete the drilling from the other end to avoid excessive run out. As the work was securely mounted in the chuck and the auger long enough to pass right through I drilled in one pass. The end result is not quite on centre but near enough.

8 With the hole bored, the main upper part body of the lamp can be turned to a cylinder ready to be shaped into your chosen form, leaving the square section at the base. A large spindle roughing gouge is the ideal tool for this.

◀ **9** Using a spindle gouge, form a classic Roman ogee pommel to transition between the square and round sections of the work. Begin with the flute facing up and, working from the headstock end, gradually roll the tool over to the right in a scooping action with the bevel following the line of the cut.

10 You should aim to create a sweeping curve. Delineate the junction with the upper section with a parting tool and you can then begin to form the first cove. If you have trouble mastering the ogee pommel the late Allan Batty's Youtube video 'The skew chisel with Allan Batty' shows it much better than I can explain in words.

11 Form the lower coves and bead using a spindle gouge and skew chisel or beading and parting tool, then rough out the general shape of the upper part of the lamp with the spindle roughing gouge.

12 It was at this stage that things started to go wrong for me as the cracks appeared and it became evident that I was not going to be able to cut the detailed beads and coves for the top of the lamp without pieces splintering away or breaking out. It was time for plan B, so I formed a simple cove, bead and land, and even this needed a bit of gluing to hold it together.

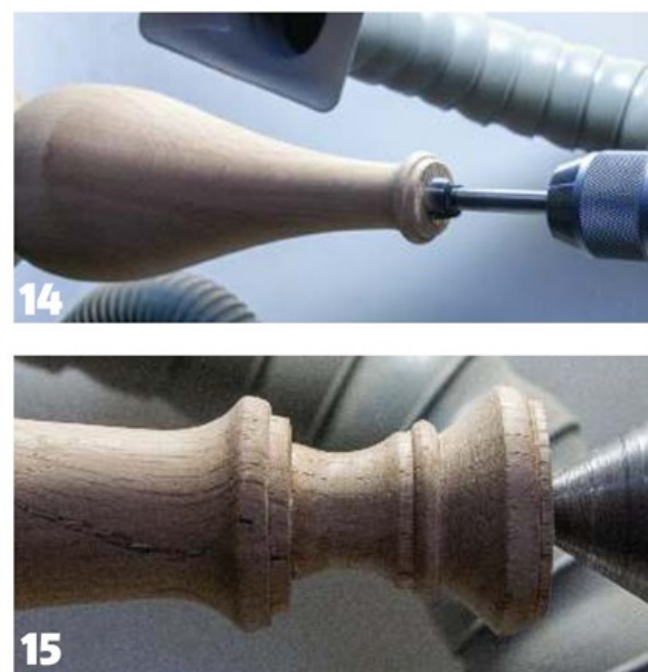
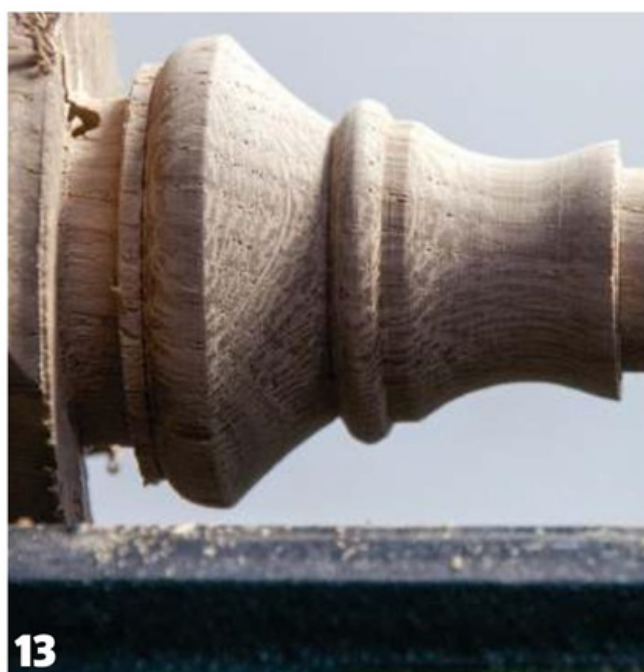
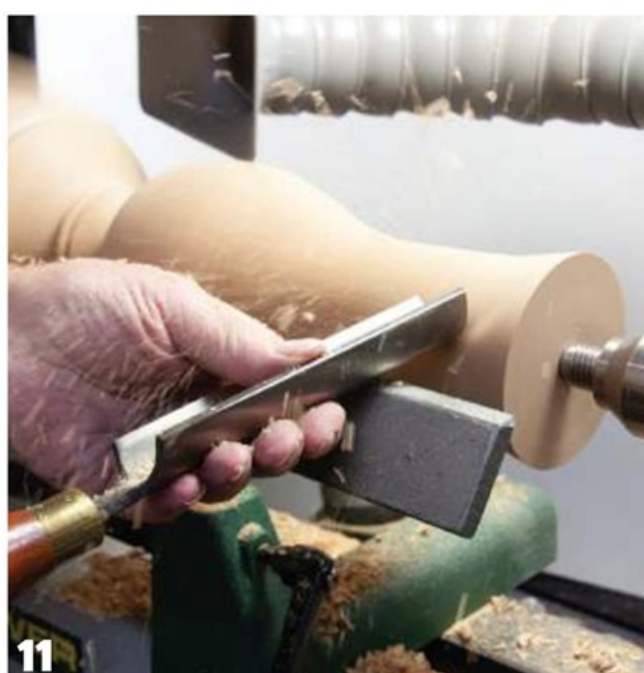
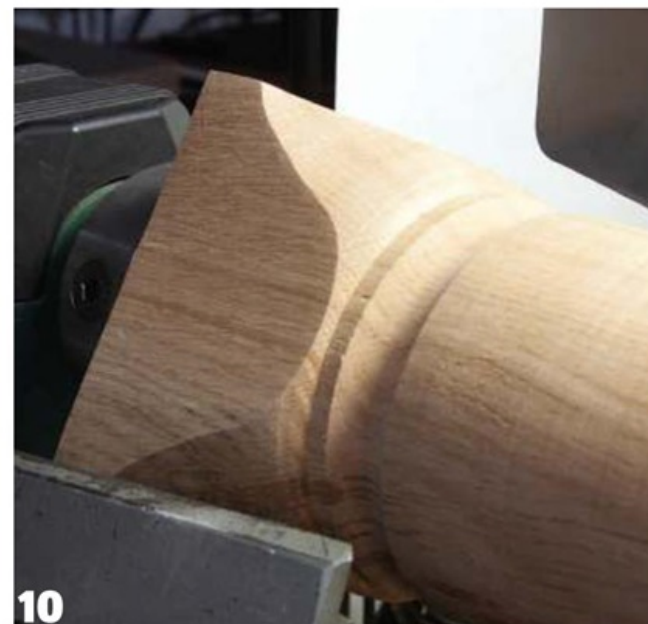
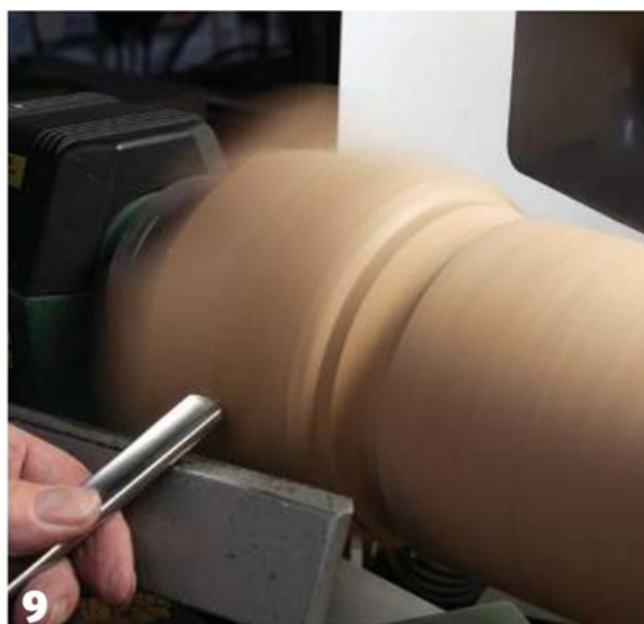
13 I then formed a new top for the piece from a separate piece of oak using a spindle gouge for the coves and a beading and parting tool for the beads and cut a 20mm spigot below the bottom cove to attach the top to the main body. Of course, if your wood is free from cracks you would form the top directly on the end of the work.

14 To attach the top to the main body, drill a 20mm hole for the spigot. This time I was in luck as the bed of the midi lathe I have been using for these projects was only just long enough to accommodate the work, tailstock, chuck and bit.

15 I glued the two components together with PVA wood glue and clamped them using pressure from the tailstock. The join is not visible as it is at the junction of cove and land. I filled the remaining cracks with a mix of CA and sawdust. The photograph shows this partly completed, it took several iterations before I was happy with the appearance.

16 Sand and finish the lamp on the lathe. Hand sand along the grain with the lathe turned off to avoid any annular ring marks and finish with sprayed acrylic satin lacquer over sanding sealer. Drill out the top to the correct size for your lamp fitting and cut a suitable thread. Mine was $\frac{7}{16}$ in NC14 but check your fittings for size.

17 Now drill the hole for the cable access, fit the lamp components and flex in accordance with local regulations. I could have done the drilling on the pillar drill earlier when the blank was still square but with the completed work it was done by holding the base in a vice and drilling with a drill. ●



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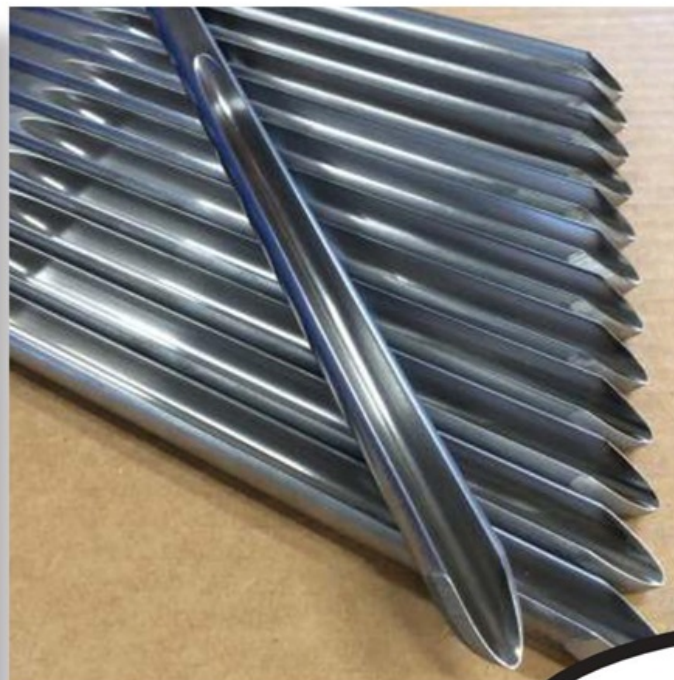
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Wooden spoons

Les Symonds makes two versions of lathe-turned spoons



Traditionally, wooden spoons would have been made either at home by private individuals, or by a local village woodturner who would have carved, not turned, them, and this would have been done using freshly-felled hedgerow timber, such as sycamore, beech or even holly. The spoon is not a shape that lends itself to being made on early lathes. Indeed, it is the availability of self-centring woodchucks that makes this project suitable for the hobby or professional wood turner.

The main issue with turning spoons is the process of hollowing the bowl, at which point the handle is projecting sideways and rotating rather like a

propeller, so this is a project which obviously calls for quite a degree of caution and of understanding about the dynamics of what you are doing. Furthermore, we shall be relying on a compression chuck that we will make specifically for this project and, as with all such wooden chucks, progress will need to be made very carefully when hollowing the spoon bowl. Light cuts made skilfully will be the order of the day. However, for those less-experienced turners who do not feel sufficiently skilled or confident to tackle this, I will also explain how to adapt the design so as to make a two-part spoon, doing away with the need to tackle

the hollowing while the handle is in its propeller-like state.

As a follow-up to this article, I will be making a couple of versions of scoops and ladles, the latter of which will have versions for both small and large capacity lathes. In the next instalment I will be making coffee and flour scoops, whilst in the final instalment I will make a one-part ladle, which needs a much larger lathe and again, a two-part version for those with smaller machines. I will be keeping the design of the handles quite basic, but feel free to add your own ideas for decoration; just remember to use a food-safe timber.

SIDEWAYS SAFETY

There are obvious implications of safety when turning a sideways projection such as a spoon handle. The handle will not be visible when rotating, so take precautions to avoid having to move back and forth past the workpiece. Set up a table where you can keep your tools and accessories at the tailstock end. Use a portable light, with its flex secured out of the way, to shine directly on to the rotating handle – this will make it slightly more visible. Most importantly, if you are not sufficiently skilled or confident, make the two-part spoon until your skills are more advanced.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE and RPE)
- Spindle roughing gouge
- Spindle gouge
- Skew chisel
- Parting tool
- 10, 15 & 45mm Forstner or similar drill bits
- Chuck with 35mm jaws
- Drive spur
- Revolving tailstock centre

- Tailstock drill chuck
- Fine-toothed saw
- Hand drill
- Carbide hollowing cutter and scraper (optional)
- Ball or toggle handled scorch-wire (optional)
- Bandsaw or handsaw

MATERIALS

- European beech (*Fagus Sylvatica*)
- For the one-part spoon:**
- 1 piece, 200 x 50 x 50mm

For the two-part spoon:

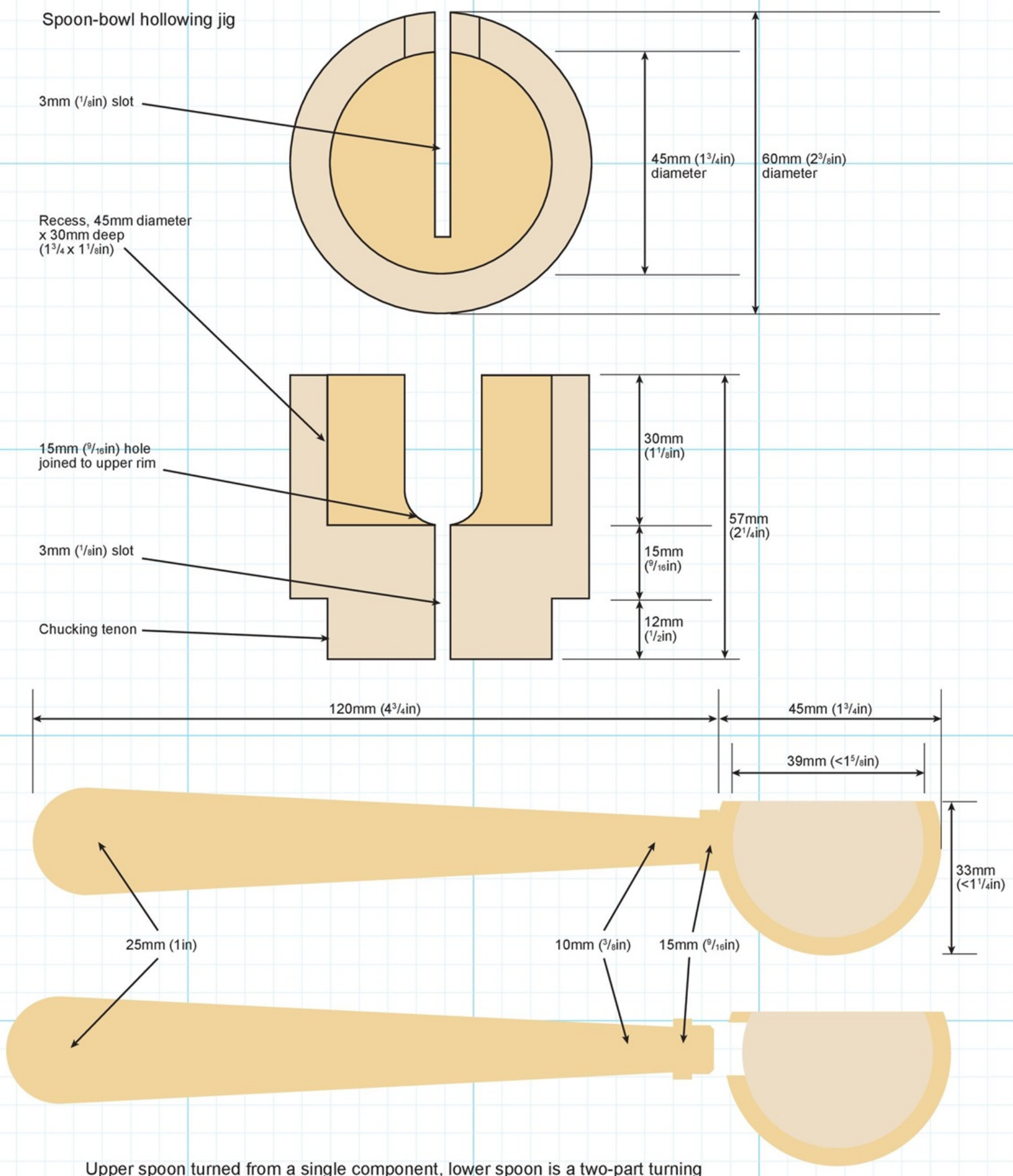
- 1 piece, 100 x 50 x 50mm
- 1 piece, 150 x 30 x 30mm

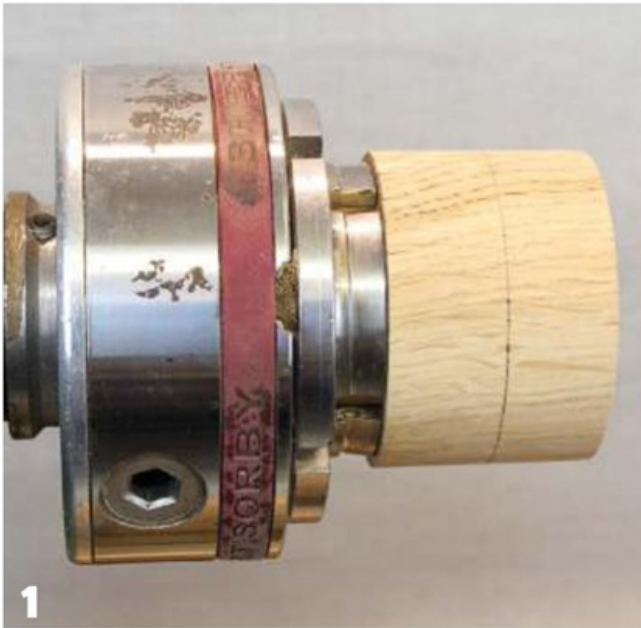
For the bowl-hollowing jig:

- 1 piece, 60 x 70 x 70mm

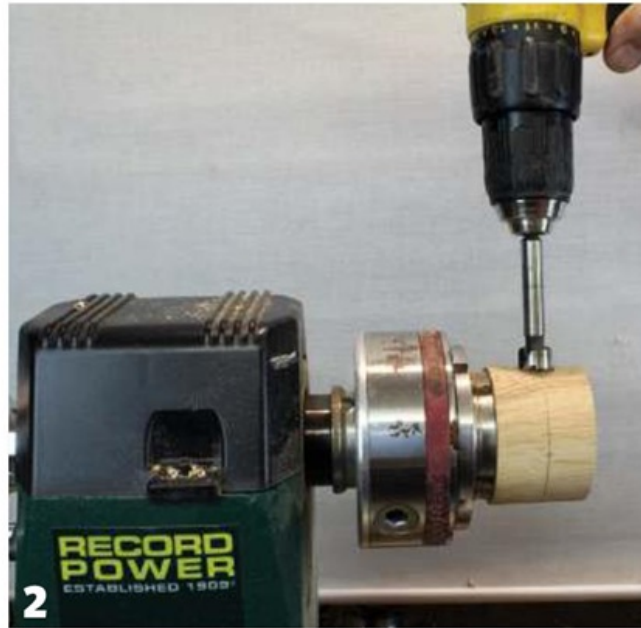
Sundry materials:

- Abrasives down to 320 grit
- Sanding pommel-stick
- Two-part epoxy adhesive
- A food-safe oil finish

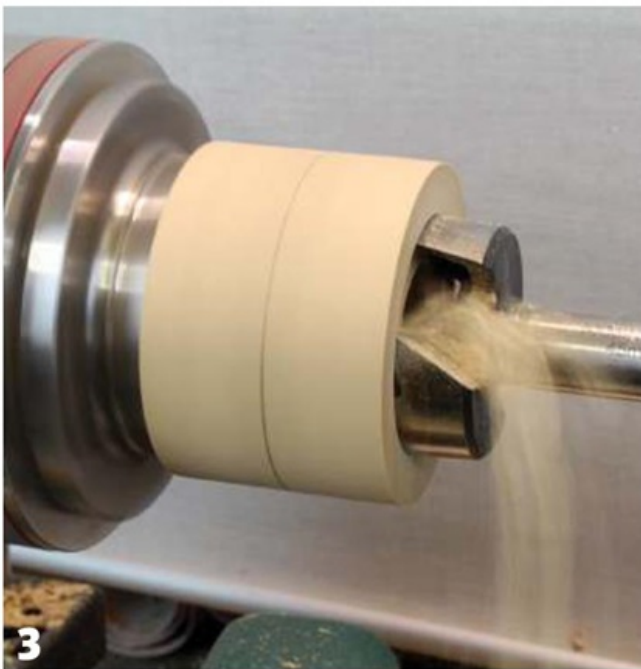




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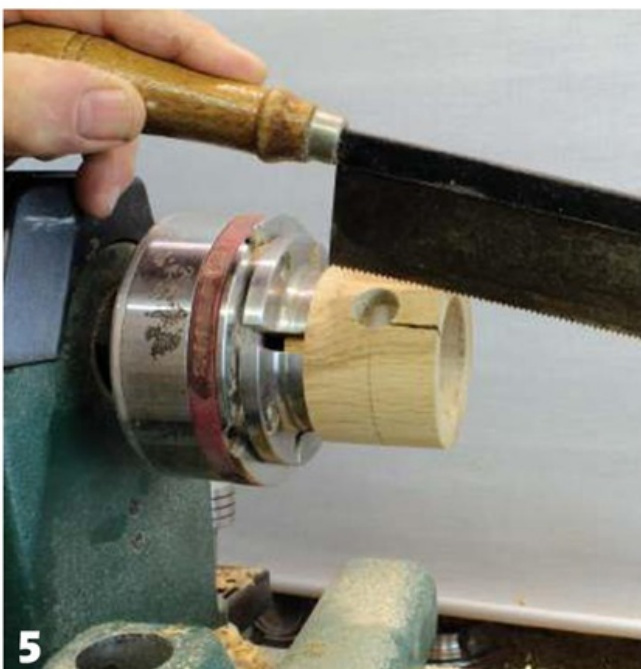
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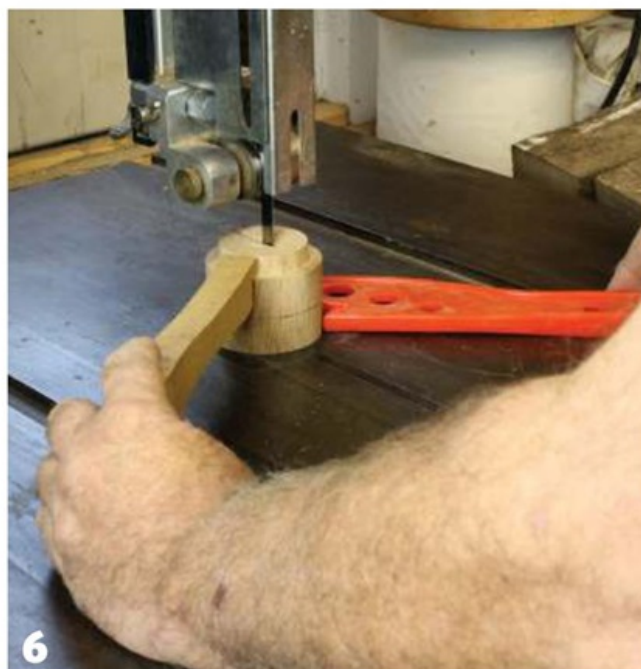
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The bowl-hollowing jig

1 Mount the blank between centres, reduce it to a 60mm cylinder and cut a chucking tenon on one end. Remove it from the lathe, set your chuck on to the lathe spindle and set the blank into the chuck, then clean off the end grain and draw a pencil line around the cylinder, 22.5mm in from the tailstock end.

