

Woodturning

THE WORLD'S LEADING MAGAZINE FOR WOODTURNERS

LES SYMONDS GUEST EDITOR

- Introduces the issue
- Turns a set of six display stands
- Profiles Welsh turner Miriam Jones



TECHNICAL Adding threads to jars • Rolling beads
PROJECTS Burl platter • Jewellery set • Ginger jar
• Banksia pod box • Chestnut and pewter pot

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Every Lathe Tells a Story

"And we like to think that's why people choose Robust lathes. The ergonomics, the build quality and the sturdiness allow you to concentrate on your work, and not the limitations of your tools."

Brent English, owner and designer, Robust Tools.

Noted turner and woodturning tool maker Steve Sinner, lower right, with some his friends and a couple of Robust Tools crew members.



Ask any woodturner about their lathe and you'll hear a story; who they got it from, when and where they picked it up, and perhaps even the reasons they chose it. We doubt you'd hear the same affectionate response about a belt sander.

Why is that? We think that, much like you play a musical instrument, you "play" a lathe. You use all your senses to turn and you alone control the path of the tool. In contrast, you only "operate" a table saw. A lathe is a tool you create a lasting relationship with.

And we like to think that's why people choose Robust lathes. The ergonomics, the build quality and the sturdiness allow you to concentrate on your work, and not the limitations of your tools.

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Guest editor's letter – Les Symonds



Since we all first adapted to the changes that Covid-19 brought to our lives, how many times have we heard the term ‘the new normal’? Yet, as restrictions ease, how often do we witness those around us striving to return to the lives they formerly led; their former-normal? I guess it is understandable, but if we allow this to happen, have we not lost a golden opportunity each to make changes which contribute a small part to a global change at a time when, clearly, some significant changes need to be made to the way in which we are collectively treating our planet?



There can be no disputing the fact that the prolific way in which so many members of the human race have travelled internationally contributed to the rapid spread of the coronavirus, which conversely led to our lockdown. Also, we cannot dispute the fact that our over-dependence upon imported produce and products struck home as we all learned to live somewhat more simplistic, frugal lives for a while.

What, then, could we (or should we) do to change things and adapt to our new normal? I, for one, resolve to make changes. I used to sell my work through a small gallery at a tourist hot-spot 50 miles from my home and would think nothing of driving the 100-mile round trip every month to replenish my stock. I would happily travel to venues more than 100 miles away to provide evening woodturning demonstrations, returning home well after midnight. This all stops!

When I first started woodturning, I would visit timber stockists and marvel at the range of exotic timbers they sold, buying those that intrigued me with little concern for their ethical provenance. I was blissfully unaware that CITES had any interest in what myself and other turners were doing and yet, today, about 50 timber species have come under its control.

I live in a region in which the only widely available commercial timber is the product of softwood forestry, which ends up as newsprint or particle board. Our local hardwoods abound with what the timber trade considers to be defects, but which a growing number of woodturners prefer to call natural features. Indeed, some of us celebrate those natural features and we have learned to adapt our work and to use them as a principal feature in our designs.

I am privileged to live in an environment in which a very high percentage of my

timber comes from within a radius of just a few miles of my workshop. I live and work from the same premises. My workshop is powered by solar panels, which keep up with demand on the dullest of days. I travel a 20-mile route, twice a month, to perform stewarding duties at a gallery where I am a member of an artists' cooperative. I fully understand that these are privileged circumstances and that not everyone could work this way, but what about you? What will you do, as a woodturner, to adapt to your post-Covid normal?