2 Apply your spindle lock and, using a hand drill with a 15mm bit, centre the bit on the pencil line, drill a hole about 15mm deep, keeping the drill square to the timber and pointed directly into the centre of the timber.

3 Set your Jacobs chuck into the tailstock and set a 45mm Forstner drill into it. Advance the tailstock to the end of the timber, set the lathe speed to around 300-500rpm, lock the tailstock and advance the chuck by winding the tailstock quill forward. Retract the drill occasionally so that its flutes do not clog up with dust or shavings.

4 Continue drilling until you have achieved a 30mm-deep hole. If you do not have a 45mm Forstner bit, you can cut this hole with traditional tools, such as a spindle gouge and skew chisel (for cleaning the wall of the hole), but be sure to make the wall an even width throughout and with a flat bottom – this is quite important!

5 Rotate the workpiece until the 15mm side-hole is visible, lock the lathe spindle and then, using a fine-toothed handsaw, cut down from the rim to the hole, thus converting the hole into a 15mm-wide slot with a radiused bottom. If necessary, use a bench chisel to clean up the faces of your saw cuts.

6 Place the jig open end downwards on the bandsaw table and, using two appropriately shaped push-sticks, make a saw cut through the 15mm slot, through the centre mark on the end grain and about a further 10mm to 15mm beyond the centre mark. Make a second cut to open this up into a 3mm-wide slot. If you don't have access to a bandsaw, this can be achieved with a handsaw and the timber held in a vice.

7 Your finished jig should now look like this.

Making the one-part spoon

8 Set the blank between centres, reduce it to just full of a 45mm cylinder and cut a chucking tenon in one end. Remove the blank from the lathe, set the chuck on the lathe and the blank into the chuck, ensuring proper centring by advancing the tailstock's live centre into the centre mark of the previous step. Draw one pencil line 30mm in from the end, then two more pencil lines, one each side of the first and 22.5mm to each side. This now indicates the position of the 45mm ball shape of the spoon bowl, with its centre line. Part off the waste from the end, down to about a 12mm core, then part-off a groove to the left of the ball, again down to a 12mm core.

◀ **9** Using a spindle gouge or a skew chisel, shape the ball carefully, keeping it symmetrical and keeping the centreline showing.

10 Set callipers or dividers to 45mm (the diameter of the ball) and use these regularly, with the lathe stopped, to check that the rounding-over cuts do not reduce the diameter of the ball. This needs to be achieved to no more than 1mm less than the optimum size of 45mm – any more than that and it is likely your jig will not grip the ball adequately.

11 As an extra precaution, slip the jig over the ball to check its size and profile and, when you are confident that it is a good, tight fit, start work on the handle.

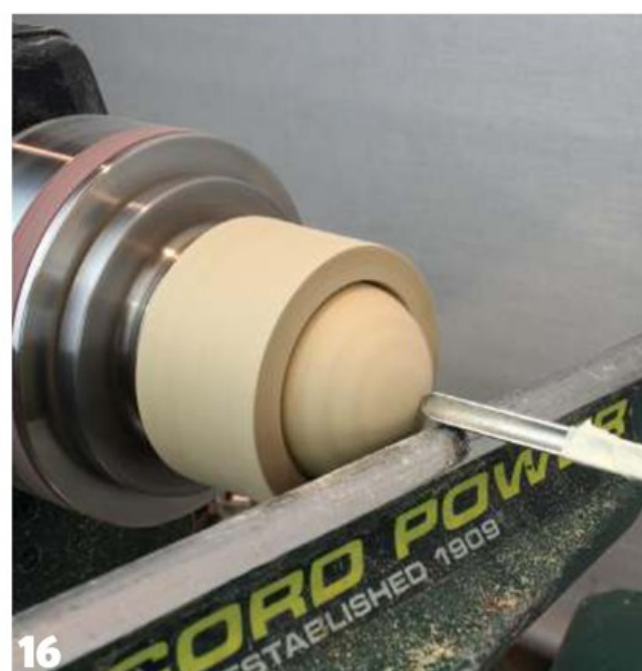
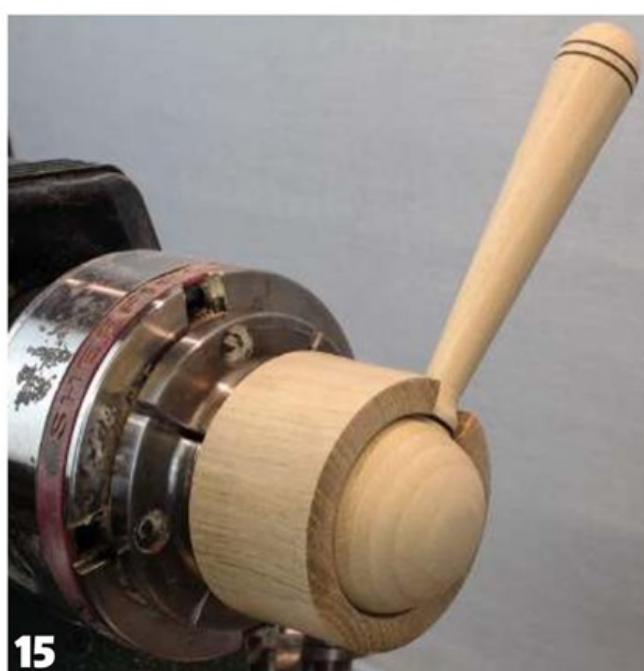
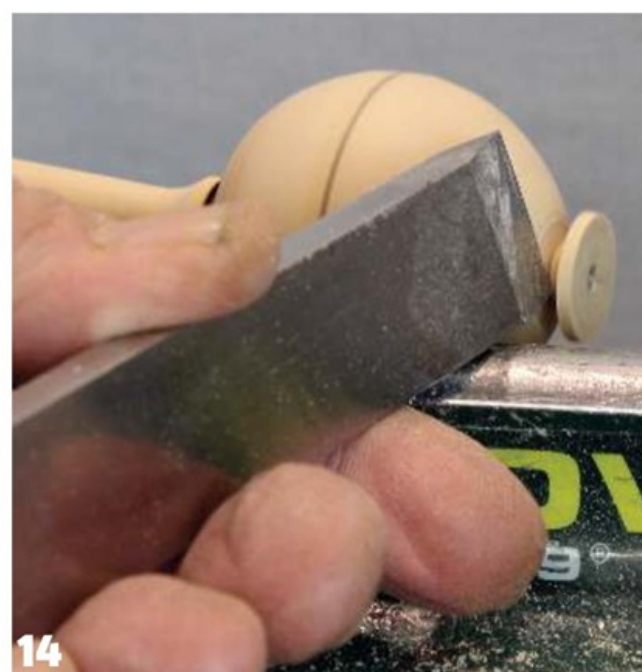
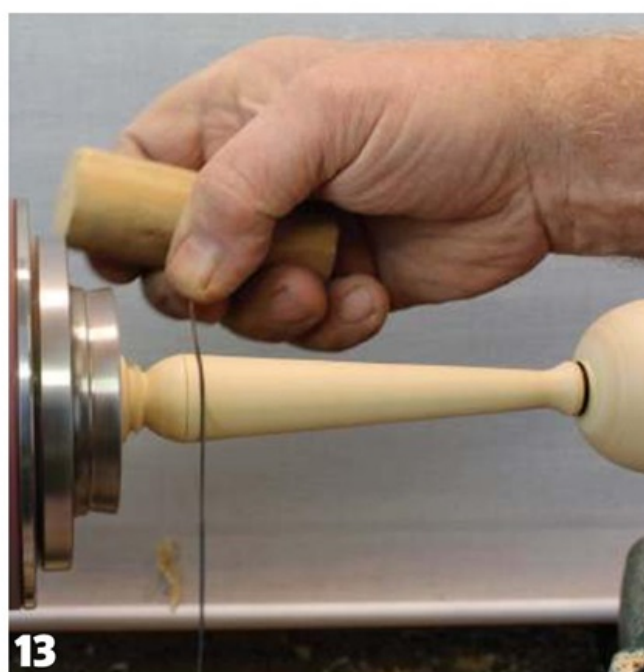
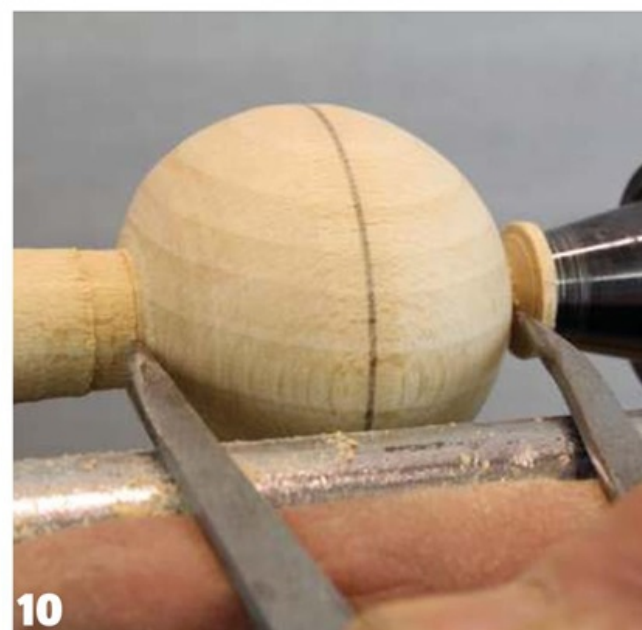
12 Reduce the handle to a 25mm cylinder, then taper it down to the ball shape, adding a decorative feature if you wish. In the example shown, there is a step abutting the ball, then a half-cove to a diameter of about 10mm with the handle tapered down from 25mm to 10mm.

13 Scorch lines or simple cut lines are a common traditional feature and if you choose to use the former, ensure that your scorch wire has a proper handle on it, especially on the leading end of the wire. Never use a scorch wire that does not have a handle.

14 Abrade the spoon to a 400-grit finish then retract the tailstock and very carefully clean off the outer end of the ball. You can do this with very light cuts with either a spindle gouge or a skew chisel, then abrade to 400 grit. Finally, part the spoon off at the handle end in the same manner, and clean up the remaining stub by hand with your abrasives.

15 Set your jig into the chuck, with the 3mm slot lined up between any two of the chuck jaws, press the spoon into the jig and tighten the chuck, checking that the handle projects sideways at about 90° to the lathe axis. At this stage, rotate the work by hand to ensure the ladle handle clears the bed bars and also adjust the toolrest to get as close to the work as possible without catching anything.

16 Ensure that you are fully aware of the spoon handle when the lathe is running and keep all fingers and parts of the body behind the toolrest on the tailstock end. As previously mentioned, if you are not confident enough to continue, then follow that section of this article which shows how to make the spoon as a two-part item. If you choose to proceed, commence the hollowing by drilling a hole down the centre of the ball to no more than 40mm depth. This can be done with a twist drill, or with a small gouge used as an auger, as shown, keeping the gouge exactly on the centreline and horizontal.





17



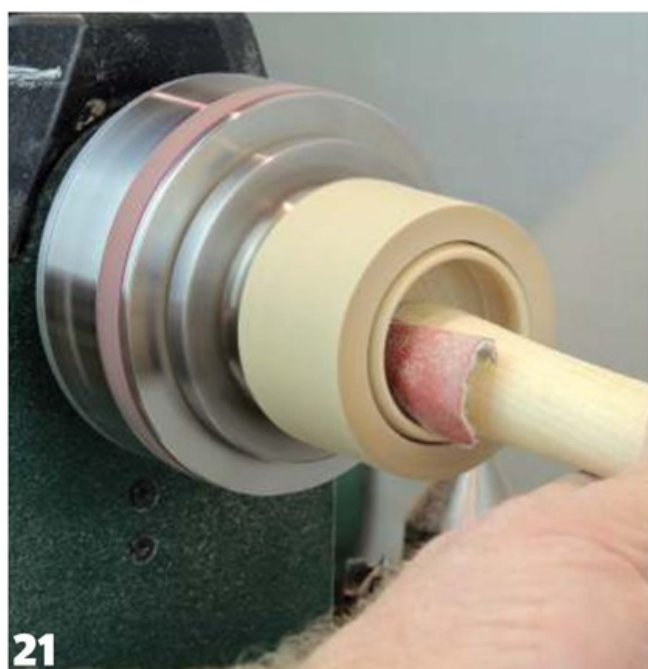
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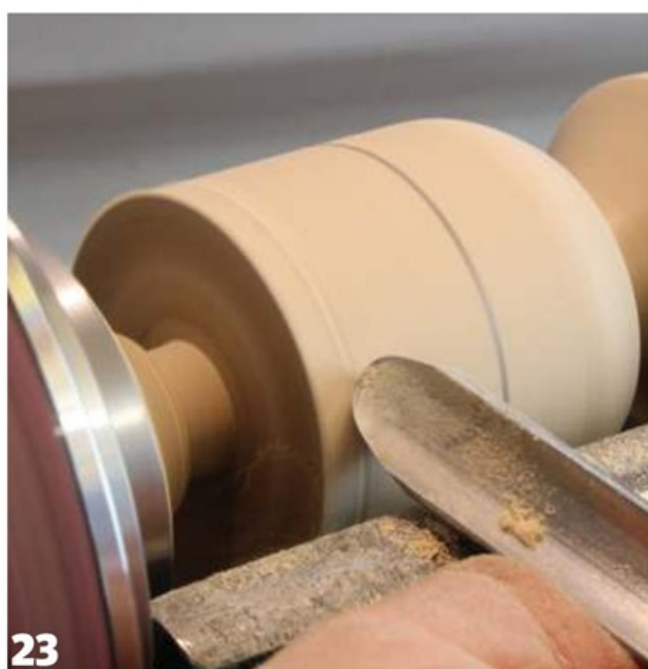
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17 With the centre hole drilled, proceed to hollow the ball, making light cuts and stopping regularly to check your process. Bear in mind the fact that you will not be able to see the rotating handle, so it is important that, as you cut away the top surface of the ball, you do not cut too far and run a gouge into the handle. Ideally, stop removing the top of the ball to within about 3mm of the handle.

18 Continue hollowing carefully and if you have a small carbide cutter you will probably find this to be an excellent use for it. With most of the hollowing complete, you should now be able to check the depth by using a steel rule, but bear in mind the fact that the rule may have a square end so will not fit fully into the bottom of the hollow. With 30mm of the spoon ball held inside the jig and a further 3mm of the bowl wall projecting out of it, you need to hollow down to 33mm, less the thickness of the bottom, so let's say 29-30mm.

19 You cannot remove the spoon until all the work is finished, so the best way to check the profile of the inside of the spoon bowl is by hand. With the lathe stopped, run a finger back and forth along the surface and this will soon give you an idea of any little ridges or bulges that need further work.

20 A solid carbide, teardrop cutter will be ideal for scraping the surface to a finish, but remember you are scraping side grain, so use a sharp tool and proceed slowly, stopping the lathe and checking the shape frequently.

21 To abrade the inside of the bowl, use a sanding stick, which can be made out of a scrap of wood, spindle-turned to a pommel shape which fits inside the bowl. Simply make a saw cut down the end of the pommel and slip a piece of abrasive into it, sanding down to 400 grit.

22 Your finished spoon can now be removed from the jig and any slight pressure marks gently sanded away.

Making the two-part spoon

23 Set the 100 x 50 x 50mm blank between centres, reduce it to a full 45mm cylinder and cut a chucking tenon on one end. Remove it from the lathe, set your chuck on the lathe and the blank into the chuck. Roughly in the centre of the blank, mark three lines, a centreline for the ball and then one each side, 22.5mm to the left and right of the centreline. Use a spindle gouge to start shaping the ball.

24 As before, use callipers or dividers, set to 45mm, and with the lathe stationery, repeatedly check the width of the ball, keeping the centreline in place to ensure that you do not cut below the 45mm diameter needed.

◀ **25** Once you are confident that the ball is the correct size and profile, retract the tailstock and clean off the end of the ball, using a skew chisel or a spindle gouge.

26 With the tailstock out of the way, it is now quite easy to check the size of the ball by slipping the jig over it. If you need to make any adjustments, do this now. Abrade the ball down to 400 grit and finally re-draw the centreline, which you will have now sanded away. Then part-off the ball at the chuck end, leaving a small core, which can be sawn through if you wish.

27 Set the jig into the chuck with its 3mm slot lined up between any two of the chuck jaws. Set the ball into the chuck with the mark of the stub lined up with the revolving centre in the tailstock. Ensure that the ball is set fully into the depth of the jig, then take a hand drill with a 10mm Forstner bit (or similar) and drill a hole about 15mm deep, squarely to the face of the timber and aimed directly at the centre of the ball. Hollow the ball exactly as described in steps 16 to 21.

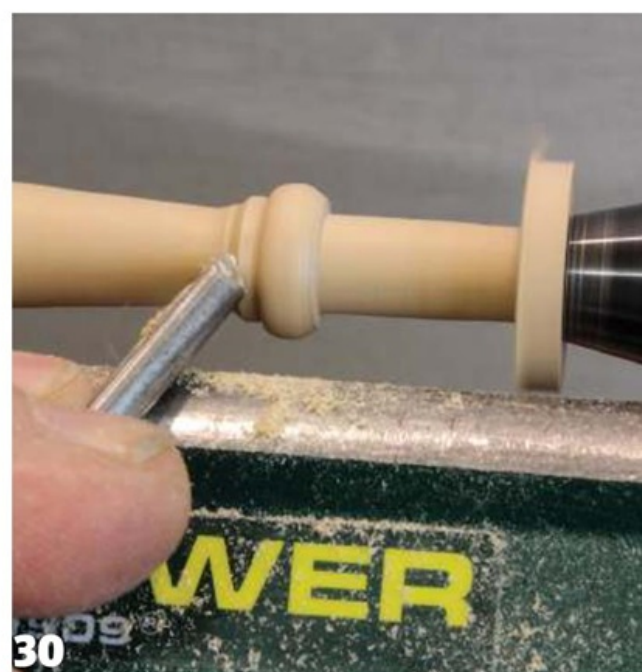
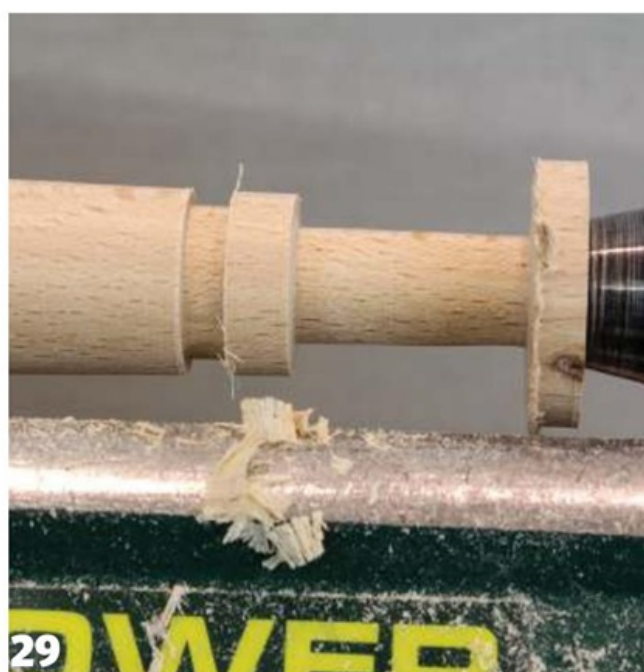
28 Remove the jig from the chuck and set the handle-blank between centres, reduce it to a 25mm cylinder and cut a chucking tenon at one end. Set the chuck on the lathe and the blank into the chuck. At the tailstock end, use a parting tool to cut a tenon, a full 10mm in diameter, then taper the handle down from 25mm at the headstock end, to 15mm adjacent to the tenon that you just formed.

29 With a parting tool, cut a groove to about 3mm depth, 6mm to the left of the tenon, then use a fine-detail gouge to cut a bead adjacent to the tenon.

30 Add any detail you wish and taper the handle down to the tenon. Abrade down to 400 grit. Using the skew chisel, cut through the tenon such that about 4-5mm of it remains in place, retract the tailstock just before cutting through, cut the end away and abrade the end, softening its shape, which will be visible inside the spoon bowl.

31 You can now test the tenon for a fit into the hole in the spoon bowl. If it is a little tight, do not force it as this will split the grain in the spoon bowl. Rather, use an abrasive, such as 180 grit, to gently reduce the tenon until it fits snugly. Part the handle off at the headstock end and clean up the stub by hand.

32 Mix up a little two-part epoxy adhesive and smear it on to the tenon and a little of it on to the shoulder between the tenon and the bead. Press it home and leave to dry. Once fully cured, apply a couple of coats of a food-safe oil finish. ●



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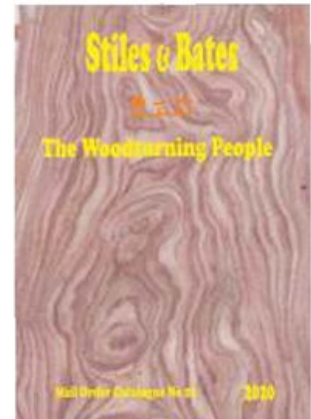
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Light pulls

Ian Woodford creates a quick-to-make project that helps hone turning skills

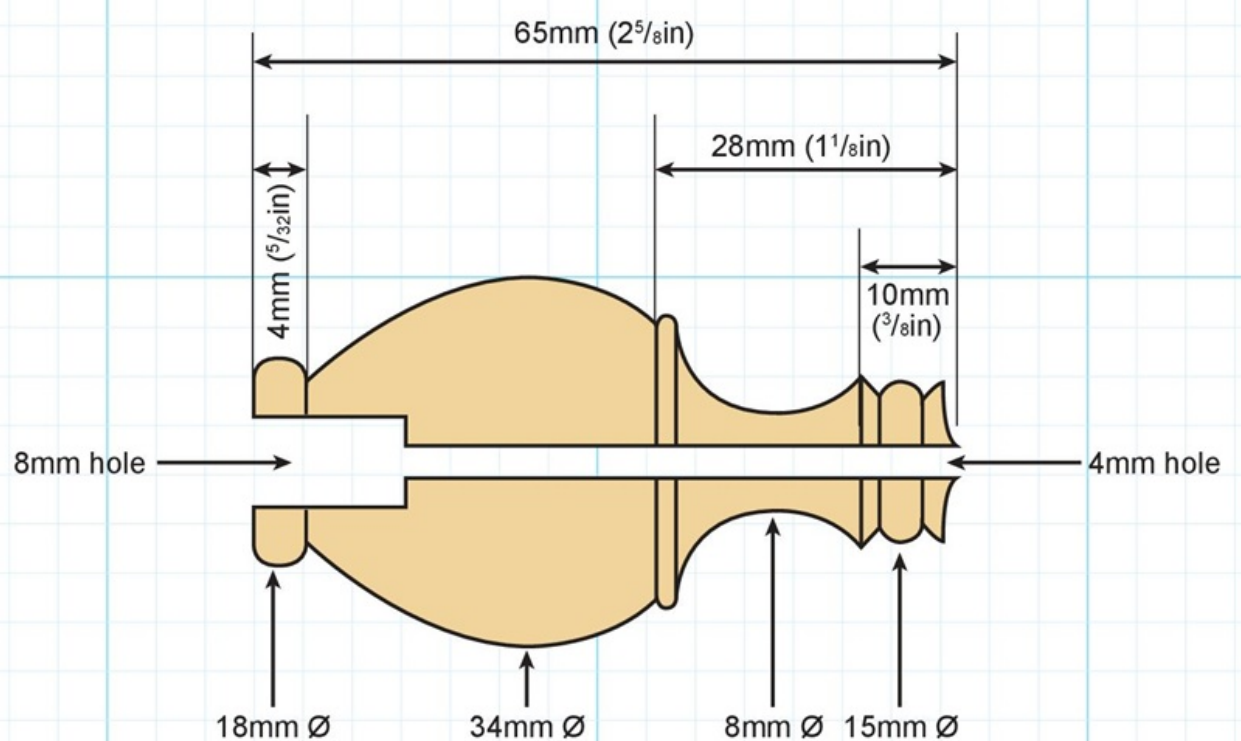


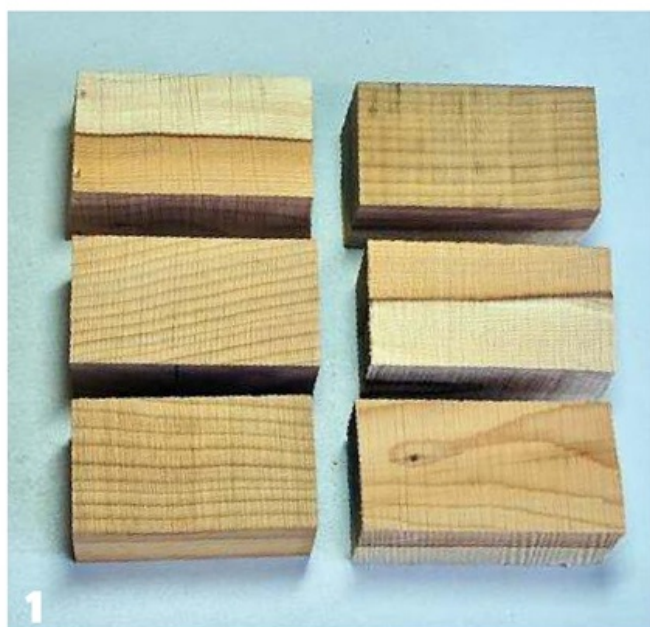
After many years of attending and selling at reputable craft events I soon learned that sales of my smaller items invariably paid for my table fee. Those items were mainly bought by women and were also quick and easy to make, so I always made sure I had plenty of them. My main profit came from far more expensive items such as condiment mills, clocks, decorative platters and bowls etc.

I thought it could be helpful to share with you these items and do quick projects about each one. I provide the basic process but leave you to make your own interpretation of the ideas.

The main emphasis is to concentrate on a standard design of each item. This makes them easier and quicker to make. The only variation is in the wood being used.

Of the two styles I make my bestseller is one I call a Greek urn because of its shape and it is usually made from yew (*Taxus baccata*) or laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*) as they are both close-grain woods and readily available where I live.





TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal & respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Spindle roughing gouge.
- Spindle gouge
- Chuck.
- Tailstock drill chuck
- 4 & 8mm drill bit
- Light pull drive centre or dead cone drive
- Revolving tailstock centre
- Vernier callipers

MATERIALS

- Abrasives down to 400 grit
- Toggle or ball-ended handled burning wire
- Sanding sealer
- Lacquer.
- Wax

1 Shown here are six blanks ready for working on. Those shown are all yew wood and they measure 65mm in length by 35mm square with the grain running the length.

2 The first task is to drill a hole all the way through and this can be done on a pillar drill or held in your chuck on the lathe and drilled with the help of a tailstock drill chuck. I prefer to drill on the lathe and the picture shows the 8mm hole for the knot of the light string already drilled and a 4mm drill bit being used to drill all the way through the blank to finish the drilling process. Working in batches it is best to drill all your blanks first to speed up the entire process and then turn them all after the drilling is done. By working in batches, you create a rhythm and it helps to build a turning memory when making repetitive cuts. This also helps to build turning skills

3 Here you can see the light pull drive held by the chuck and the drive end is secured within the 8 mm hole of the blank. If you don't have one of these drives you can make a wooden jam chuck drive or use a non-revolving cone drive that sits inside the 8mm hole. The other end is supported by the revolving tailstock centre. The blank has been rounded with a roughing gouge and shaping is done with a spindle gouge.

4 For decoration I create burnt lines at the various curved intersections. I use this technique quite a lot as it accentuates and crisps up the detail. The burning is accomplished with thin wire. Each end of the wire is held within wooden balls / toggles as this prevents wire cutting into your fingers when held tight. This type of system is commercially available from most woodturning centres. Never wrap wire around your fingers for this purpose.

5 The light pulls are typically sanded to 400 grit, and then a sealer applied. Lacquer is then applied and finally buffed with carnauba wax. The burnt lines are clearly seen in this photo.

6 The finished item. •

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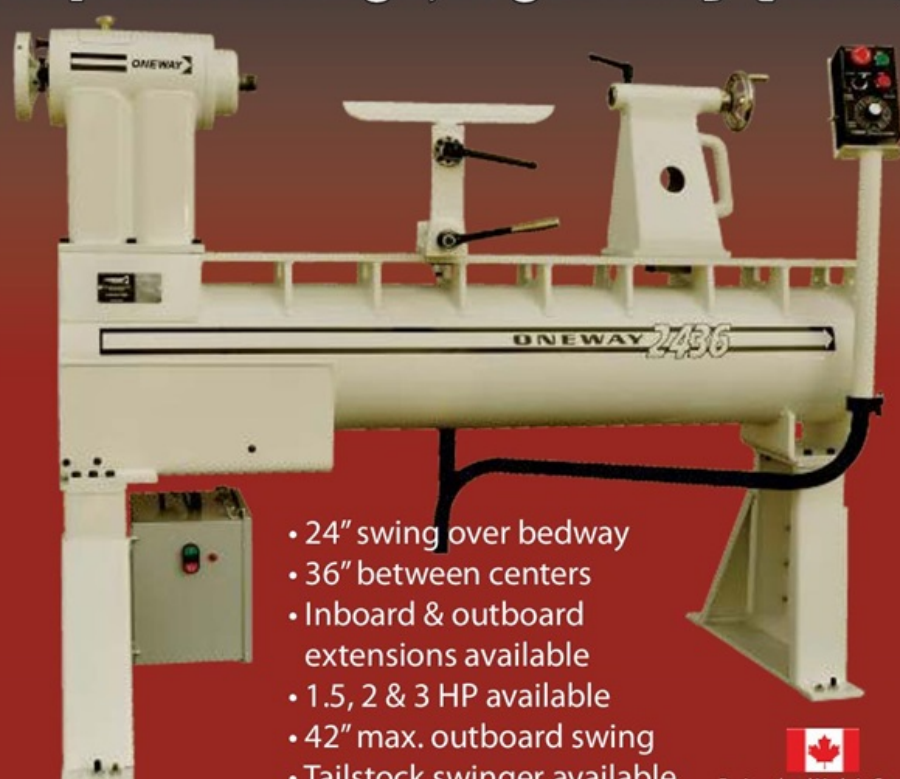
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Community letters

Here are some readers' letters the Editor has received

Wonderful timbers



A miro bowl I made

Dear Mark,

Wherever I sailed during my 44 years at sea in the Merchant Navy I would collect pieces of wood to turn into mementoes of my travels. Often all I needed to do was mention to the port captain or the stevedore that I was a keen woodturner and later a fellow woodturner would come knocking on my cabin door with armfuls of timber for me to take home. New Zealand was my main source of rare and beautiful timbers but I have other pieces from more than 100 countries in my woodstore.

Today I turned a bowl from miro (*Prumnopitys ferruginea*) wood harvested from Henderson Island in the South Pacific. For several years I was captain of

the supply ship plying between Pitcairn Island and New Zealand. The tale of the mutiny on the HMS *Bounty* which led to the founding of the community on Pitcairn Island in 1790 is well known. Some of the descendants of these mutineers still live on the island and make their living on subsistence farming and trading, particularly selling handicrafts to passing ships, including items made from miro wood.

Once a year I would load two long-boats on to my main deck along with 20 islanders and sail to Henderson Island, which lies 120 nautical miles east-north-east of Pitcairn. Here the islanders

would spend three to four days on this uninhabited island fishing and cutting miro wood before making the 18 to 24-hour journey home under their own steam.

I have many souvenirs made of miro wood in my collection, including walking sticks and carved fish, even one made by children as a thank-you. However, this is the first time I have turned a piece myself and I am pleased with the result. It will always remind me of these kind and generous people with their haunting dialect of 18th-century English interspersed with Tahitian.

Thank you for an excellent magazine.

Best wishes, Peter J Newton

Fenland Woodturners Club 25-year anniversary

In 1994 neighbours Alan and Trevor discovered they were both interested in woodturning, after taking an interest in a cherry tree in another neighbour's garden. They commented that there must be many woodturners working away in their sheds and maybe they would be interested in meeting with other like-minded turners.

Alan placed an ad in the local press announcing a meeting on 14 December 1994. That night 14 people attended and agreed to form a club –it was decided that we would be called the Fenland Woodturners Club, as those attending came from a wide area. We still have five founder members active in the club, including the chairman and treasurer.

Meetings have always been held on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) Initially meetings were based on general discussion and relationship building, eventually developing to more experienced members giving demonstrations. This allowed us to gain a sound financial footing as membership increased.

The aim of the club is to promote the craft of woodturning and to assist members in developing and improving as they gain experience.

Eventually membership had grown sufficiently to allow a programme of professional demonstrators on alternate months. The interceding months are classed as Natter Nites, providing a mixture of social interaction, an opportunity to discuss successes, failures and how-tos. The club has two lathes, which are used on these evenings to explain processes to those seeking to develop skills.

Club competitions are held four times each year. Entries are divided into the categories of Novice and Experienced. Judging is by secret ballot by those present on the evening and votes count towards an overall winner each year.

Today our membership is approaching 60, drawn from an area covering a 25-mile radius.

www.fenlandwoodturnersclub.co.uk

From the forum

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

GONE OVER THE TOP FINDS A PERMANENT HOME

<https://bit.ly/2NRYsar>

Nicksimpson posted: Some will remember this piece, which I produced for the centennial Remembrance Day last year. It was on display for 24 hours and seemed to be destined to spend the rest of time in a box. I am delighted to report that Poppy Scotland has taken the piece for permanent display in its premises in Inverness. Those with a very acute memory might notice that the poppies now have four petals, in keeping with the Poppy Scotland style rather than the two-petal design of the RBL.

Dunkhooper commented: Congratulations Nick. A very good piece and something none of us should forget about.





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Tinea rimmed bowl

Pat Carroll shows how to create a decorative bowl



Reading the title of this piece one might wonder what ‘tinea’ could possibly be. Considering a title for articles is not always an easy job, and as this rim is based on the work of any woodworker’s arch enemy – the woodworm – the title ‘Woodworm rim’ just didn’t have a ring to it, so *tinea* being the Latin for woodworm I opted for the more interesting title.

A piece of slightly spalted beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) was used for this project and in mind for the piece was to create a rim

with texture. So, what better texture than that created by one of Mother Nature’s creatures, the woodworm?

On a recent trip to Jimmy Clewes’ workshop, he showed me a great way to create an ogee shape on the base of a bowl or platter. This is shown in the step-by-step sequence. The texture is created with a rotary carving unit and various burrs and brushes. It is a lot of fun and I hope you enjoy experimenting with the techniques shown.

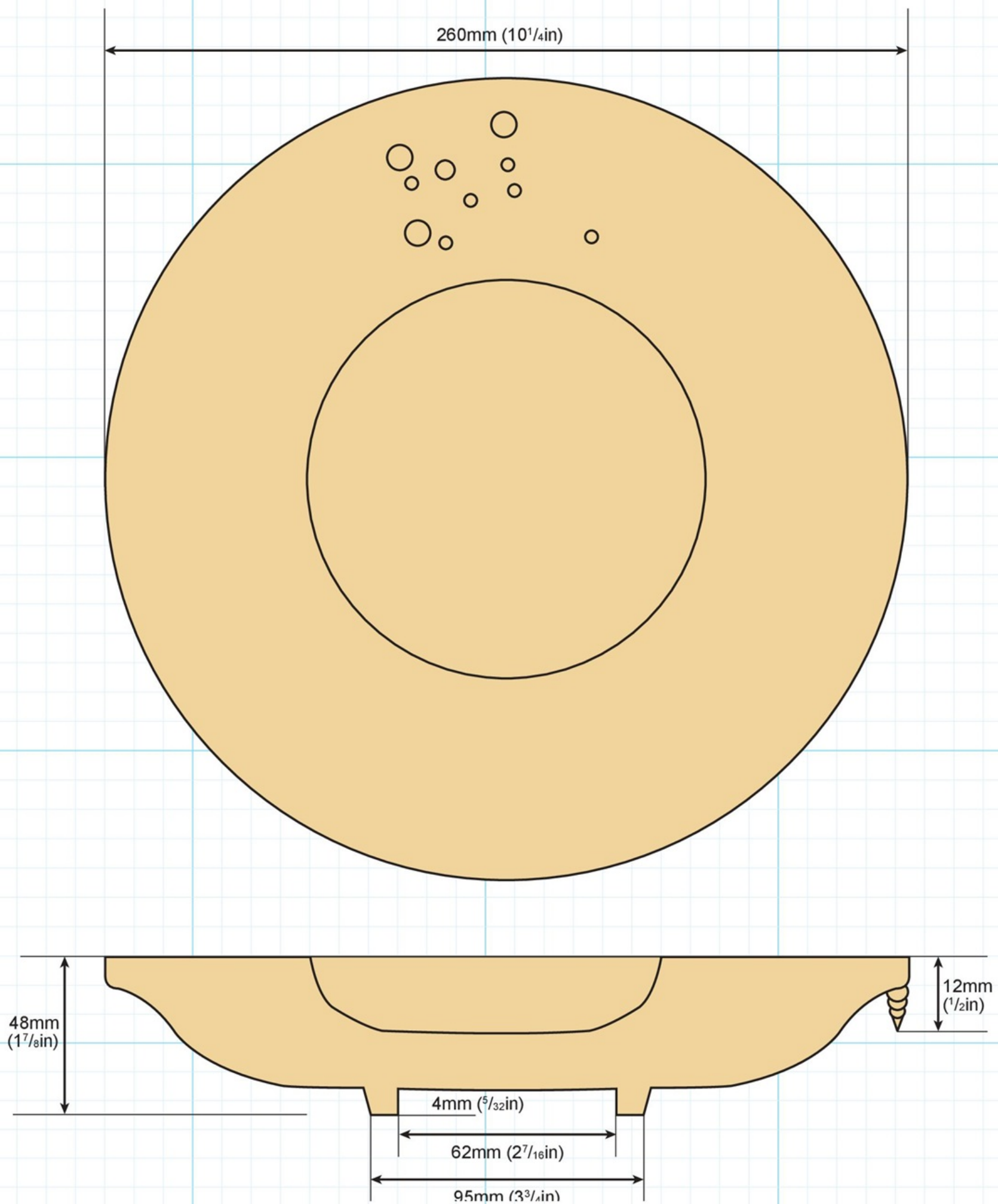
TOOLS AND MATERIALS

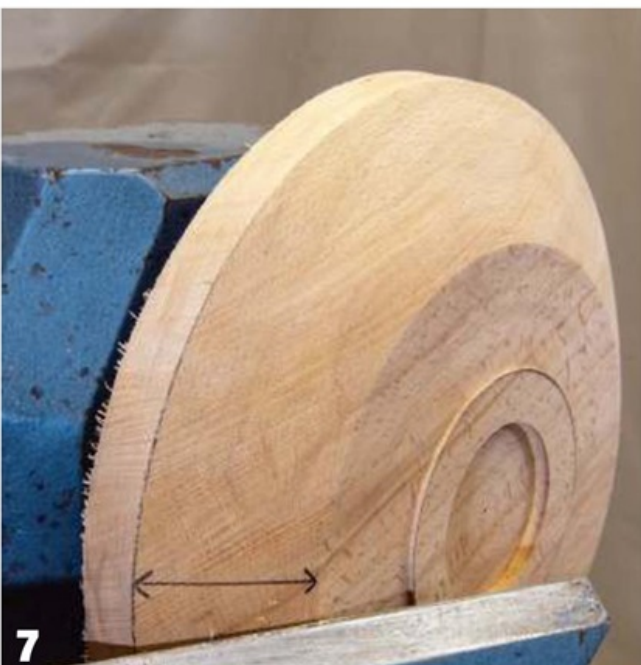
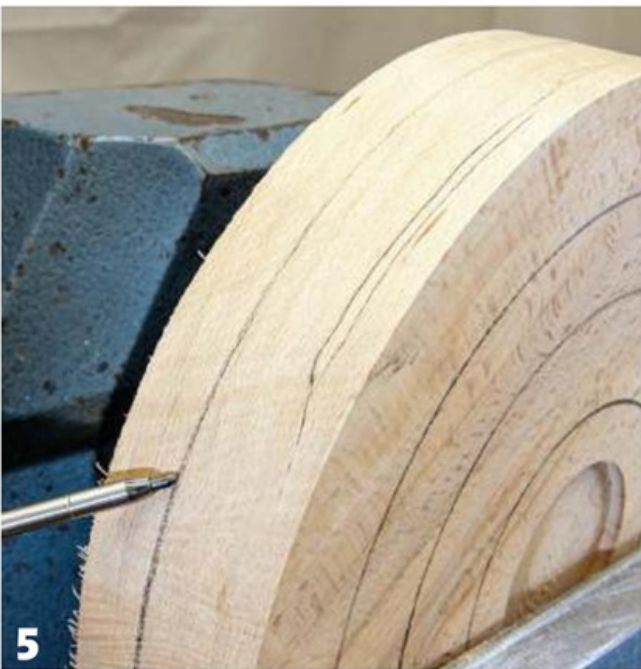
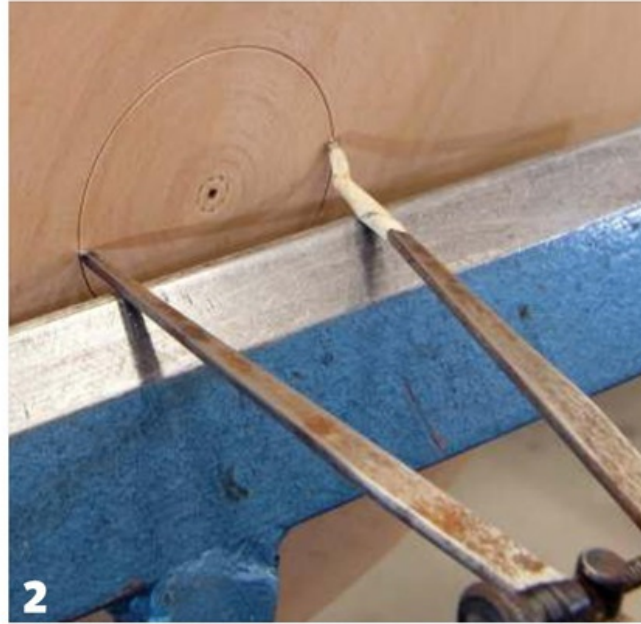
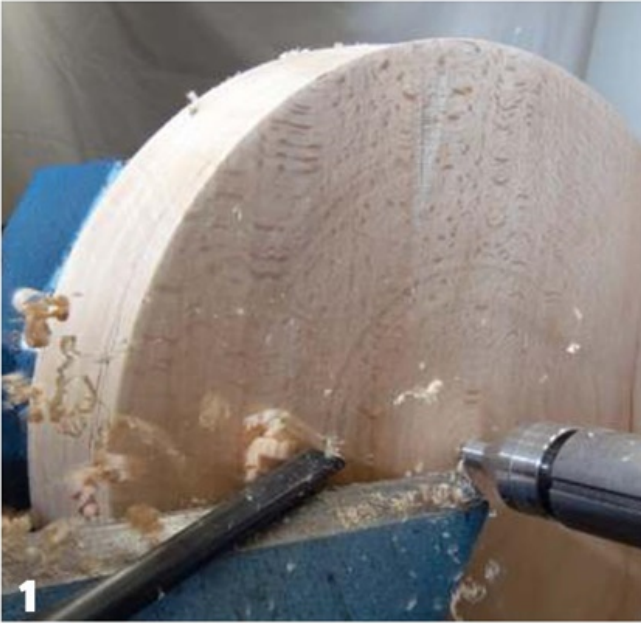
- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Bowl gouge
- Parting tool
- Beading and parting tool
- Faceplate
- Chuck
- Drill
- Drill bits of various diameters
- Sanding arbor
- Revolving tailstock centre
- Rotary carving unit

- Various sizes of ball-ended burrs
- Flame burr
- Drum sander
- Sanding wheel

MATERIALS

- Beech or other timber of your choice, 350mm wide x 50mm deep. These are guideline measurements, create to your ability, requirements and lathe capacity
- Abrasives down to 320 grit
- Finish of your choice





Shaping the underside of the bowl

1 Mount your chosen blank on a small faceplate and mount it on the lathe. The screw holes will be turned away later when creating the hollow for the bowl. Once secure, bring up your revolving tailstock centre for support. It is always best practice to use the revolving tailstock for support whenever you can when holding work on a faceplate or chuck and only remove it when safe to do so to access the area supported by the tailstock. You can then shape and cut detail or perform an action that the tailstock support will hinder if in place. Now, use a bowl gouge to true up the face and edge of the blank.

2 Measure your chuck jaws, set the measurement with the dividers and transfer this to the wood, making sure you do not touch the right-hand side point on the timber as this will kick the tip upwards and around the work. A tip for beginners is to put a piece of masking tape on one side of the dividers at least 3-4mm past the steel point. Then, should you get the point close to the wood, the tape flickers and acts a warning not to move the dividers any closer to the piece. If you are not confident using dividers on a moving piece use a pencil and rule to mark the piece.

3 Using a parting tool, cut a suitable recess for the chuck, working in increments to a depth of 4-5mm at a time.

4 Since the jaws on my chuck are dovetailed, I use a parting tool with an angle ground equal to the external shape of the chuck jaws to create the necessary dovetail profile. Of course, you cut the profile required to suit your jaw profile.

5 Now mark the outer part of the foot. The remaining area is divided into approximately three parts. The side is also marked to determine where the bottom of the rim is. In addition to this, a line is created to show where the widest part of the base section is too.

6 Create the outer section of the ogee and underside of the rim. Start by removing the waste material between the rim line and the marked line nearest the edge of the blank...

7 ...and create a flat face between these two lines. Also, remove a little timber on the lower section to create a very slightly raised foot. About 3mm high or so will be great.

8 Create a subtle concave curve between the outer edges of the flat section you created just now. Now remark the pencil line just removed on the lower edge of the concaved section. To create the lower upsweep curve section, mark two lines either side of the line just marked, approximately equal distance from the centre/corner line.

9 Gently round the corner over with the lower wing of a bowl gouge, which is a scraping-type cut, or use a push cut.

10 Once you have the ogee curve you require, remove the piece from the lathe, leaving the faceplate still attached, and check that the chuck jaws are a good, secure fit. If they are not, remount the work and adjust as required until correct.

Shaping the top of the bowl

11 Once in the chuck, true up the face of the piece using a bowl gouge. Here I am adopting a pull cut using the lower wing of the bowl gouge. Such a cut does not have the bevel rubbing but it is an effective waste-removal cut. A bevel-rubbing push cut will give a cleaner finish.

12 Mark the boundary of the central highest part of the convex section of the rim and then create a downward convex-shaped curve to meet the outer rim. Once done, draw a line just in from the outer edge of the rim to determine the outer boundary of where the holes will start for the texture.