As always, we love to hear from you and see your latest work, so please contact us at WTEditorial@thegmcgroup.com or on www.instagram.com/woodturning__magazine/

Happy woodturning!
Les Symonds

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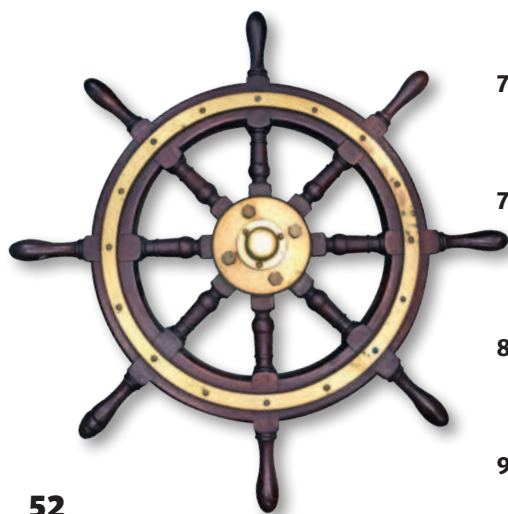
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HEALTH & SAFETY

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).

Stand alone!

Les Symonds makes a set of six display stands from a single turned workpiece

A departure from my normal articles in that this is something of an experiment to batch-produce stands for the many clocks and platters I turn and sell.



I am using mainly a large offcut of laminated oak kitchen worktop, with ash for the other main components, to produce a turned disk which has then been cut into six equal segments. A main consideration was that the finished stands should show minimal interference with the appearance of what each was supporting. They should have reasonable weight (to display the larger items), and the spread of the base should be wide enough to give stability.

The project has been completed on a large lathe with swivel-head capacity, but it could just as easily be scaled down to suit the items you make and the capacity of your lathe. You could even make these as eight segments from each disk, rather than six. We are primarily concerned here with designing and making stands which complement our work, rather than resorting to using commercially made solid plastic or plastic-coated wire stands.

HEALTH & SAFETY

- Our main concern, should you choose to follow the dimensions of the example shown, is that of turning a large diameter piece with the corners of the hexagon projecting beyond the circumference of the main body. Therefore, good lighting

and appropriate lathe speed will be necessary throughout.

- A full-face shield is always advisable when turning, but when turning laminated or segmented work it is strongly advised; glue-ups can fail.
- The two glue-ups will need to be

rested while the adhesive sets and cures, and this is best done overnight. With the composite workpiece being a good weight, adherence to the dimensions given when scalloping-out the front face of the main body will be essential.