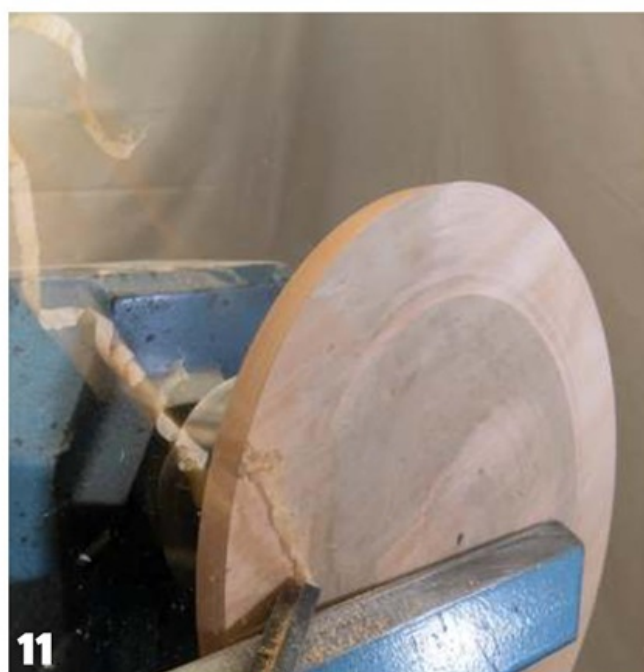
Texture

13 Starting with the largest diameter bit, several holes are drilled in the rim at various depths. Do not drill all the way through to the back of the bowl. That said, you could texture the underside of the bowl too. Choice of drill bit is entirely up to the user and availability. A test hole was also drilled in the centre. Drilling with a drill press will give clean, parallel holes, but as texture was the desired effect, a cordless drill was used.

14 Work through the various sizes of bits available to create a random pattern. You can, of course, create any type of pattern you choose, but a random one does not require indexing or a drill guide and so on.

15 Work through various drill sizes.

16 A large burr is used in a rotary flexible shaft tool to create an uneven surface, working randomly across the surface, and also the outer rim receives some texture.





17



18

17 A smaller, coarse burr further adds to the texture by removing any unwanted corners left from the previous burr.

18 Using a nylon rotary abrasive brush in the cordless drill helps clean up wispy bits and creates a very subtle texture.

19 A smaller burr cleans up the fibres around the top of the holes. A small piece of tape on the burr acts as a fan, blowing the dust away from the work away.

20 Here is the finished surface.

Finishing touches

21 Now turn the centre of the bowl with a bowl gouge. As there is a recess for the chuck and not a spigot, keep in mind the recess, monitoring the depth of the bowl centre when hollowing so you do not go too deep.

22 Here is the piece prior to the application of several coats of satin lacquer. Of course, you can use a finish of your choice. No finish is an option too.

23 As stated in step 13, be careful not to drill all the way through unless desired. As one of the bits did go through, I did not want to restart the project so I turned what looks like a woodworm (*tinea*), burrowing into the underside of the bowl. ●



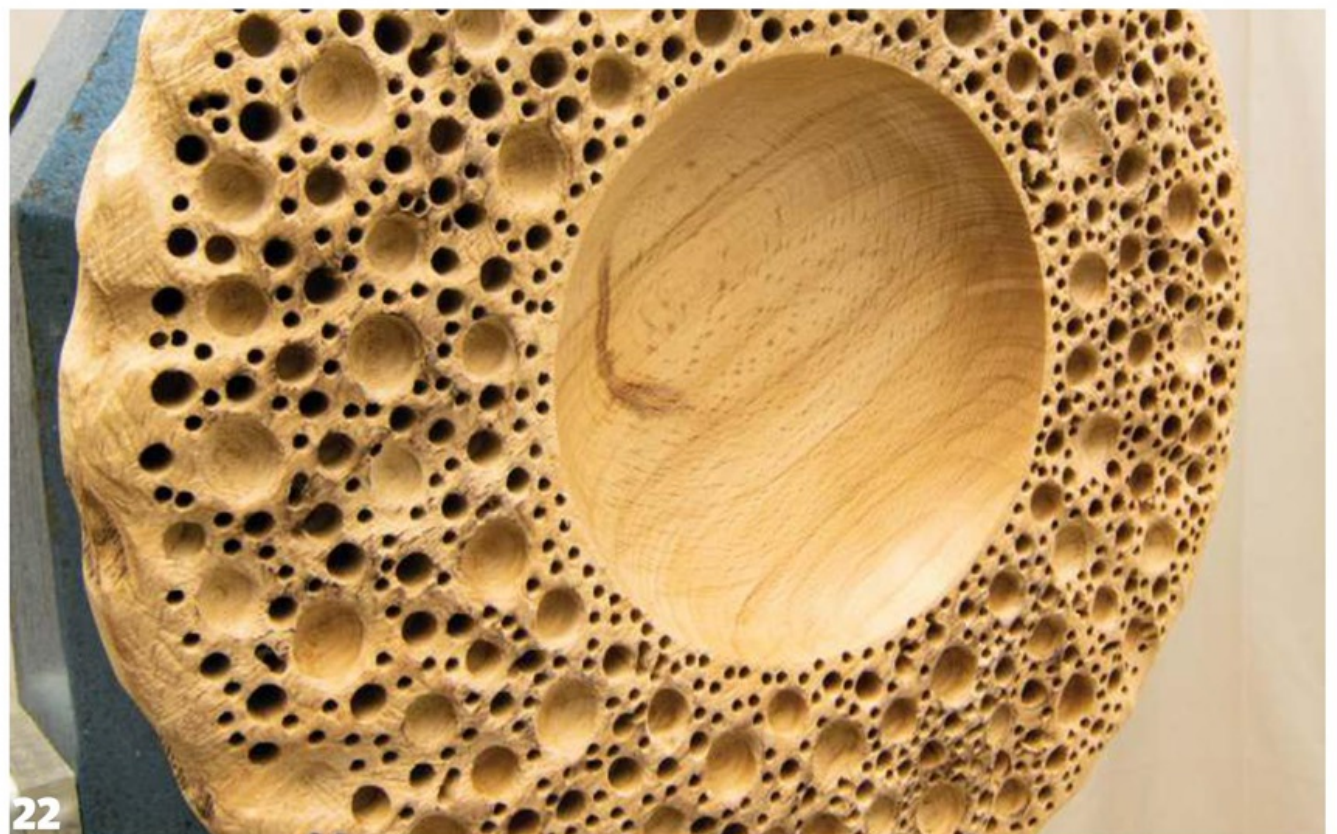
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20



21



22



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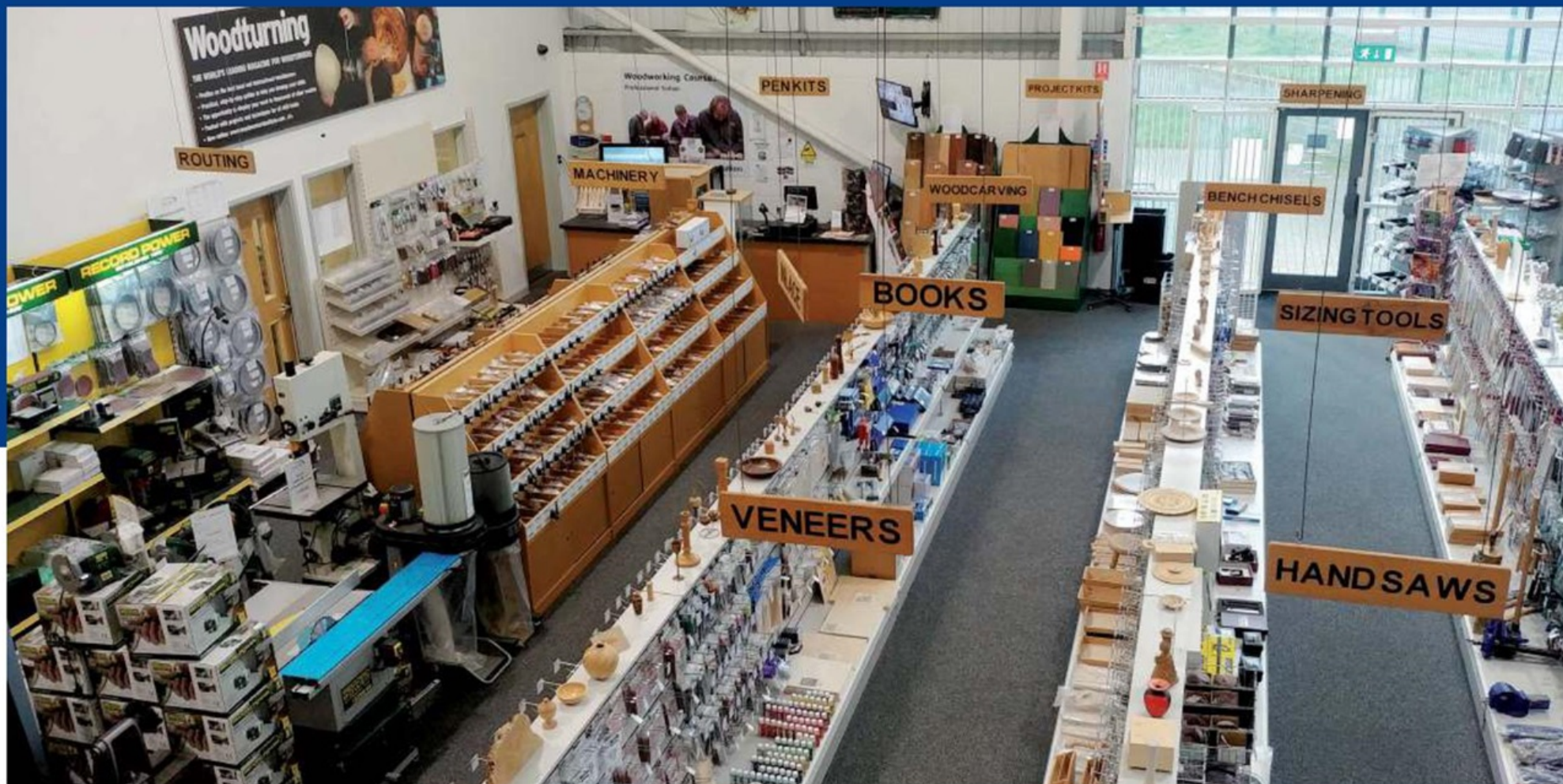
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A man of many influences

Vermont woodturner Ted Beebe gives us an insight into some of his life and work



My wife Kathy and I live in the country near Burlington, Vermont. We spend a few months in Florida each winter; I am a member of a turning club in both communities and enjoy great friendships and sharing in each. I grew up on a dairy farm in Vermont, USA and attended business college prior to a career in banking, retiring about eight years ago.

I bought my first lathe in about 1976 and attempted a couple of spindle turning projects over the next 35 years. I've done woodworking projects as long as I can remember and felt that a lathe belonged in my shop, but it didn't agree with me. In 2011, we were at a woodworking show and I showed a fair amount of interest in the woodturning group that was demonstrating. Kathy picked up an application for membership and later encouraged me to join. After attending four monthly meetings, a member informed me that turning meant I needed to turn the lathe on. My first projects were simple, small bowls using the very old craftsman gouge. I am not sure what I used for finish, if any.

INFLUENCES

In each of the clubs that I belong to, I have a mentor and friend that are both excellent segmented turners. While they are perfectly willing and able to give me instruction, and have on occasion, they are more of an inspiration and model for me. I also enter some of my work in competitions in Florida, and I find that the idea of competing pushes me to new levels. I am also influenced by

things around me, such as a stack of cups or an odd-shaped piece of wood that has interesting possibilities. I would say that my most productive innovation comes early in the morning as I am waking and thinking about projects and challenges in the shop so, oddly enough, waking from sleep has been a big influence on my work.

MISTAKES & DEVELOPMENT

Possibly my biggest mistake has been a large piece of wood that came off the lathe. No real damage, but a lesson learned. At the time, I was turning outboard using Cole jaws with no tailstock support. That sounds foolish as I think about it now. The challenge is to be as careful as I can, yet there are sometimes situations with which I am not totally comfortable. In such situations, there is usually an alternative that would be a better choice.

I just want to see my development continue to evolve. A few years ago, I would not have been able to see some of the projects that I have completed in the past two years. While I have some interesting and challenging projects planned for the near future, I can only hope that they will lead to further innovation and challenges beyond. I do,

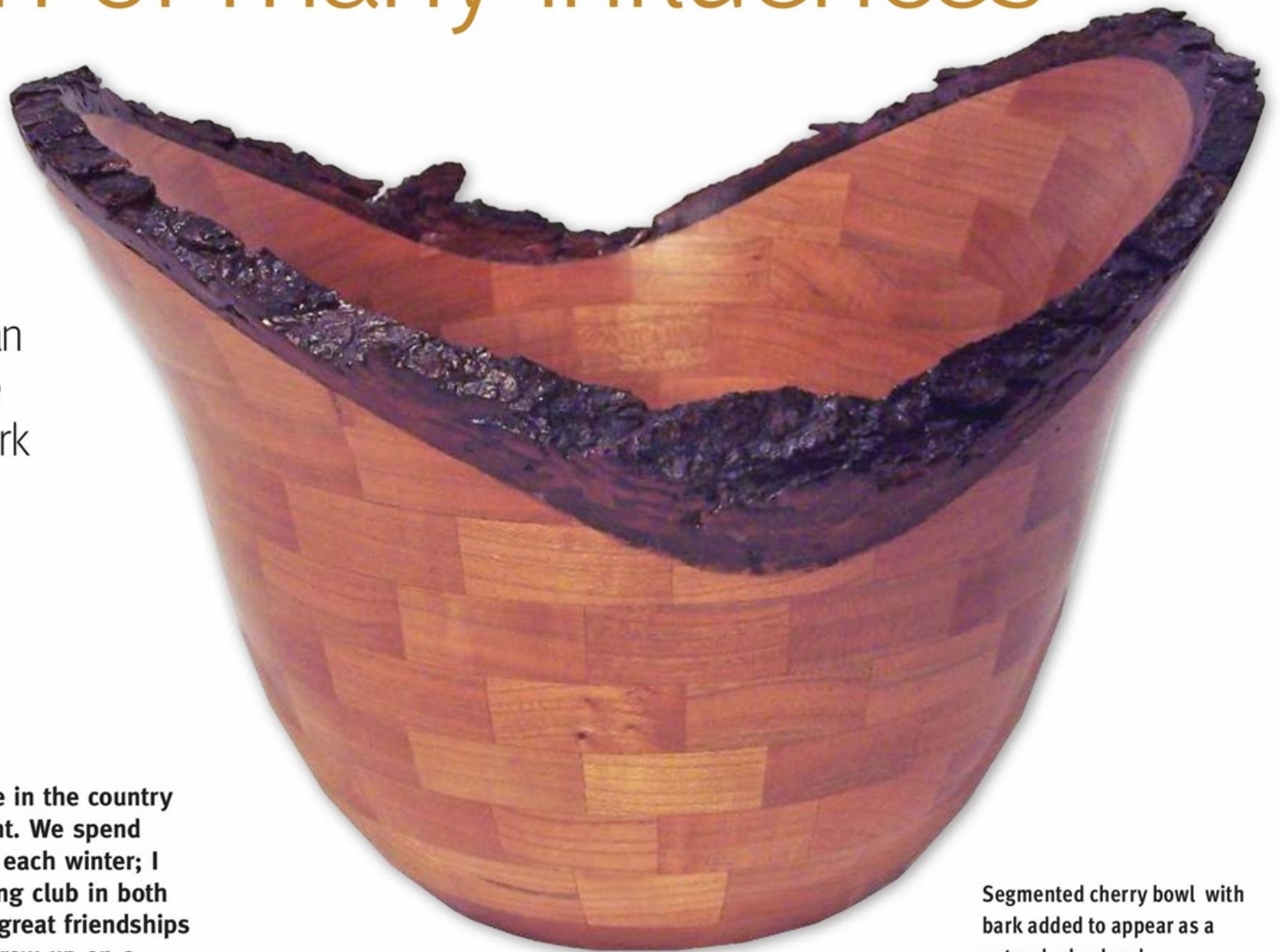
however, hope and expect that my turning skills will continue to improve. I want to be better with my gouges and less reliant on my sanding devices. There are also tools and procedures that I would like to incorporate, such as piercing and texturing tools.

EXPERIENCES

I have been known to start the lathe, apply the gouge, and wonder why I am not making any shavings, only to realise that the lathe is in reverse. That's odd. I also will occasionally attempt to blow dust off of my glasses without removing my dust mask... doesn't work well.

The guitar project has been my most memorable. When I figured out, early one morning, how to make the guitar soundboard on a lathe, it became a must-do project loaded with challenges. I turned the segmented back, neck, segmented soundboard, segmented soundboard insert, bridge, and bridge pins.

The best advice I ever received was simple, and you've probably heard it: 'Use sandpaper like someone else is paying for it.' It is not always easy to discard a piece of paper that is still working to some degree, but a new piece of paper is a pleasure.



Segmented cherry bowl with bark added to appear as a natural edge bowl



Segmented maple/walnut 'out of round' bowl



Segmented cherry basket-bowl with handle



Full size, playable, segmented acoustical guitar, primarily maple



Bowl from a board



Cherry segmented serving tray with 4 segments doubling as handles with a cherry plywood bottom



18 segments, spruce, quarter sawn, end-grain bowl.



Segmented, painted, maple stack of Solo cups (one piece).

Quick-fire questions

HAVE YOU EVER GIVEN UP ON SOMETHING?

I have given up on a project or two, most notably, when I have gone through the bottom of a bowl. However, there has been a time or two when I have just changed the plan at that point, but most often it is deemed not salvageable.

FAVOURITE TYPE OF WOODTURNING?

Segmenting. I do a fair amount of turning out of solid wood, but I often do a bowl from a board using 38mm-thick boards made from several species of wood. Also, of the four significant projects that I have in mind, they all use traditional segmented rings, but none of the projects are bowls. I used my experience of making traditional segmented bowls to create the guitar project, and from there I have thought of so many more applications.

The biggest difference between now and when I first started turning are equipment, knowledge, experience, and materials, all of which have grown nicely, but I'm sure that is true for all of us. My interest in segmenting and my access to two mentors/friends who I have watched with great interest and admiration has added greatly to my growth and pleasure with the hobby.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT?

I'm not sure I have a favourite piece of equipment, with most of the pieces getting about equal time in use. Segmenting can take a lot of prep time and many of the tools are called upon. I will say, however, that it is always a pleasure to get the project on the lathe, because that is where the product that you had envisioned starts to come to fruition.

THE FUTURE?

I like what is happening – the growth in popularity of the hobby is impressive. I am anxious to see a selection of carbide-edge gouges come on the market. No more sharpening, just send it away to be sharpened occasionally, just as I do with saw blades.

LIKES AND DISLIKES?

I like the camaraderie and the sharing that goes on within the turning clubs. I like galleries as a way of keeping my inventory at a manageable level, and I dislike sitting at craft shows watching people walk by without even a glance for fear of making eye contact.

HELPFUL ADVICE?

I'm not sure my advice will be helpful, because many turners (perhaps most) like just what they are doing. But if a turner has any interest at all in trying hollowing, segmenting, pen making, or whatever, then I would encourage them to try it. Step outside the box. If your club has mentors, then use the one who might be helpful to you. If you don't have mentors, then just ask and someone will be glad to help.

TOP TIP FOR FELLOW TURNERS?

Try using an O-ring for the base of your next bowl. I use a 5mm-wide parting tool to make a groove and I glue in a 5mm O-ring of various sizes to suit the ring and project. I like it, I just don't think of it often enough.

If you have any questions or comments, Ted can be reached at teddy.beebe@gmail.com.



Ash/walnut segmented cookie jar with 3 segments serving as legs



9½-foot rattlesnake, lacewood with eastern hophornbeam underside, 185 rings, 3,185 segments with a battery powered rattle

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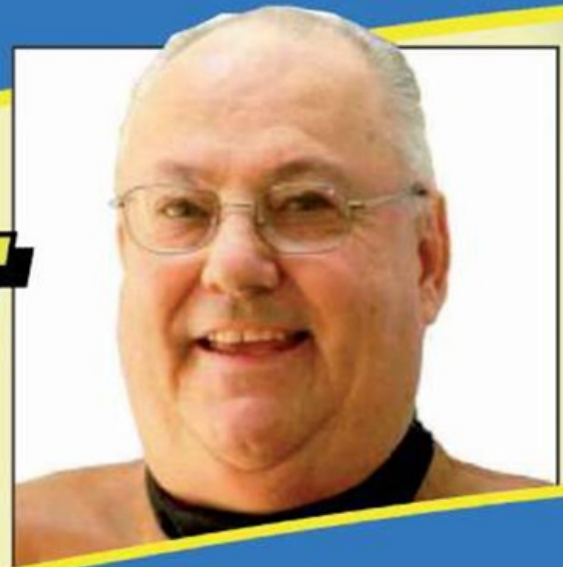
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Screw-threaded lid hollow form

Jason Breach integrates a screw-threaded lid to a hollow form



Over the years I have done some thread chasing, but it is a skill that I have never really practised. I have had the chance to watch a few of the masters of this art demonstrate over the years. Bill Jones and Alan Batty always made this look so simple. I can remember my first attempt, a series of V-lines that did not do very much – let alone screw together. When I was approached by a friend who wanted to know if I could make them a small wooden pot to use as a pet urn for their dog, I knew a push-fit lid would not be a suitable way of fitting lid and base together. The use of a threaded lid would be the best solution as this ensures the lid will remain in place. I decided that a simple shape in a decorative pale timber would work best. The timber selected needed to be dry as damp timber will shrink to an oval shape, which will mean that the threaded lid will not function. In the end I used a block of madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) burr for the main body and African blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*) for the lid to create a contrast.

The selection of the materials is so important. There are a number of timbers that will take a thread – boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), lignum vitae and such other close-grained dense hardwoods – and some of the cast resins and acrylics. You could, as I did in this project, apply a few coats of cyanoacrylate adhesive to the madrone section to be threaded to reinforce and solidify a material normally too soft to take a thread. It worked very well and is well worth experimenting with on other timbers too. The size of the material for the pot is 100mm square stock, as any bigger than this is difficult to find dry and also makes the hollowing with basic tools more problematic. I initially looked at inserting a hardwood ring into the top of the pot and threading this, but then started looking at hardening the timber around the opening to allow this to hold a thread instead.

The tools used to create a thread are called thread chasers; they are supplied in pairs, one internal and one external, in

a number of thread sizes. I used a set of 20TPI – 18 would have worked well too. It is possible to work with these on the toolrest, but this tends to make the chasers drag and resist the thread, so the use of an armrest makes the cutting of the internal thread a lot easier. A practice run before starting brought back the technique, and reminded me that the speed needs to be slow, 200-400rpm is a good guide. Also, when starting to cut either thread, present the tool at about 45° to the workface and engage the centre of the chaser and not the first tooth. This takes a little bit of practice, but is so rewarding when it works.

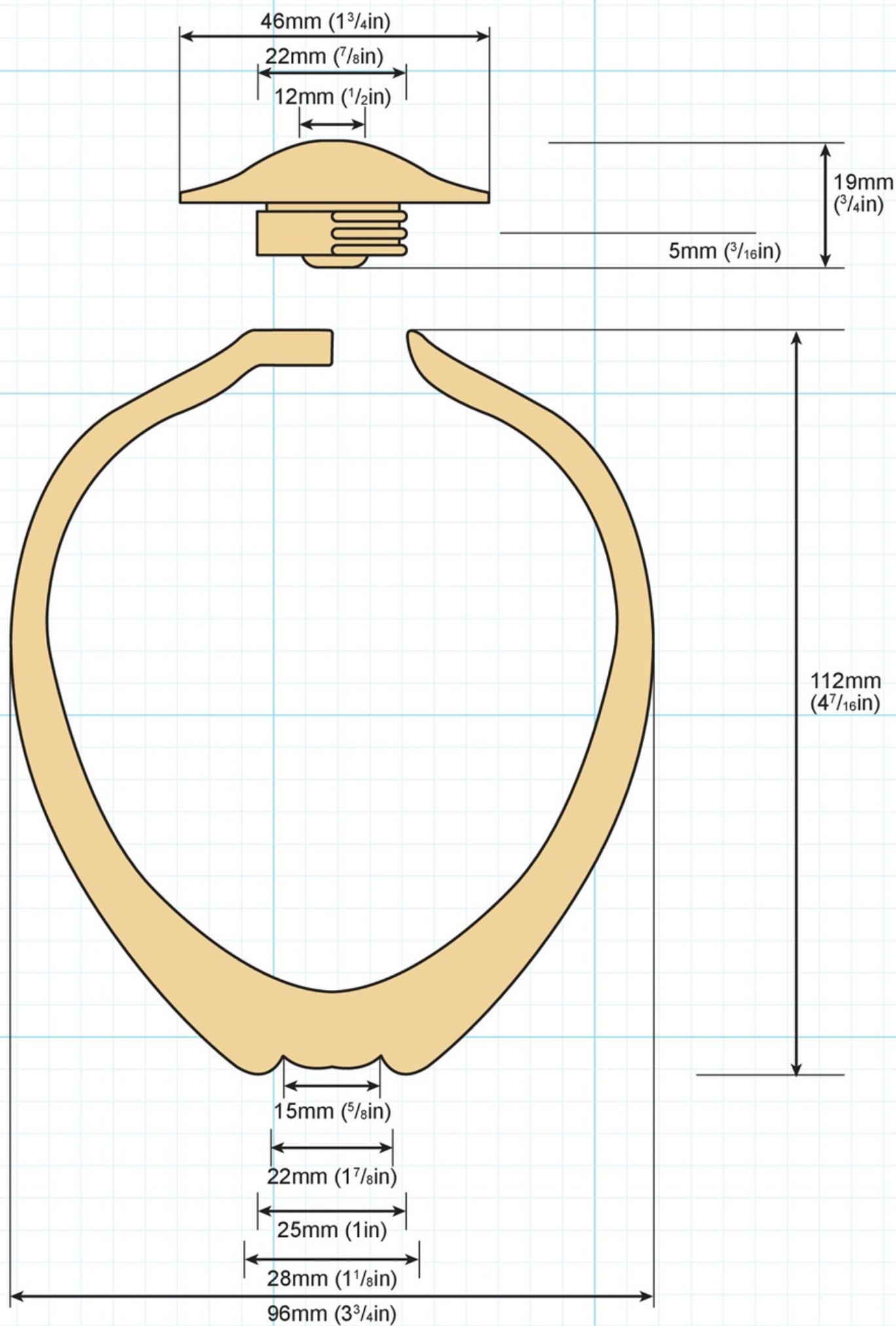
Making the urn I used basic turning tools that we all have – you can use whatever small, specialised hollowing tools you have. The use of the threaded joint between the lid and base can easily be adapted to suit a range of projects, so if the small urns do not appeal to you, this technique can easily be incorporated into a range of other ideas.

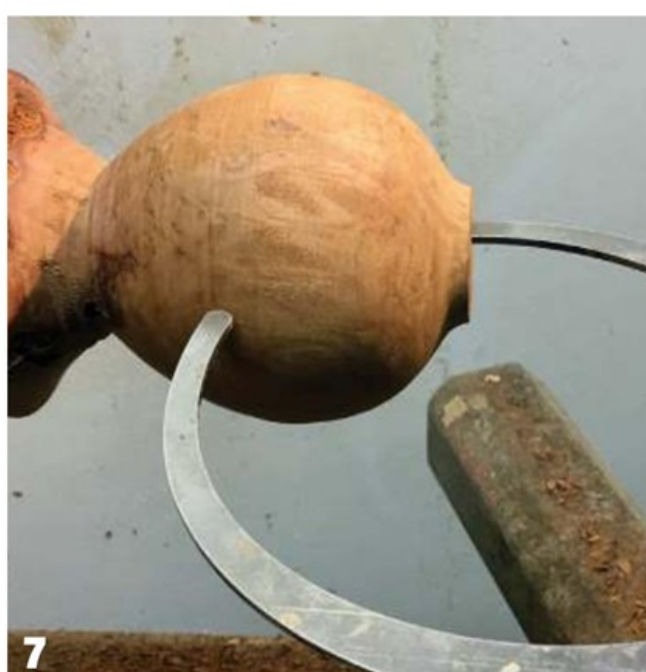
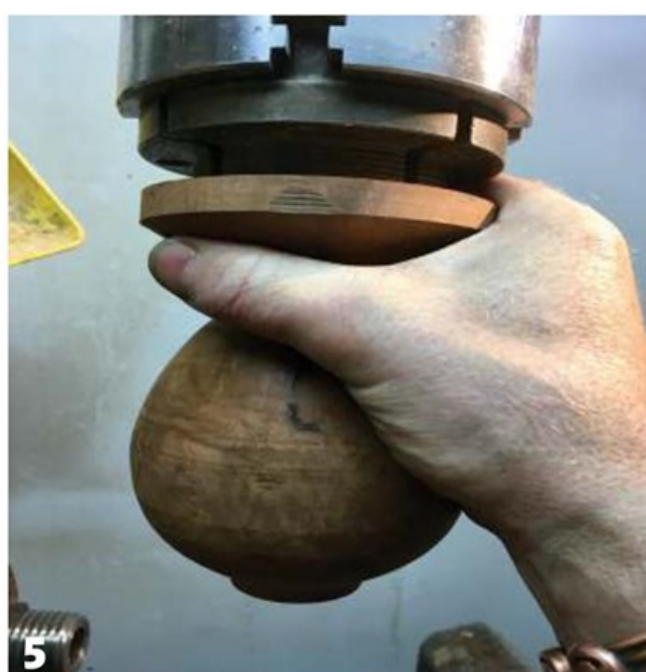
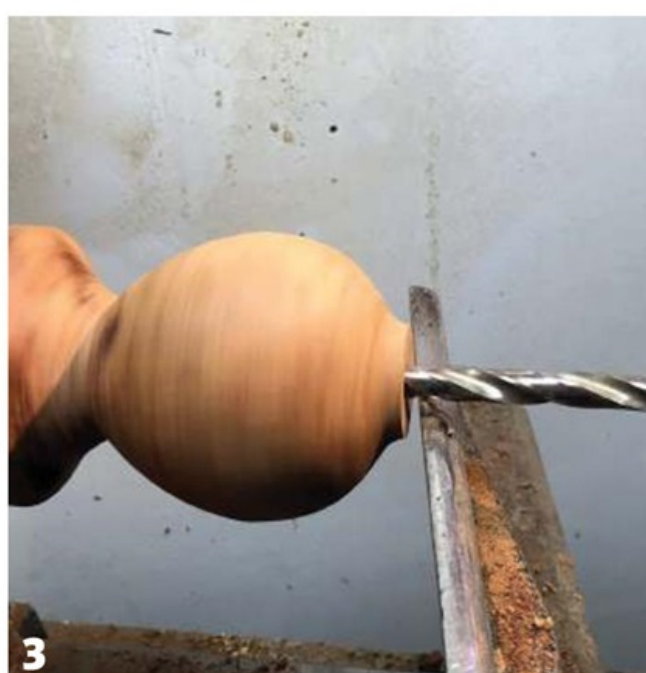
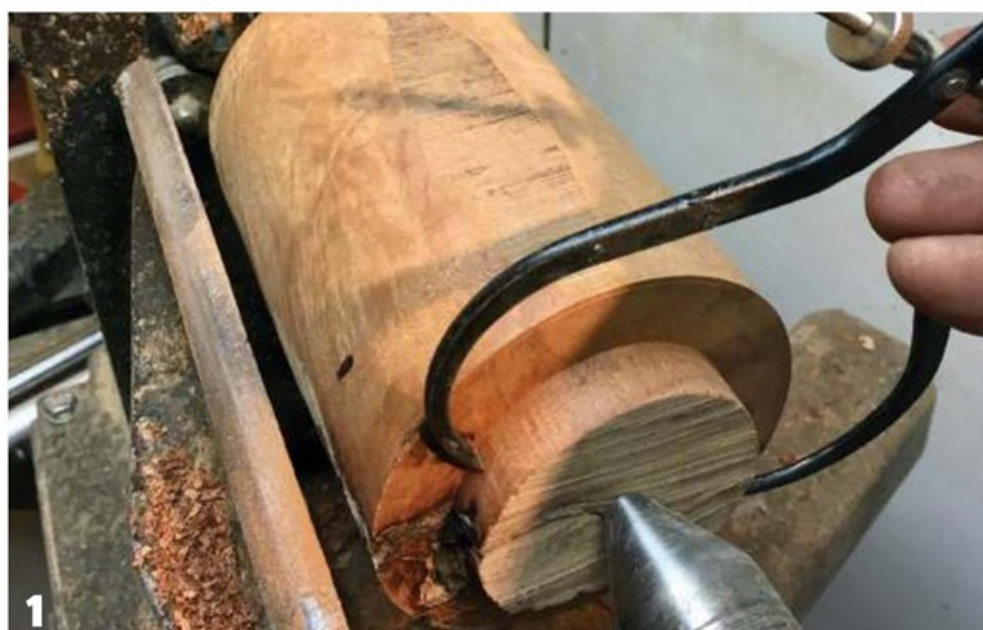
TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Spindle roughing gouge
- Bowl gouge
- Beading & parting tool
- Multi-tipped tool
- Hollowing tool
- Oval skew
- Pair of 18 or 20tpi thread chasers
- Armrest
- Drill bit 12mm
- Callipers
- Depth gauge
- Tailstock drill chuck
- 10 or 12mm plug cutter and drill bit (optional)

MATERIALS

- Pot 125mm long by 100mm square
- Lid 50mm long 50mm square
- Cyanoacrylate (CA)
- Abrasives down to 400 grit
- Finish of your choice





Initial shaping and hollowing

1 Mount the work between centres and turn this down to a straight cylinder. Cut a spigot on one end to allow this to be held in a chuck. I tend to use gripper jaws on this type of project as they are longer in length and I think hold more securely than some of the other jaw forms.

2 Once done, mount the wood into the chuck and bring up the tailstock to help keep everything secure. Now, using a gouge, shape the external shape working from larger to smaller. Do not make the base area of the form too small at this stage as this will weaken it and cause vibration when hollowing.

3 To allow easy access to hollow, drill a centre hole using a tailstock-mounted drill chuck. Mark a depth mark on the drill but reduce the lathe speed to about 500rpm, hold the drill chuck to prevent rotation and drill a clearance hole remembering to stop often and clear out the waste.

4 Keep the speed at about 600rpm, and using a bowl gouge with the flute at 10 o'clock work from centre outward and remove the waste. The handle needs to be under your forearm to counter-leverage. You can use a straight hollowing tool instead.

5 The waste material that has been removed will collect within the hollowed area, this will soon start to bind with the gouge or hollowing tool, and make it bounce and not cut. Clean out the waste by removing the chuck from the lathe and shaking the work upside-down.

6 As the hollowing progresses, it's important to check what we cannot see or feel, so measure the depth with a depth gauge. Remember though, the base shape of the pot has yet to be shaped, which will extend the height of the pot

7 & 8 Regular checks of the wall thickness are important to ensure the timber is being removed from the correct places. This simple shape allows the waste to be easily removed. Once the bulk of the hollowing is done, refine the internal shape with a suitable scraper, taking light cuts to refine it. I aimed for a wall thickness of about 8mm.

◀ **9 & 10** Leaving material around the top adds strength while hollowing as the opening can become rounded from the leverage of using the tools g. Once hollowed, lay a skew chisel flat on the toolrest and use the long point to square up the opening. Try not to open out the diameter of the hollowing too much. Remember to clean out the waste that has collected from inside.

Thread chasing

11 Since the madrone is soft and will not take a thread, I am using thin CA adhesive to harden the wood fibres so they will allow the thread to be produced. Flood the surface while slowly rotating the work by hand. Allow the glue to penetrate and dry before proceeding further. This technique of hardening wood with CA is well worth exploring. An alternative is to create a suitable material insert/collar to thread chase. The choice is yours, but both these methods allow you more variety of timber species to explore.

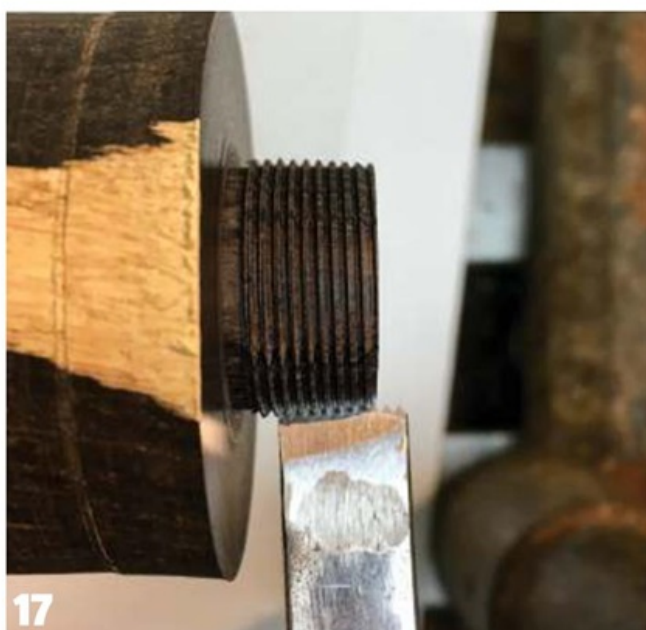
12 How you start thread chasing will depend on whether you use a thread-chasing armrest or not. If you are, set up the toolrest so that it is parallel to the lathe bed, ensure the lathe speed is lowered and, using the armrest to support the internal chaser, present the chaser at 45° to the opening and lightly engage the second and third tooth on or fractionally above the centreline, allowing the chaser to move along the armrest to cut the thread. If you are not using a arm rest, set the toolrest square across the opening and present the cutter in exactly the same way as with using the armrest.

13 Repeat this approach of gently arcing in, along and out again. With each touch a little more thread will be created. As the thread starts to form, position the handle of the chaser so that it is dead parallel to the opening. Once a thread has started to form the first tooth will engage within the thread. On soft timbers, add more glue as required to create crisp threads. Patience and not force are what is required. Continue as required, ensuring that the thread is parallel and clean.

14 Once done, refine the outer shape of the form, extending the shape of the top and the base. Once done, sand and seal. If possible leave this held within the chuck.

15 & 16 If you can, use another chuck to hold the lid material and mount this on the lathe. Now, using a beading and parting tool, turn a 12mm-long section to a straight parallel spigot. This needs to be about 2mm bigger in diameter than the threaded opening of the pot. At the headstock end of the section to be threaded cut a 2-3mm groove to create a clearance area to remove the chaser. Lower the speed and, using the external chaser on the toolrest, present the chaser at about a 45° angle. Cutting with the second and third teeth working from tailstock towards the headstock, lightly engage on the corner, sliding the tool along. Repeat this to form the thread.





17



18

17 As the thread forms, bring the handle around so that the first tooth engages and is drawn parallel along the thread. Remove the chaser before you hit the body of the material that makes the lid or the thread will be stripped.

18 Once the thread is formed, see if they come together. If too tight, remove a little material on the top of the threads using a 10mm beading tool, then re-cut the thread with the chasers. Looking at the threads these will have a sharp V-section. Repeat this until they screw together – a little paste wax can help reduce friction.

Finishing touches

19 & 20 A decorative button can be inset inside the lid. These I cut with a plug cutter using a pillar drill. The matching drill size is drilled in the base of the lid, and a button is glued in with Superglue and then shaped to make this a hidden small feature. Sand and polish. Part-off the section required for the lid, remount the chuck holding the pot on to the lathe, screw on the lid to the pot, and bring up the revolving tailstock centre to add support.

21 Using a sharp gouge shape the lid, working from larger to smaller. I split this into two repetitive cuts, the hollow shape working from the outer edge up towards the tailstock. Once shaped, create the dome section of the centre of the lid. Only remove the tailstock when needed and then sand and seal it.



19



20



21



22

22 The base of the pot can now be extended – remove material from the mass near the chuck to allow access to shape the base. Measure the internal depth and thickness to give a guide of the overall length and, once shaped, sand and seal it..

23 & 24 Carefully part the pot off the lathe using a parting tool and handsaw. To clean up the base I hollowed a scrap block to make a friction drive. Ensure the drive surface is smooth. Using kitchen towel as a cushion, mount the work using a ring centre in the tailstock, not too much pressure is required. Carefully turn the base shape creating a slight hollow, sand and seal. The pot and lid can now be polished using a buffing wheel polishing kit to create a lasting polish. ●



23



24

Kurt's clinic

Kurt Hertzog answers some readers' questions

Ideas for club meetings

Question: I'm looking for some fresh ideas for our local woodturners club monthly meeting. We have show and tell, a turning demo, and a wood raffle. We need to pick things up. What do other clubs do? Any suggestions we can adopt?



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT HERTZOG

Answer: In the fun part of the meeting when the business part has been toughed out, you've already got the most common items. To those you can consider adding: a guest speaker; a question and answer session; expanding your raffle to include tools/hardware/discount coupons to local or internet/mail order merchants; and, on occasion, tours. These are just a few ideas. On the guest speaker, ask a non-member local turner of note. They can be a local pro, a talent from another club, whether local or within reasonable travel distance, or specialist in some field of interest. Most will come for free or perhaps dinner with the executive before the meeting. Question and answer can be free flowing with questions from the floor and answers by any and all of the membership who have some advice. Your raffle can be adapted to be more diverse but self-funding by offering

ticket participation at a level that will cover the cost of a prize. Something everyone can use in a modest price range. Often, local merchants will donate these just for the publicity you give them. 50/50 raffles are popular. The winner gets half the pot and the other half goes to the club. Consider an occasional tour of a local woodworking, woodturning, lumber merchant, or other interesting site. Have your meeting there. Hold the meeting on a weekend day at a convenient time. Most facilities will allow groups to do this if approached properly, order is maintained, and the safety requirements are adhered to. Hold your regular meeting and add the tour of the appropriate parts of the site to the meeting contents. Mix and match to add some variations and some spice to the meetings so they don't become too rote and stale.

Workshop lighting

Question: I'm finding my overhead lighting at my lathe isn't enough anymore. Any advice or recommendations for a new lathe light?

Answer: You may consider replacing or expanding your current lighting to start. I have two 4ft double bulb fluorescents directly over the bed of my lathe. I have recently changed those fixtures to LED lighting. Now, these two 4ft double strip LED lights output far more lumens and do it for much lower electrical cost and low heat. To this lighting, I have added several forms of task lighting. Behind my lathe, I have an added power bracket with many duplex electrical outlets properly wired. The bracketing is sturdy and supports several

goose-neck industrial light fixtures. These are movable as needed and can be positioned as close or as far away as needed for the light as well as being able to safely turn. I have magnetic base goose-necks too. A wide variety of lamps is available. Try your woodturning retailer, internet/mail order vendor, or the industrial supply houses. Lamps are offered with shields to protect the bulbs, CF lamps, or LED light sources. They should be a buy once, last forever kind of purchase for your shop.



Look for high-efficiency, high-output overhead lighting to couple with task lighting as needed and use directional lighting to help see clearly

Best click pen kit

Question: I turn mainly wood pens and I like click pens. What's the best kit for the money? What do you recommend for the best writing pen?

Answer: I'm sorry I can't recommend the best click pen kit. I haven't found one that I am very happy with. I find them all relatively fragile and prone to short life. On the best writing pen, no pen really writes. The installed inkfill mechanism does the writing. I'll rephrase your question to 'what is the best writing inkfill?'. That question really is subjective. I rarely use the kit inkfill. They work but are necessarily very low-cost products. I favour using the genuine inkfill for that style of pen. For the 7mm Cross style pen, I use a genuine Cross inkfill. For the Parker or Sheaffer style, I use a genuine Parker or Sheaffer inkfill. Be cautious ordering since the retailers label replacements as Cross-style or Cross-type, etc. Buy from a pen shop or a stationers in the authentic retail packaging to get the real thing. Be willing to pay the cost difference. There are quality inkfill manufacturers that make products that fit the various styles. You can certainly choose those if you wish. The acid test is writing with them. Put two inkfills into two pens that are essentially the same heft and feel. If you can't tell the difference between them writing, then buy the less expensive inkfill. If you can tell the difference, make a



Unless it is an unimportant giveaway, I always opt for the high-quality inkfill to be certain it writes as good as it looks

value judgement whether your pen is worth installing the inkfill that will do it justice. BTW, AT Cross owns Sheaffer.

Send your questions to Kurt's email: kurt@kurthertzog.com



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Don't blow your health

Geoffrey Laycock discusses ways of clearing dust and shavings

You have spent an amazing afternoon in your workshop. You've made a platter and a hollow form and the spread of shavings on the floor are testament to the prodigious work rate and the hazy snow effect view through your window evidence of the amount of dust floating around for you to breathe. It's all worse than it should be because you have discovered that highly useful tool – compressed air. You've seen others use it and show how useful it is for blowing shavings and dust out of hollow form turning. You used it to quickly clean your lathe, 10 times faster than your vacuum, and then you dusted yourself off better than you have ever done before, so your partner isn't going to moan about you traipsing dust into the house. Brilliant.

Of course any of those activities may be seen during demonstrations, frequently on Uselesstube or in articles, but all three are also very strongly advised against. In a work setting all three would be prohibited.

BLOWING OUT SHAVINGS

Blowing out shavings and dust should speak for itself. You've already seen the evidence in the sunlight coming through your window or under one of your workshop lights. It is a super-efficient method to get fine dust airborne so you can breathe it. Same goes for cleaning down a machine, but that is even worse and the quantities you can chuck into your airspace huge. Now you may argue that you wear a powered respirator so your breathing is not affected. Excellent news, but that won't stop all the dust settling on every available surface to be disturbed later – and I have yet to mention the fire and explosion potential. OK, the chance of a dust cloud ignition is very, very small, but it has certainly happened in industrial environments so you could be the news maker for the small workshop. The dust settling everywhere most definitely does increase your fire risk. Also, forget about the high-level room air filter you have making a significant difference to such a haze. They are not designed for levels of dust like that and, just a thought, have you ever changed the filter?

CLOTHING

The last activity, cleaning your clothes, is potentially the worst. The risk depends on the type of compressed air blowgun you have, but in any case it is something you most certainly should not do. There are two types of blowgun: the simple one basically has a small diameter pipe the air flows through, the second is a safety blowgun which has multiple holes at the firing end and the holes are usually angled. This is intended to attempt two things. First, the angled jets should make it less likely the material you are blowing away comes straight back at your face. It's a nice idea but they don't work very well. The second reason is, if you blow air through it while in contact with your skin, the pressure can divert from the holes obscured by skin and cause no damage. They don't do that too well either.

Have any of you watched a high-pressure water jet cutter in action? Maybe not, but I had a lot of involvement with them. Watching a 150mm-thick piece of aluminium being precision cut by water – in that instance with an ultra-fine abrasive added – is fascinating. It demonstrates that something you see as soft and harmless can be highly destructive, and so



PHOTOGRAPH BY GEOFFREY LAYCOCK

can compressed air at much lower pressures. Skin contact with blowguns has killed in the past, much more frequently it causes skin damage which often results in serious infection as any skin contaminants are forced deep into tissue. That air can become injected into blood vessels and as air bubbles travel around the body they can find the lungs causing an embolism, blood vessels around the heart causing an infarction or blood vessels in the head causing stroke – you get the idea. And you are blowing dust into the surrounding air you are also breathing, so another good reason to avoid.

FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

HSE website: [HSE.GOV.UK](https://www.hse.gov.uk) – HSG39 Compressed Air safety

In the interests of broadening the range of guidance available, I attempted to find OSHA – the US enforcement body – guidance on compressed air safety, sadly with no success. I did find Directive STD-01-13-001, which requires air used for cleaning to be reduced pressure below 30PSI. Also Standard Number 1910.242(a) sets the standards for all tools and equipment used by employees: 'General requirements. Each employer shall be responsible for the safe condition of tools and equipment used by employees, including tools and equipment which may be furnished by employees.' That is the text in full.

The Health & Safety Executive guidance above is comprehensive, based on real-life experience, up-to-date and available anywhere easily.

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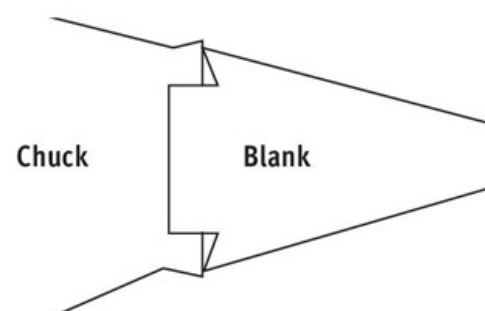
Neil Turner makes a useful jewellery display item from scraps of pretty burl timber

Most woodworkers are collectors of wood and they all have a stash of small pieces of pretty timber offcuts from previous projects. With this thought in mind, what can we do with some little pieces of burl offcuts?

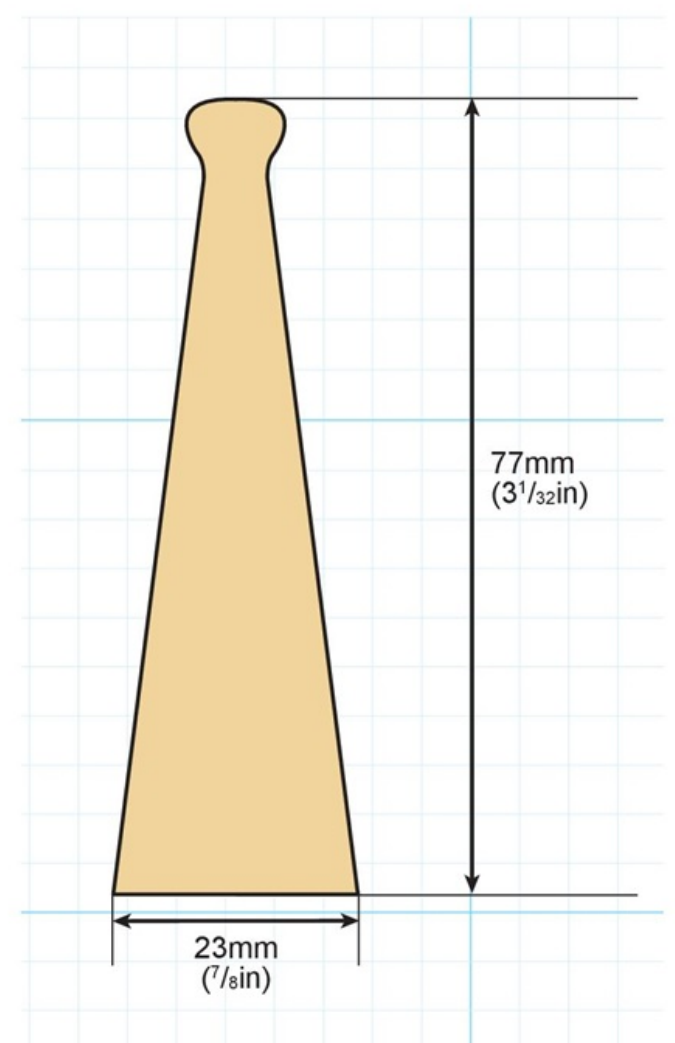
One small turning project that doesn't require a lot of timber is a ring holder. They can range in size from 22mm-30mm dia. to 60mm-95mm high. The design is important – a slender, long taper has far more appeal than a short, dumpy shape. Something else to bear in mind, the grain in burl timber is not straight, which can make it awkward to have a pointy top on the ring holder as it can easily break off. A solution is to have a small belled top, which doubles as an easier way to pick up the holder if need be.

HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS

- Always make sure your tools are sharp when turning any timber, but with burl wood it's even more important.
- When making the spigot for the chuck create a small, square spigot and undercut the face where the outside of the jaws make contact. This gives contact with the outermost part of the jaws and will give more stability during the turning process (as per the drawing).



- Make sure your final finish is very smooth – these pieces are made to be felt and handled so this will add to the tactile experience of the purchaser.
- Run dust extraction when sanding.
- Check burl for faults and defects.
- Turn at a speed you are comfortable with.





TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE & RPE)
- Spindle gouge or bowl gouge with swept-back wings
- Spindle gouge
- Thin parting tool
- Chuck fitted with a set of pin jaws
- Drive spur
- Revolving tailstock centre
- Bandsaw

MATERIALS

- Offcuts of pretty timber
- Danish oil/lacquer finish of your choice
- Abrasives 180-400 grit

1 Cut the pieces into the rough shape required on a bandsaw. Place the cut blank between centres and rough the blank into the round. There are a number of tools you can use to perform this task, such as a spindle gouge, skew chisel or a bowl gouge. Make a small spigot on the larger end with a parting tool to accommodate the jaws of the chuck.

2 Place the turned blank into the chuck fitted with a set of long-nose jaws. Secure firmly. Move the tailstock into position to support the blank during the turning process. The long-nose jaws allow you a little more room near the chuck body for turning. Avoiding the potential of catching your fingers and hands on the chuck. Using a bowl gouge or spindle gouge, in this case with a swept-back grind, you are able to make a slicing cut to minimise tear-out. Working large diameter to small diameter you can create the slender shape and the curve at the top. Always work downhill to avoid tear-out

3 Use a thin parting tool to define the base, leaving 10mm diameter of timber to support the final turning on the top of the ring holder.

4 Using a spindle gouge with the flute pointing in the direction of travel at about the 2.30-3 o'clock position, start to shape the top. By using the chisel in this manner, you will hopefully avoid potential catches. This tool is thinner than a bowl gouge, so it is easier to use closer to the live centre with it still in position to nearly complete all the turning process.

5 Remove the tailstock revolving centre and complete the top with the spindle gouge.

6 Run through the sanding grit to your requirements, trailing your fingers in the direction the wood is turning.

7 Part off with the parting tool holding the work with one hand and keeping all parts of the hand and arm away from the chuck, slightly undercutting the base. Sand off the small piece of waste left from the paring procedure, then coat with your preferred finish.

8 Here is a finished ring holder. ●

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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 has spent a good deal of his time designing, turning and writing on the subject of salt and pepper mills. He has also published a book, *Adding Spice to Woodturning: 20 Salt, Pepper & Spice Shaker Projects for Woodturners*.

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Geoffrey Laycock was a Chartered Fellow of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Chartered Member of the Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors and Fellow of the Royal Society for the Protection of Health.

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IAN WOODFORD

Since retiring from the pharmaceutical industry Ian has enjoyed concentrating on his love of woodturning. As well as belonging to two Hampshire clubs he has written articles for both *Woodturning* and an American magazine.



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A professional woodturner, demonstrator and teacher, Kurt writes for various woodturning and woodworking publications in the US.

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JASON BREACH

Jason started turning at the age of 12 and has built up a reputation as a tutor and demonstrator that has taken him around the world. He produces a range of items, but is best known for his unusual turned boxes.

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LES SYMONDS

After a career in teaching, Les developed his hobby of woodturning into a career. He is on the Register of Professional Turners and has a small shop and gallery in Bala in the Snowdonia National Park, where he displays and sells his work.

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NEIL TURNER

Neil started out as a farmer and always enjoyed working with timber. Later in life he changed lifestyle to turn and make furniture full-time.

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neilturnerartisan.
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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.

**www.marksanger.
co.uk**



PAT CARROLL

As a builder/carpenter, Pat has always loved working with wood. In 2002 he took a woodturning class and was very quickly hooked. He is keen to explore the combination of texture and colour in his work.

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RICHARD FINDLEY

Richard is a full-time production turner specialising in small production runs, one-off commissions and turning for furniture and restoration work.

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PETE MONCRIEFF-JURY

Pete learned turning in school and, when made redundant 12 years ago, became a full-time woodturner. He focuses on making for high-end shows. He also demonstrates and teaches.

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WALTER HALL

Walter is a woodturner who has specialised in making pens and pencils. Based on the Northumberland coast in the UK, Walter sells his bespoke pens and pencils through local craft centres and via his website.

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walterhall.co.uk**
www.walterhall.co.uk



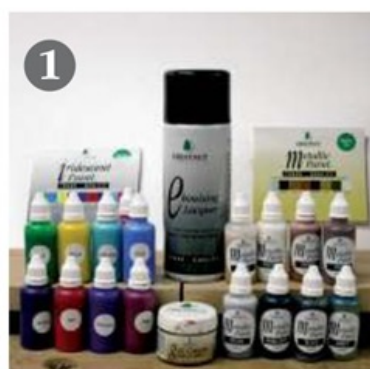
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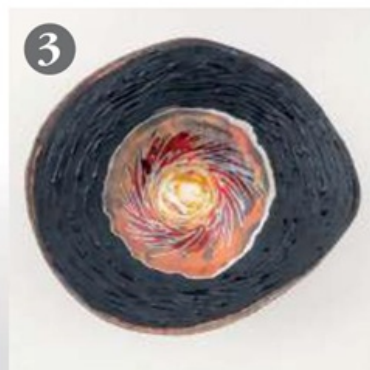
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Woodturning

Feb issue 341 on sale 23rd Jan

Andrew Potocnik makes a box with a spinning top for a lid



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW POTOCNIK

Richard Findley's Editor's Challenge is to explore piercing work

Mark Sanger makes a split-turned vase with a difference

Colwin Way on making jar lids and coasters

Andy Coates continues with timber saving and looks at what can be turned from rings and cores

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Mirror with a difference

Mark Sanger makes a sculptural centrepiece for a wall

Experimenting with texture, colour and the use of mixed media has always been a large part of my work and I aim to continually develop the techniques, ideas and projects that I make. Continual refinement of each technique and idea – no matter how small – is part of the philosophy I aim to follow. Often developments are subtle, from tweaking a tool technique to altering a texture or simply revisiting a previous project with a view to trying something different with an old favourite.

Having always been interested in ancient cultures and how these artisans produced everyday items, I am ever looking back at the difference in techniques and materials used compared to my own work. I was looking at the old method of producing mirrors by simply shaping and highly polishing metal, so I decided to amalgamate this idea with a heavy texture and rust paint effect I often use in the pieces I make to produce a sculptural mirror with a difference.

The project is turned from a sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) cross-grain seasoned blank mounted and turning on both faces, with the back of face turned to remove weight from the mirror due to its size as well as to add varying thickness into which grooves are parted, so the heavy, carved texture produced in the front face breaks through into these grooves, producing a heavy, pierced effect that allows the colour of the wall it is displayed on to show through. The texture is applied using 50mm carbide tipped discs and mini long-neck angle grinder taking light cuts until the final depth of texture is achieved. This 'breakthrough' effect from the carving can only be achieved if the thickness and profile of the project is produced to a thickness of the carving wheel to cut through into the grooves in the back face as shown later in the project stages.

After the texturing the surface is scorched outside of the workshop, using a blowtorch to remove torn-out fibres. This softens the texture adding to the aged, worn effect I was after. The whole piece is then stained with deep-red spirit wood stain and allowed to dry. Metal reactive iron oxide paint purchased online is applied to the texture and rim and ageing solution sprayed on to this using a misting atomiser, which is available from good art supply stores.

For the mirror I wanted to achieve the look of highly polished metal so decided to apply 24ct gold leaf to the surface of a modern glass mirror using the methods shown in Adam Cornish's article in a previous issue on gold-leaf effects.

Applying gold size/glue to the glass mirror being used caused the size to finely bead on the surface, resulting in fine cracks in the leaf when applied, in turn magnifying the reflective qualities to the effect. Finally, the mirror was glued into place and a D-ring picture/mirror hanging bracket screwed to the back for mounting. As with all projects you can alter the design or the texture and colour to suit your taste. Most of all, stay safe and have fun.



TOOLS AND MATERIALS

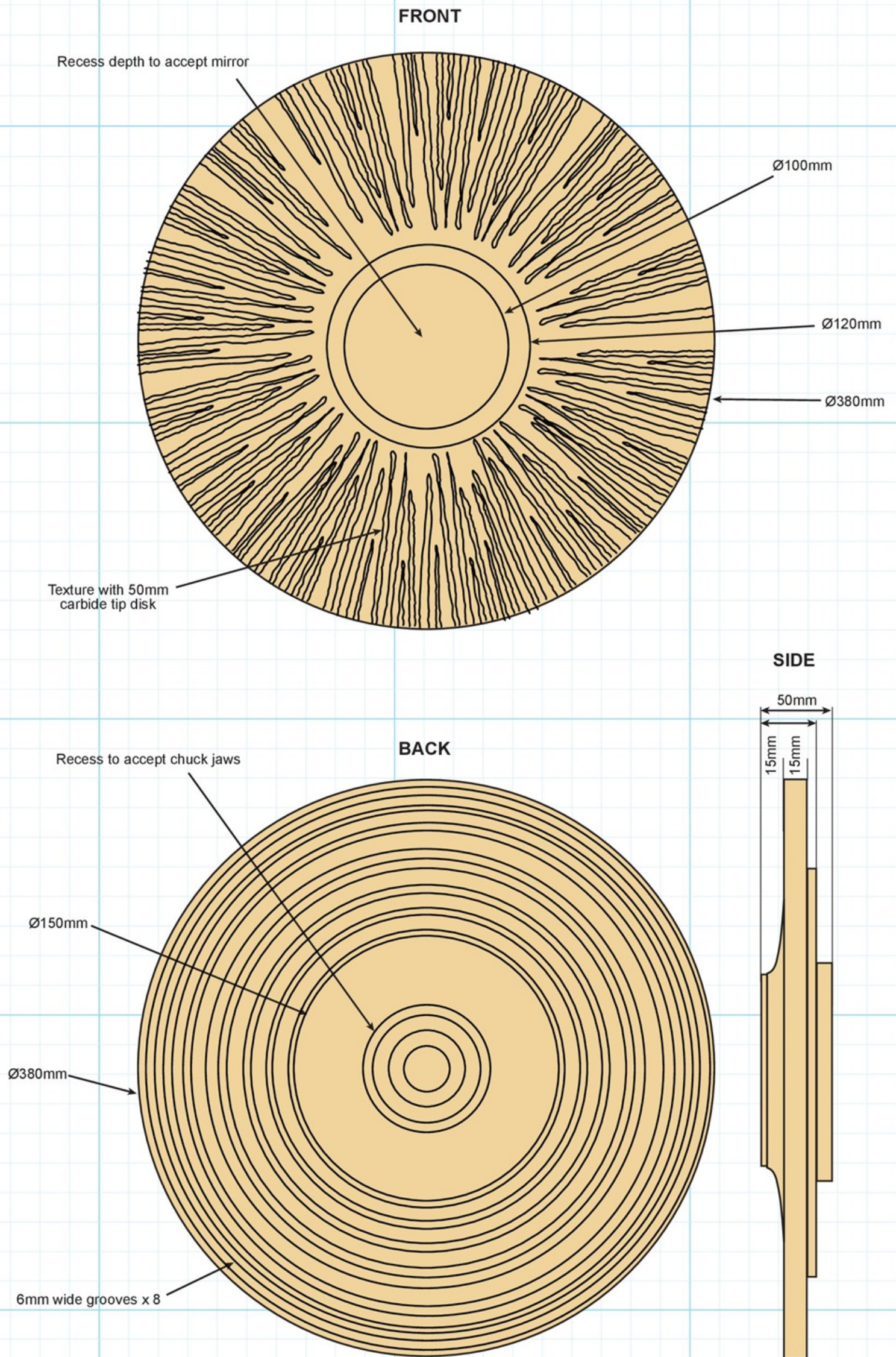
- Personal and respiratory protective equipment (PPE and RPE)
- Bowl gouge
- Spindle gouge
- Skew chisel
- Parting tool
- Mini angle grinder
- 50mm diameter thin cutting disc(s)
- Hot-melt glue
- Blowtorch
- Chuck clamp to hold the work while carving

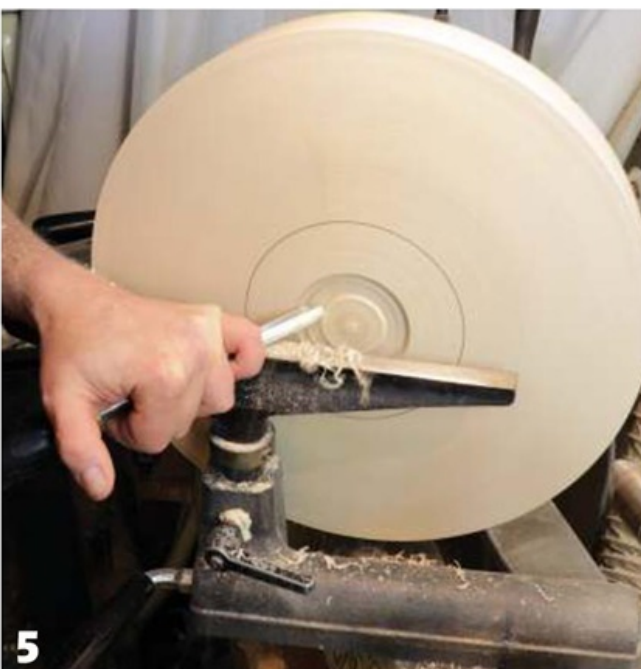
MATERIALS

- 380mm diameter x 50mm thick seasoned faceplate oriented bowl blank
- Abrasives down to 240 grit
- Acrylic spray sanding sealer
- Deep-red spirit stain (mix of red and black)
- Iron oxide reactive paint
- Rust activation solution for reactive iron oxide paint
- Gold size
- Small size brush
- Guilders' knife/gilding kit
- 24ct gold leaf or faux leaf
- 100mm diameter glass mirror
- Picture D-ring hanging bracket

SAFETY PANEL SCORCHING TIMBER

- Never scorch or scour work in the workshop or home. Only ever carry out the scorching projects outside of the workshop in the open air and away from any flammable material.
- A suitably rated face-mask or respirator must be worn during all scorching, scouring and cleaning operations.
- Eye protection, preferably a face shield or goggles, needs to be worn.
- Wear leather gloves while scorching. When working with burnt surfaces, finishes and waxes, wear appropriate protective gloves.
- Exposed skin on arms should be covered at all times.
- Use disposable gloves while cleaning up scorched surfaces.
- Ensure that the wood is properly cooled before returning to the workshop.
- Have a fire extinguisher or bucket of sand/water handy while scorching.
- Keep a water atomiser for use while scorching.





The back of the turning

1 Mount the blank on to a face plate and bring up the revolving tailstock centre to support the work for added safety. Once secure, use a bowl gouge to true up the edge of the blank using a pull or push cut.

2 Again, with the bowl gouge clean up the face of the blank. Here I am using a pull cut but a push cut is equally appropriate.

3 Using a rule and pencil mark the recess diameter to match the chuck jaws you are using. Mark also the outer diameter of what will be the area the mirror hanger will be screwed into later.

4 Using a parting tool presented horizontally on the toolrest gently plunge the parting tool slowly into the wood to the depth required inside of the line marked for the chuck jaw recess.

5 Once to depth, use a small bowl gouge or scraper to hollow out the remaining waste of the recess to centre. Aim to produce a flat surface for the top of the jaws to locate against in the base of the recess.

6 Now refine the profile of the recess to match the profile of the jaws of your chuck. You can use a dedicated tool for this process or use a skew chisel laid on its side presented in scraping mode and make the cut with the toe/pointed section of the skew. Make sure that the recess is cleaned out all the way down into the base so that the jaws will seat fully when expanded.

7 To add interest to the recess I cut several beads on the inner area of its base, making sure that the location of these was inside the area where the chuck jaws are located. For this I used a 10mm bead forming tool. You could instead add V-grooves or leave it plain.

8 Mark the centre of the outside edge of the blank by eye with a pencil and lathe running. Then, using the bowl gouge, create concave areas on two sections of the back face of approximate equal size to a depth of around 15-20 mm deep. These need to flow down from the central/thickest section out to approximately 5mm from the previously scribed line.

You can, of course, vary this shape. The ultimate profile you use is up to you, but this one is a good one to use to get used to the processes shown. Once you have learned what you need to from this project you can go for it and experiment to find shapes that you wish to use.

◀ **9** Now, using a parting tool presented horizontally to the work, create a series of evenly spaced and depth grooves by plunge-cutting to the depth of the pencil line marked on the outside rim. To check this depth, simply stop the lathe, place a small rule into each groove and offer this up to the outside edge scribed centreline. If required, go a bit deeper.

10 With the grooves cut, sand the back face and the edges of the grooves with 120 down to 320 grit abrasive with the lathe running at around 700rpm. Make sure you use suitable direct dust extraction at source and PPE and RPE face and lung protection.

The front face

11 Remove the blank and faceplate and mount on to the chuck in the previously shaped recess. Now, using a bowl gouge, clean up the front face. Again, I am using a pull cut but a push cut can be used if preferred. I am taking a very light skim only so have not used the revolving tailstock for extra support – you can, of course, do so.

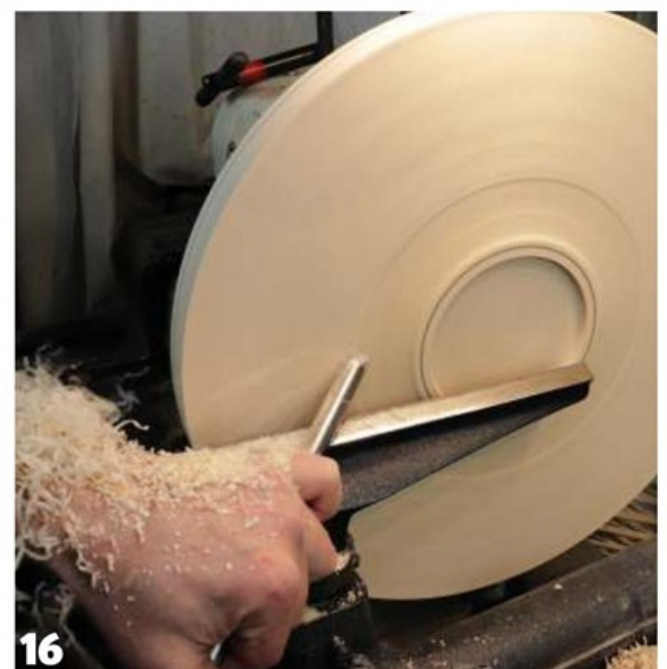
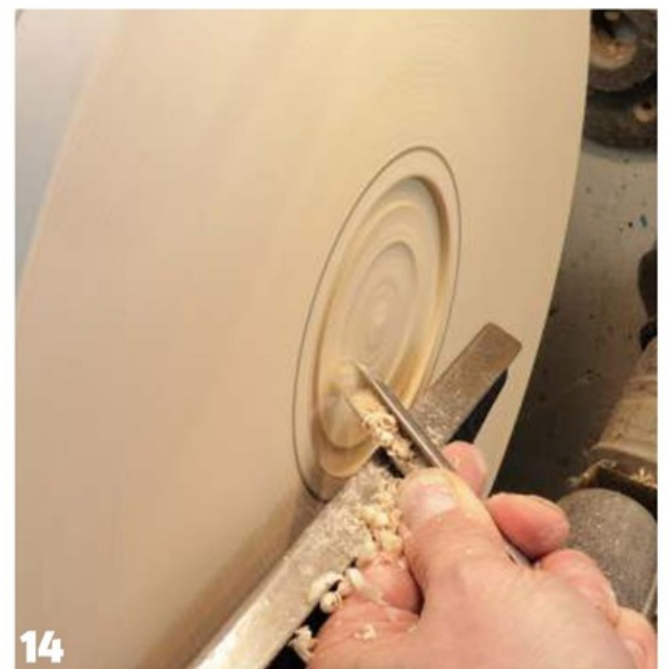
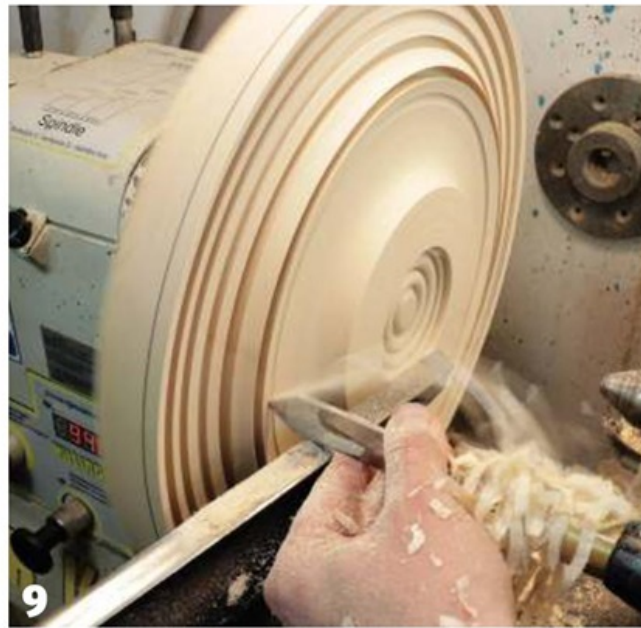
12 Once skimmed, use a pencil and rule and, with the lathe running, mark the diameter for the recess to accept the mirror you have chosen to use – mine was 100mm diameter, as well as the width of the bead that will surround it.

13 Using the parting tool as before, plunge cut into a depth inside the line marked to a depth slightly deeper than the thickness of the mirror. You do not have to be accurate here as the final depth is altered to suit the bead turned around the recess rim shown in step 18.

14 As previously in step 5, use the bowl gouge to hollow out the remaining waste for the recess to accept the mirror, making sure the base of the recess is flat for seating the mirror against it. Once cut...

15 ...offer up the mirror into the recess and gauge how far in the internal curve of the bead produced next will flow into the recess. If required, deepen the recess with the parting tool at the edge and hollow out with a gouge in the centre until the mirror fits to depth. Again, final depth can be achieved after the bead has been produced, so this is not critical at this stage.

16 Now, using a bowl gouge, shape the front face by creating a flowing concave section which starts where the outer section of the bead will be flowing down to approximately 10mm away from the pencil mark on the outside edge of the blank.





17



18



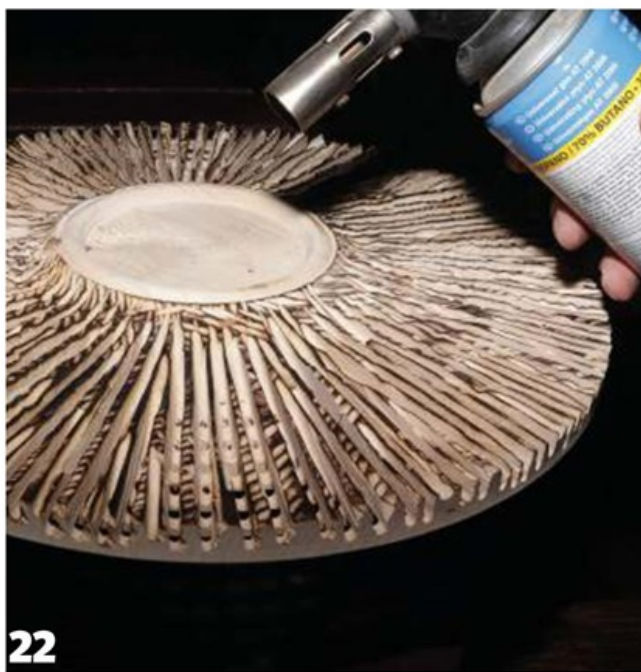
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24

17 Continue shaping the front until the thickness remaining from the base of the grooves in the back to the front face is slightly less in thickness than the working depth of the rotary cutter you are going to use for the texturing. To check this, I used callipers to measure from front face to base of each groove. The maximum working depth of the 50mm carbide-tipped disk I am using is 15mm. This is measured from the guard housing to the tip of the cutter held in the mini angle grinder. Manufacturers of thin carbide cutting discs to fit mini long-neck angle grinders or to fit in rotary carving units include Abortech, King Arthur Tools, Saburr Tooth and Kutzall.

18 Using a bowl gouge or bead-forming tool, shape the bead that will frame the mirror.

19 Once cut, sand the bead with 120 grit abrasive. There is no need to finish finer than this as the surface will be painted with a thick iron oxide reactive paint later.

Texture and colour

20 Now it's time to texture the front face using the mini angle grinder and cutting disc. Here the project is mounted in the chuck on to a carving jig on the banjo of the lathe. You can easily and safely mount it in the chuck on the lathe spindle. If you are using the latter, the lathe spindle must be locked to prevent rotation while carving. Always use protective gloves and have both hands on the mini grinder while in use. Never have a hand in the line of the exit route of the blade to protect yourself in case you encounter a catch. Carve striations/grooves of various lengths – they do not need to be even – from the centre bead out to the rim. Take several fine cuts until final depth is reached. If the thickness and grooves have been measured and turned correctly the texture will cut through into the grooves on the back as you reach the full depth of the cutting disk.

21 With texturing complete I angled the cutting disk to 45° and created a fine, shallow texture into the surface of the main texture.

22 With the texture complete remove from the chuck/jig, take outside and place on a non-flammable surface. Use a small blowtorch to lightly scorch the texture. This burns away any torn-out fibres from the carving and softens the edges helping to give the impression of a worn surface after final colouring.

23 With scorching complete gently brush the loose carbon away from the surface with a small bronze brush.

24 Apply wood stain to the back, front and rim, making sure you reach all the way down into the carved texture, and allow to fully dry. Here I am using a mixture – red into which I dripped black spirit stain until I produced a deep burgundy colour.



25 Once the stain is dry seal the surface front, back and rim with acrylic spray sanding sealer. I must clarify that this is contrary to the sealer that is recommended by the manufacturer of the reactive metal paint that I am using later, but I have found it works fine for the applications I use the paint for.



26 Apply the reactive paint to the surface in two stages, following the manufacturer's recommendations and making sure that the paint reaches as deep into the texture as possible. Do not worry if you cannot get all the way down as the stain previously applied will show through. It will look more organic if you leave most of the stain showing in the base of the texture.



27 Now apply the reactive solution to the painted surface as per manufacturer's guidance. Here I am using a small misting atomiser, available from art stores or online, and waiting for the rust to develop. If required spray the surface several times until you have the colour effect you want and allow to fully dry.



28 Apply gold size and 24ct gold leaf or faux gold metal leaf to the surface of the mirror. Here I painted a thin layer of size on to the mirror and, being so smooth, the size beaded finely over the surface so as the gold leaf is applied fine cracks appear, allowing for the reflective surface of the mirror to add to the glow of the metal surface. If you prefer you can omit the application of metal leaf and glue the mirror into place without this.



29 Apply a small amount of hot-melt glue into the recess for the mirror and gently press into place

30 Mark the location for and screw into place a picture hanging bracket. The project is now finished and ready for display. ●



30

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Fun and recuperation

We find out more about artistic turner Derek Lane and his workshop creations



I did woodwork and woodturning at school many years ago but like many did not take up either until later in life. I started collecting woodworking machines in about 2001 and set up a workshop with the intention of having a go at cabinetmaking.

This soon stopped in 2003 after four heart attacks and a triple bypass. I managed to start making small things as a recovery after six months then had a go at something larger – a rocking horse which again helps with recovery, after a mini stroke halfway through the build.

I also started making wooden models and toys, which I still occasionally do. Most of these ended up with great-grandchildren. This helped slow the fast-growing pile of turning that seemed to collect around the

house even after I'd given many pieces to family and friends. It also included some turning even for those, so I was not too far from the lathe.

It was not until 2009 that I was offered a cheapish, secondhand Draper WTL100 lathe, which served me well making small turned parts for my woodworking projects. I soon found that I enjoyed turning so much that I also brought an Axminster AWVS mini lathe, which I still have.

I then upgraded my Draper to a new Record CL3 just over five years ago and still have it. This last lathe is my main go-to tool unless I decide to make a pen, which is not so often now – I use the smaller one for that.



MAIN IMAGE: Chestnut burr (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), something I enjoy turning. I kept the finish simple **ABOVE:** At the Going Down of the Sun, made to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEREK LANE

WHAT WAS THE VERY FIRST COMPLETE PIECE YOU MADE?

It was a set of six egg cups on a stand, which I made at school, but the first thing I turned after taking it up as a hobby was plenty of fire wood as I followed Keith Rowley's book, turning coves and beads for practice. This was followed by the usual dog bowl-shaped bowl. I still have these items – the egg cup set because it brings back memories of woodworking at school, which seems to have now died down, and the dog bowl to remind me that I once was a beginner.

WHAT ARE THE INFLUENCES IN YOUR WORK?

When I first started I really didn't have any influences as I turned in the workshop by myself and just wanted to learn. Later on Mark Sanger's work gave me some influence and many other turners' work has influenced me.

WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST MISTAKES WORKSHOP AND WOODTURNING WISE? WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES?

At first going through the bottom of a bowl using a mortise and trying to turn greenwood without knowing how to treat things like uneven wall thickness and having it split on me.

I treat most turning as a challenge, especially as I progress and try new things which need to be held differently to the normal methods. Some of the biggest challenges I find are finding ways to hold a piece safely when there are no visible ways of doing so, unlike a bowl where you have tenons and mortises, which are standard means of holding a piece. I always seem to work something out.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPENING REGARDING YOUR DEVELOPMENT IN TURNING/CARVING?

I would like to find one style that I find interesting and can follow. At the moment I just like to make one-off pieces without copying others.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE IN TURNING?

All of it – I enjoy every minute in the workshop and every piece I turn is memorable for one reason or another. But if I have to narrow it down it was when I presented the memorial vase I called At the Going Down of the Sun to my local British Legion Branch. This piece attracted so many people because it was something I made for the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1. So many people wanted to buy this and asked if I could make more, but I try not to make the same piece twice, especially this one.



One end of the small workshop I work from. It's 4m X 2.5m, but once all the cabinets and tools are in there's only 2.5m X 1.5m of floor space



The crucible represents the melting of copper. The shallow turning shows it full of copper



Teardrop box made from spalted beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) with a mahogany (*Swietenia spp.*) centre band

WHAT'S THE BEST BIT OF TURNING/CARVING ADVICE YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

Because I started without using the internet forums or the benefit of joining the club I now belong to I had to work from books. But if I had now to give advice it would be take lessons from a good tutor and practice, practice and yet more practice and never stop learning. Join a club if you can as there is a wealth of knowledge out there. Don't rely on things like YouTube as there are some terrible videos out there – not that all are bad, there some good ones, but without knowing what is good or bad then they're best left alone.

HAVE YOU EVER GIVEN UP ON A PROJECT?

Unless a piece is too dangerous to continue with I will not give up. Not in the sense of it becoming firewood – I put it to one side and then make a slightly different piece from it. I enjoy the challenge of making a piece from something that has gone wrong.

Not all pieces go as planned.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE TYPE OF WOODTURNING?

All of it, as I enjoy keeping things interesting by doing different things, from texturing to colouring. Sometimes the simple, well-turned flowing bowl can be the most pleasing thing to do.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCES IN TURNING/CARVING NOW TO WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED?

A lot more tools are available now. So many to choose from but I do tend to buy as needed rather than because I think something is nice and a must-have tool. Some of the jigs that are around now make turning much easier things, such as sharpening systems, whereas I still use a grinder and sharpen freehand.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT?

I don't really have a favourite piece of equipment as they all get used to produce either a turned piece or parts for the model/toy making. But for turning I would say the lathe and for tools a good quality bowl gauge mine is $\frac{3}{8}$ in.

For an all-round piece of equipment either for turning or general woodwork it has to be a bandsaw.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

To be able to carry on turning and enjoying myself in the workshop. To find a style of turning that is mine – so far in the 10 years of turning I have not. To be able to see younger turners take up the hobby.



Half-track made mainly with tulipwood (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). I made this just for me



Fire truck. One of the 'grandad can you make a fire truck' pieces. Made from the wood scrap bin

For clubs to prosper and continue to be a great place for like minded turners to share information.

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

I like learning something new, as well as being able to give small demonstrations occasionally at the club.

I dislike people who think that carbide tools are the only tools you will ever need. Not that carbide tools don't

have a place in the workshop like many tools they have there uses.

WHAT HELPFUL ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR FELLOW TURNERS?

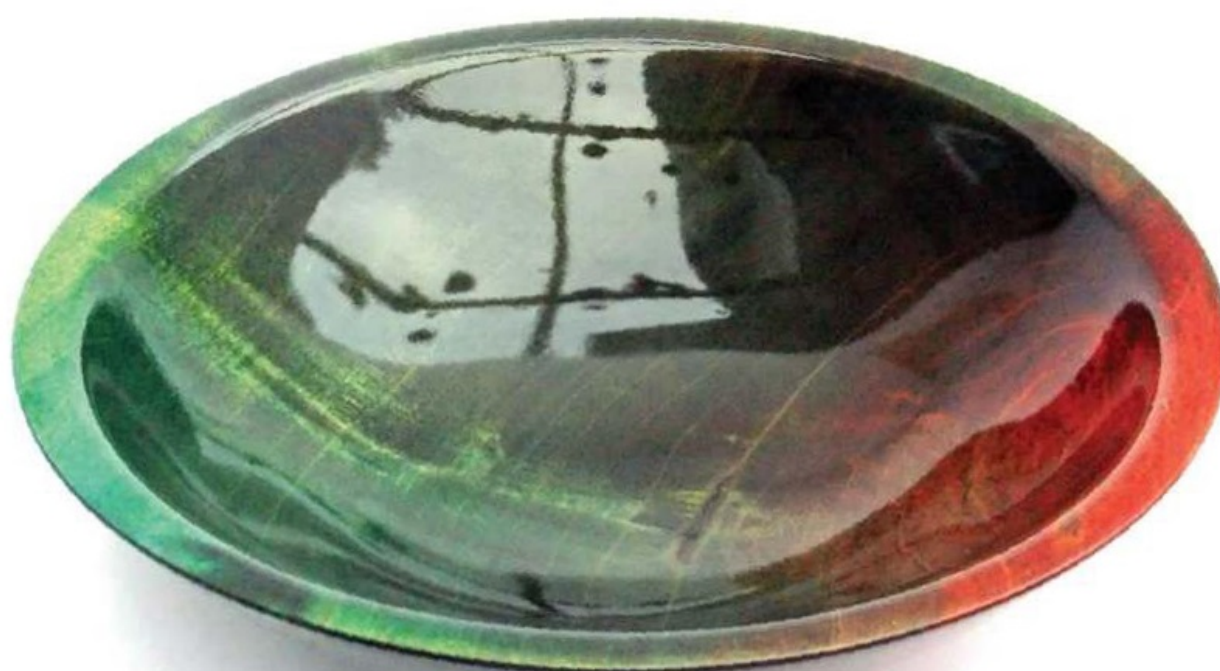
Practice, practice and practice. If starting out join a club and get proper tuition – I wish I had when I first started – and, finally, buy some good protective safety equipment. Clubs are a great place to learn and get hands-on when you have a problem. I belong to



Decorated oak platter, textured and coloured, with a chestnut burr insert, again coloured, with a purple slate base



Maple (*Acer* spp.) hollow form with a carved, twisted finial



Coloured field maple (*Acer campestre*) using spirit stains to help bring out the grain

the Garden of England club here in Kent and enjoy the company and have received some good advice and hopefully been able to help other turners.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/DLWoodart
E-mail: dalboy70@gmail.com

The club I belong to is the Garden of England Club:
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Let's put the lid on it

Chris West creates an inlaid lid for a glass jar

What I have attempted to do in this article is introduce ways of embellishing a jar lid and possibly making it more personal to the recipient. Why can't they be used as a present, especially if the jar has been filled by something that's valued? What will the jar be used for? A neighbour has a Norfolk terrier she adores and who is spoilt with the occasional dog biscuit. That is its destination.

However, the choice is yours. The method of turning the recess for the lid's inlay is very similar to last month's fridge magnet project. The differences are in the layout of the wood in the inlay. Additionally the outer inlay (1) will use black Milliput, which is a two-part epoxy putty, but it also comes in a number of colours. The black will be used instead of ebony.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS WEST

GLASS JAR LID

Blank: 90 x 90 x 38mm

Wood: Large leaf maple burr

The plastic lid supplied with the glass jar will have glued to it an inlaid wooden lid. However forming the finished recess for the inlays is the last step.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Spindle gouge
- 1/2in or 3/8in skew chisel
- 2mm & 3mm parting tool
- Chuck
- Bandsaw
- Revolving tailstock centre
- Double-sided tape
- Timber of your choice for inlays or Milliput

Hopefully you will still have last month's issue, which gave a detailed description of how to turn the inlays. If you haven't, steps 1-3 give the basic information.

ORDER

Preparation. Wood inlays 2, 3 and 4 will need one side placed on a belt sander to ensure that its base is level and flat all over. If the top of the lid is going

to be flat then the inlays are all turned to a thickness of 9mm.

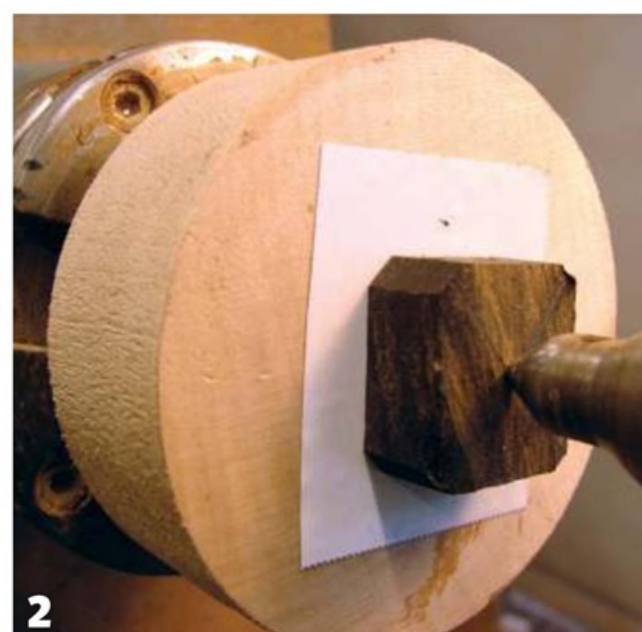
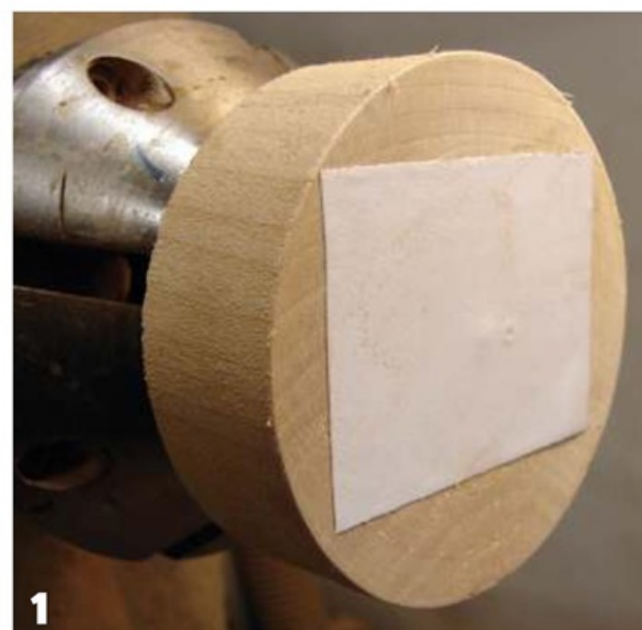
Turning the wood inlays

1 The first step is to turn a scrap block from hardwood. It will need a dovetail or spigot to hold it and needs to be approximately 51mm deep. In this particular project, which has a large diameter outer inlay, the scrap block is 115mm in diameter. The front surface of the scrap block must be flat. A piece of double-sided tape is stuck on to the front of the scrap block.

2 Bandsaw out a blank for each inlay. Hold each against either a larger disc sander or a belt sander to get a flat surface. Place the first wood inlay blank on to the double-sided tape using the live centre to position the blank centrally.

3 Using a spindle gouge turn the blank's diameter to its designated size, ensuring that the side is at 90° to the flat side of the base. The finished diameter can be $\pm 0.05\text{mm}$ as the lid receiving the inlay will be opened up to the required diameter.

Once step 3 is completed, remove



the inlay from the scrap block and put aside. Repeat the above steps for each of the remaining wood inlays, turning them to the required diameters and thicknesses. You may need to fit new double-sided tape each time after ensuring that the wood surface is flat.

FITTING INLAY 4 INTO 3

4 & 5 Either use the scrap block to hold inlay 3 centrally in a chuck and hollow it out to allow 3 to fit snugly in. Alternatively as shown inlay 3 is held in chuck jaws for the removal of wood to allow 4 to fit in. The thickness of 3 is 9mm. Remove wood to a depth of 5mm.

Glue 4 into 3 using medium CA and trickle a thin CA around the circumference where the two inlays meet.

FITTING INLAY 3/4 INTO 2, OFFSET

6 & 7 If necessary remove the previous double-sided tape and ensure that the wood surface is flat. The assumption is that the tape is in situ.

As can be seen in the drawing, the centre of 4 (B) is offset 14mm from the centre of 2 (A) on insert 2. Measure, mark and centre punch this point.

Place 2 on the tape using the live centre to fix it at position (B).

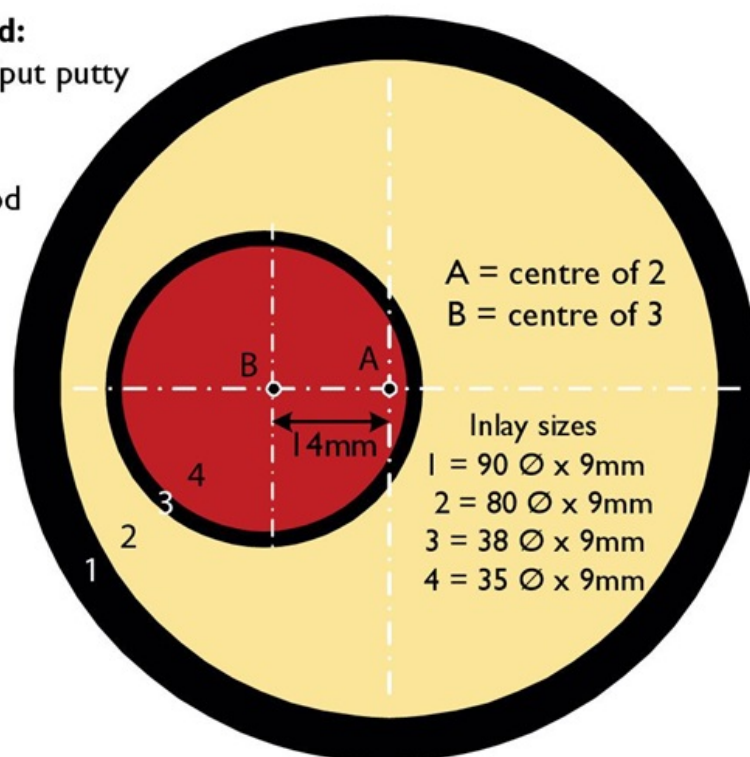
With a pencil, draw the diameter of 3 on to 2. Begin very carefully removing wood from 2 to a depth of 6mm.

HINT: If you are of a nervous disposition like me and are afraid of 2 falling off, add masking tape across the face of 2 and on to the scrap block. Wrap further tape around the circumference of the scrap block to hold the tape on. Now breathe easier!

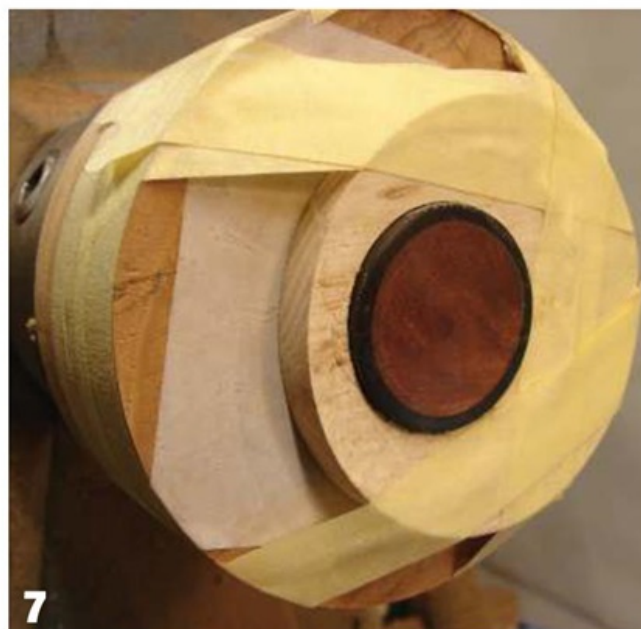
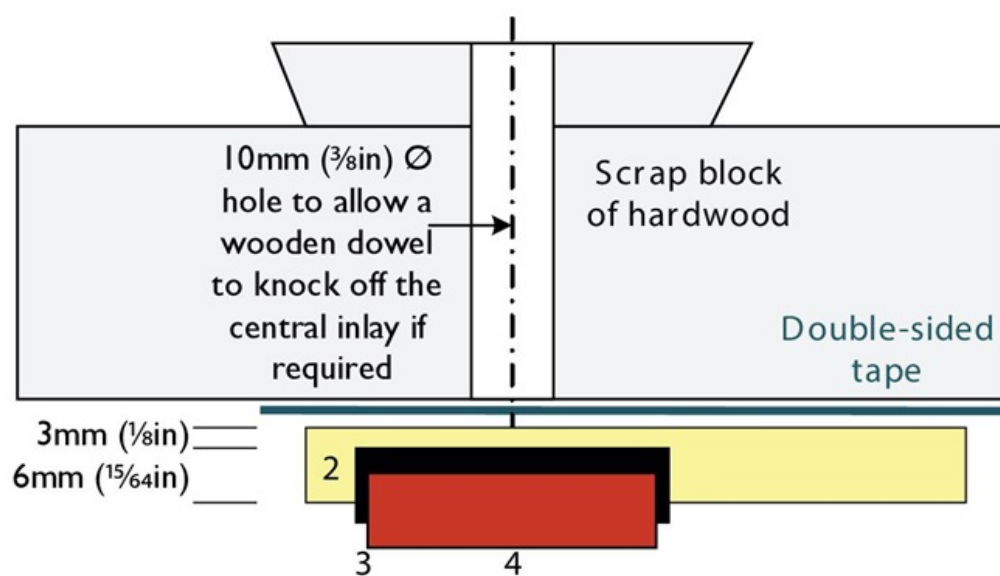
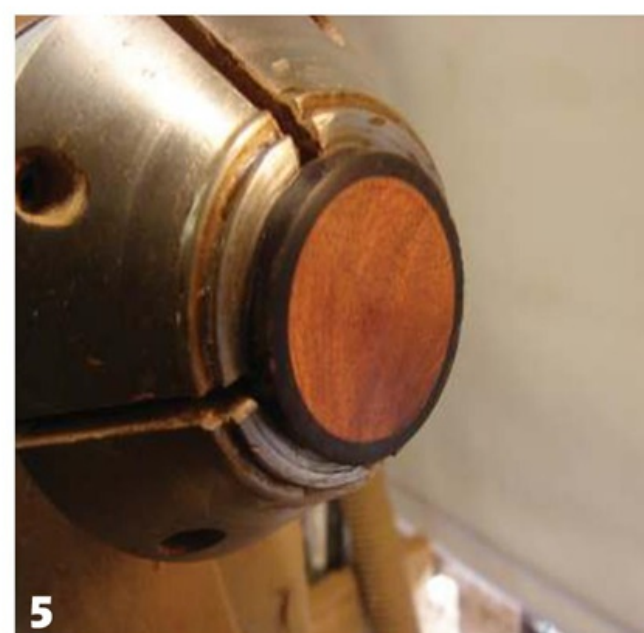
When it fits, glue 3/4 into 2 with medium CA and when dry remove 2 from the scrap block.

Wood used:

- 1 Black Milliput putty
- 2 Ash burr
- 3 Ebony
- 4 Bloodwood



3



Turning the jar lid

Blank: 90 x 90 x 38mm

The lid blank is rough turned and a dovetail formed as shown in the diagram. Hold by the dovetail, face off and form a 87 x 14mm Ø recess for the plastic lid. Keep testing for a good fit as you go. Turn the outside to its final diameter 107mm and mark its overall height of 25mm.

Sand, seal and add a waterproof finish to the bottom edge of the lid. Remove the blank from the lathe.

A couple of ways of holding the lid recess to form the recess for the inlays to fit into:

- Large expanding jaws which will accept 87mm Ø, or
- Turn a jam chuck.

The example used is a jam chuck which will accept the lid recess of the blank. The first thing is to face off the top of the lid to give the 25mm height. As shown, after removing the dovetail a recess 90 Ø x 8 x 6mm deep is formed in the top of the lid. This will be inlay 1 and be filled with black Milliput.

Prior to filling the recess with Milliput the area of the top of the lid which will remain after the inlay has been inserted, should be sanded and sealed. This will substantially reduce any possibility of contamination of the wood by the Milliput. This information came about after a conversation with Jim Overton on the best way of ensuring that contamination between wood and the Milliput can be avoided. My thanks to Jim. You can see his YouTube Channel for further uses on Milliput in woodturning.

Preparing the black Milliput putty

Cut off a 50mm length of each of the supplied rolls of Milliput. It is suggested that nitrile gloves are worn to keep your hands clean. Start kneading and rolling the two rolls together for approximately five minutes, by which time no streaks of lighter colour should be seen. Pack the recess with the Milliput. Allow a minimum of three to four hours for it to dry. Milliput may darken after being finished.

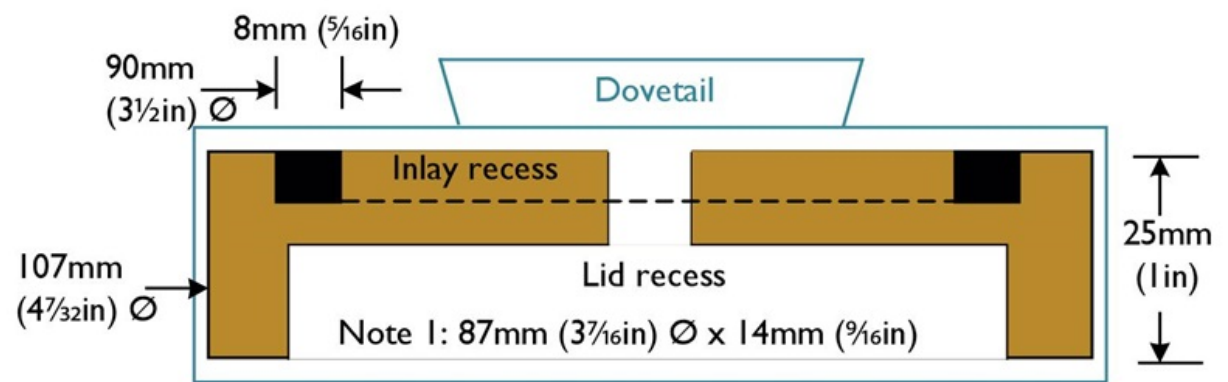
PREPARING THE LID FOR THE INLAYS

8 & 9 When it is running true the 90mm Ø x 6mm-deep recess is turned. The recess is shown packed with the putty.

Shown on the right is the result of removing the excess Milliput. When dry, the recess 80mm Ø x 6mm for the main inlays, 2, 3 & 4 is formed. For the final few millimetres of its diameter the inlay is constantly offered for a good fit. Glue it as before.

Shape the inlays as required. Finish as before. Remove from the jam chuck and buff using a brown and then white finishing compound followed by a wax to finish it off.

Finally rough the surface of the plastic lid to give a better surface for a two-part epoxy glue to adhere to the lid recess. Proceed to fill the jar with your choice of goodies. ●



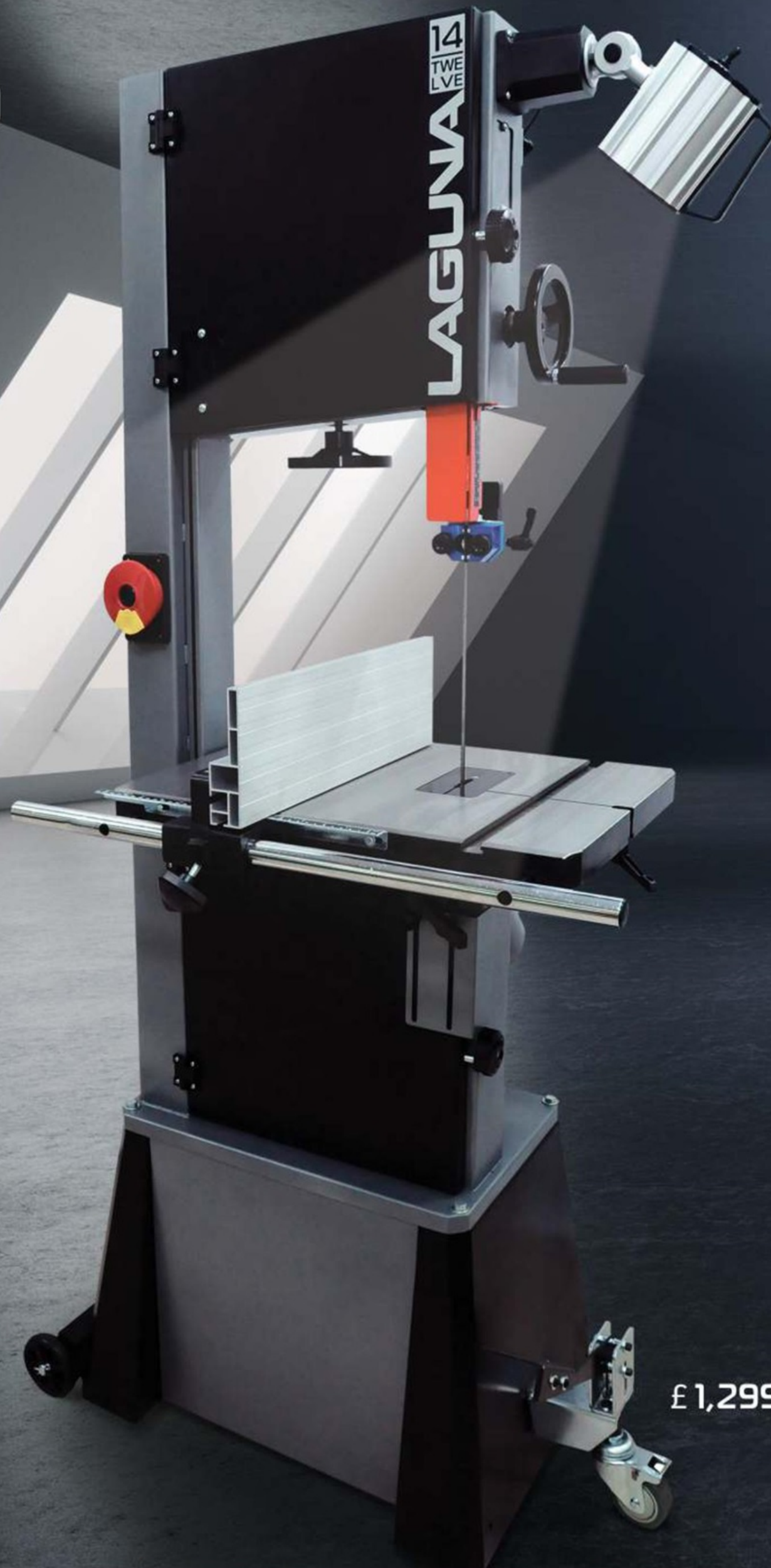
Note 1: the dimensions are for the glass lid I used.



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ON TEST

Red Scorpion pyrography unit



When I learned a while back that John Woods from Woodart Products had been working on a powerful pyrography unit called the Red Scorpion for a long while, I was eager to find out more. When I spoke to him about it he said: 'I wanted to create a pyrography unit to have the finesse of heat sensitivity to be able to do the most delicate of shading but powerful enough to do heavy-duty branding decoration too. I also want the handpiece to stay cool in use.' It intrigued me and, having looked at and tried many pyrography units over the years, I wondered if the unit would cover everything a pyrographer/brander would need in one unit, so called it on in for test.

The unit

It is a no-nonsense, smart-looking oblong metal-cased vented unit that has a heat control dial and two round ports into which fit the connectors, attached to the handpiece via heavy-duty wire flex. It comes with a well-thought out set of instructions and lengths of different thickness Nichrome wire from 26 (thin wire) 18 gauge (thick wire). The unit is supplied with a heavy-duty flexible cable, at the end of which is fitted a heavy-duty, fully-vented pen to prevent heat build up

and help it run cool even when used for prolonged periods of time.

John says of the Red Scorpion: 'The electronics feature many levels of protection to provide consistent heat output throughout its full range, improving reliability even under heavy loading.'

In use

The unit is easy to use – it is a case of fitting the nib you want in the handpiece, plugging the unit in and also the wires to the handpiece into the unit, switching it on and adjusting the dial to give the heat setting required. The unit does indeed have a well-thought out heat setting range, which is incrementally increased by turning up the dial. The upper-end heat range is reserved for branding only, using the thickest of wires. If you use the top heat setting on thin wire it burns though/melts the wire. I was able to set very low heat for shading and also high heat, as you can see in one of the pictures where a homemade 18 gauge wire branding nib was created and it was not even on the highest heat setting. The fierce heat created a beautiful, deep scorch branding texture. Even at the highest heat setting the handpiece remained cool in use.



Conclusion

The Red Scorpion is a well-built, no-nonsense unit that does what it is designed to do without any fuss whatsoever. From high-heat branding with wickedly fast heat recovery to the low-heat delicate shading, it coped with all the situations I tasked it with easily and was a real joy to use. The handpiece did indeed stay cool and was an easy fit in the hand, so I had full control of the movements required too. The wires off the handpiece are soft and do not hinder the manipulation.

If you are looking for a pyrography unit that can cope with all the situations mentioned, then do have a look at this one. I am certainly impressed by this machine and its capabilities and have no hesitation in urging you to try it for yourself. I am sure you will be impressed.

Mark Sanger's comments

The Red Scorpion from Woodart Products is a pyrography unit that I have been using for some years in my work. The unit gives me full versatility for pyrography shading to fine texturing and immense power for branding and heavier texture while working quickly and efficiently using a range of wire thicknesses to 18 SWG. This is my go-to unit as, having tried most of the units available, it is the only one that offers me the ability of controllable, subtle heat for shading to high power for branding for the type of work I produce with excellent tip temperature recovery, so I am not having to wait for the tip/branding wire to re-heat. This is the unit I use for my texturing classes and that I always recommend to my students.

Price: £230

Contact: John Woods at Woodart Products

Web: www.woodart-products.co.uk

Turner's Edge bowl gouges by Robust Tools

Andy Coates puts the new Robust bowl gouge to the test



In July, I received a call from Mark Baker, who had not long returned from a recent visit to the AAW symposium, and he said: 'I have returned with some tools for test and would you like to put some through their paces?' I said I would and some tools from various manufacturers duly arrived. One such tool was an unhandled 1/2in (13mm diameter bar) Turner's Edge bowl gouge made by Robust, which also manufactures lathes and lathe accessories.

The Americans state a gouge size by the width of the bar, the UK states a bowl gouge by the width of the flute opening or, as some say, from the outer edge of the bar to the farthest outer edge of the flute. So to use US 1/2in gouge is actually a 3/8in (10mm) bowl gouge in the UK. Mark tried out the 5/8in bowl gouge (1/2in UK size).

The two bowl gouges measure 290mm long and feature a 75mm long flat section on the non-fluted end to secure nicely in interchangeable handles. From the pictures above you can see this. Also the grind has a secondary bevel as well as the primary one. On looking at the Robust website, it is selling a 3/8in bowl gouge

and a 3/8in detail/spindle gouge.

The gouge sent, as all the Turner's Edge gouges, is made from Nitrided M2 HSS. Robust's website says: 'The M2 blade is hardened to 64 Rockwell C and then the nitriding process increases the cutting edge hardness to 75° Rockwell C. The nitriding, because is a process that forms a diffuse zone within M2 itself, reduces surface friction, improves wear resistance and significantly enhances edge holding and smoother chip ejection from the polished flute. The gouge profile is true parabolic flute.'

IN USE

I started using the bowl gouge on an ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) bowl bank and I knew I would like this tool. It cuts beautifully and leaves a very clean surface. I tried it on many other timbers too. Over the years I have read many claims for a tool's edge-holding abilities, and rarely has the difference been so significant that it was noticeable. This is not the case with this tool. After several months' continual use I find it does require fewer trips to the grinder, and continues to cut cleanly, for

longer, even on difficult wood species.

One claim, that the polished flute results in better shavings ejection, may seem odd, but in use this proves to be the case, and it does seem to make a difference. Occasionally with other tools, a chip will jam at the cutting edge and buffer the cut, requiring it to be physically removed, usually by knocking the tool against the rest, but this does not seem to happen anywhere near as often with the Robust tool.

I did not find a single thing not to like about this tool, and it is now on the go-to rack closest to the main lathe. It's a thumbs up and a big smile from me!

Mark Baker's opinion

The Turner's Edge bowl gouge I tried performed without any fuss or bother. It can be sharpened on aluminium oxide belts, bench grinders, wet stones and CBN wheels and can be honed on diamond, ceramic and CBN hones with ease. There is no need to hone the internal flute form as it is so highly polished that the edge created by honing didn't warrant it.

Like Andy, I too found the edge holding to be excellent and the chip ejection is superb. It is difficult to ascertain how much longer the edge lasts over standard M2 HSS, but the increase is significant and it really is an excellent gouge to use.

Prices from \$65

Contact: Robust Tools

Web: www.turnrobust.com

TWO NEW JET LATHES

Jet has introduced two new lathes to the UK market via Axminster Tools & Machinery, both featuring a five-year Jet warranty: the Jet 1640EVS and Jet 1840 EVS.

Jet 1640EVS features

- Turn bowls up to 420mm diameter
- Spindle work up to 1,016mm between centres
- 1.12kw motor with infinitely variable speed via two pulleys with digital display, 40-1200rpm & 120-3200rpm
- 36-hole indexing positions & 2mt headstock and tailstock bore



- Headstock rotates 360° and slides for maximum versatility

Jet 1840EVS features

As the model number suggests, this lathe has a bigger capacity and features many of the same key aspects of the 1640 EVS but is heavier, turns bowls up to 470mm diameter and features a 1.5kw motor and magnetic moveable stop button.

Prices: 1640VS – £2,559.50, 1840VS – £2,909.50

Contact: Axminster Tools & Machinery

Web: www.axminster.co.uk



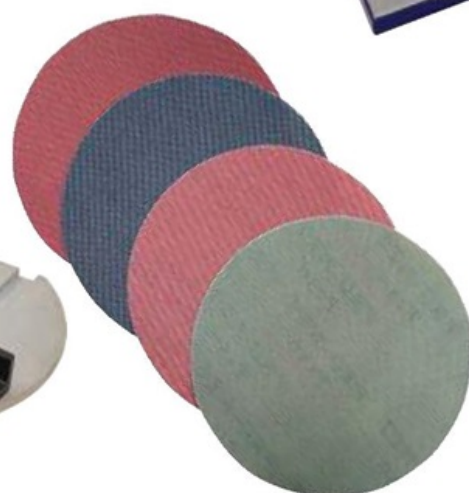
CHARNWOOD BELT AND DISC SANDERS

Charnwood has recently introduced a range of four new belt and disc sanders to suit modelmakers and toymakers through a 1hp belt and disc unit designed for heavy-duty woodwork. Charnwood has also launched a range of abrasives called Pronet, a mesh-style abrasive available in sheets or discs in 80-600 grit.

Prices: Abrasives from £2.50 per pack Sanders: £99-£299

Contact: Charnwood

Web: www.charnwood.net



CHESTNUT MOP DRESSER

Chestnut has recently launched a mop dresser. Held two-handed and lightly against the lower half of a polishing mop, it is designed to quickly clean the mop of debris and build-up, leaving fresh cloth to start again. This improves the functionality of polishing mops and gives a cleaner finish on work.

Price: £14.70

Contact: Chestnut Products Web: www.chestnutproducts.co.uk



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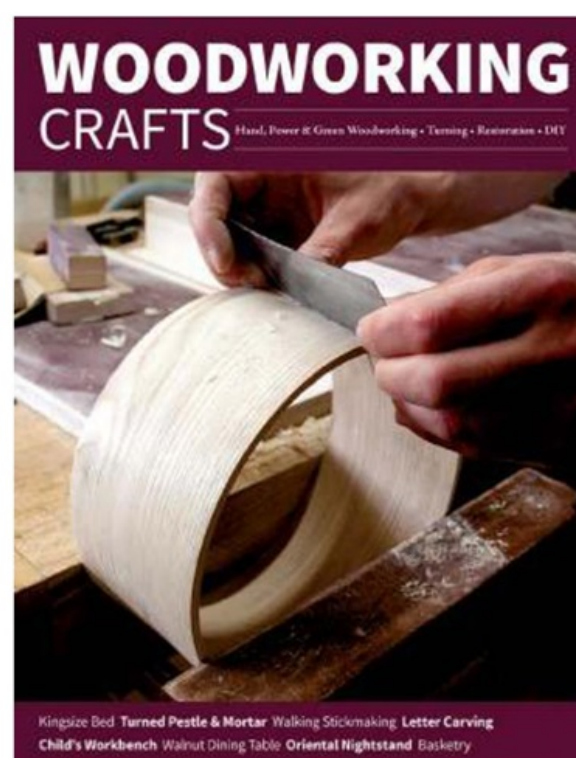
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Rekindling your inspiration

Pete Moncrieff-Jury shares his thoughts on getting stock ready for shows



Occasionally I hear a woodturner saying that they love every aspect of the craft, that they never get bored and are always happy to be in the workshop making shavings. While this may be true for some, I envy them a little and have to admit that it isn't always the case for me or, I suspect, others, especially those who earn a living from it.

By the time this is being read Christmas will be in the past and a new year beckons. Theoretically I now have at least four months before my first show of the year and, apart from some demos at clubs and tuition, I have time to experiment, practise and feed my imagination. Well, I did say theoretically. In practice I need to make sure that I don't leave things until the last minute before rebuilding the stock. Ironically, the better we do at shows leading up to Christmas, the harder I have to discipline myself to making those bread-and-butter items that so often cover the cost of shows. I reach a point (very quickly) of being fed up making earring stands, brooches, candlesticks and other things that sell well.

Well that is all true, but not the whole

picture. The following months are times that Mo and I can take a look at those basic, mundane things and see how we can improve them, what variations we can come up with. Just how many different ways can you design an earring stand and make it different? As I have said before, one of our main selling points is that whatever we make to sell at shows we try to be different, stand out and make people stop and take a second look. Earring stands are a good example. Originally just like the one in the front of the image, they have evolved over the years to be double decked, with a bowl and a ring stand, round and square and several other variations.

I am fortunate in many ways having a Mo. Apart from her artistic ability to take my plain work and make it look amazing we also bounce ideas off one another, but there is also a third advantage. I try to remember things that people say, suggest etc., whereas Mo will make a note of them. Now, this period ahead is when those notes come in handy. The woman at a show who asks if we make triple-decker earring stands. (That one didn't

work as it had to be far too wide at the base for stability.) Give it a go, see if it is viable. Or the man who wants chunky, heavy-looking goblets for drinking beer. (Those turned out to be a good seller at the folk festival.) Again, give it a go. The next four months are indeed a time to make sure we have enough stock, in fact more than we think we need for the next show and beyond but they're also a time to practise, get better at what we do, experiment with new ideas.

The point of all this is that most turners get times when Inspiration disappears and we are left feeling at a loose end in the workshop. Trying to do things differently, varying designs and trying ideas for old designs not only relieves that boredom but also re-fires the love we have for our craft. If you are feeling a bit stagnant, can't think of anything new, lacking inspiration, instead of trying to make something completely different go back to something you make already and revamp, redesign. It can get those creative juices flowing again before you know it.

Hope you had a great Christmas, and have a productive, inspired new year.



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