Plans & equipment

Materials

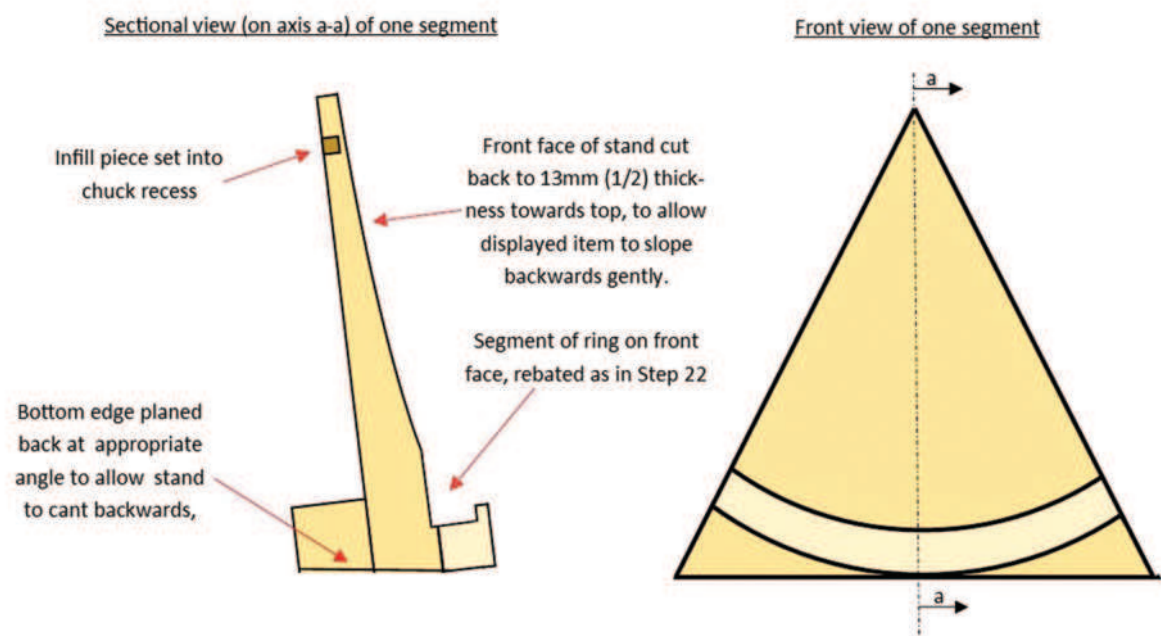
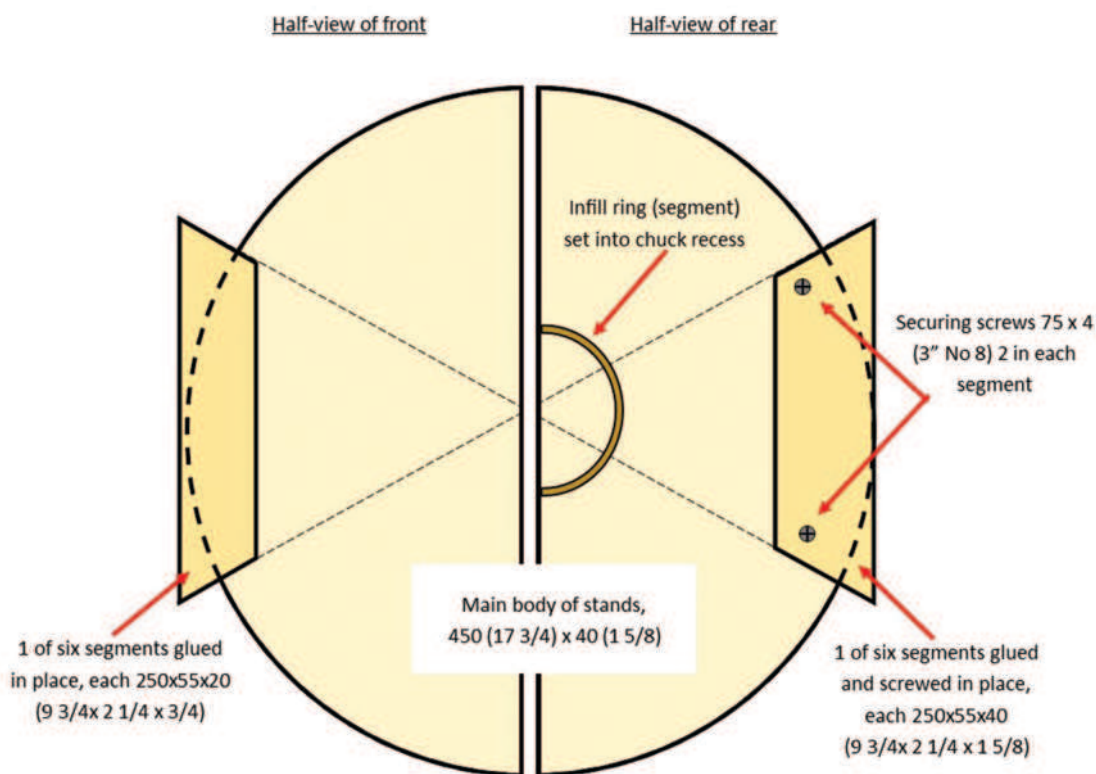
- Main body: Laminated oak, 450 x 450 x 40mm
- Front ring: ash, six @ 250 x 55 x 25mm
- Rear ring: ash, six @ 250 x 55 x 40mm
- Chuck ring filler: mahogany 100 x 100 x 25mm
- Satin finish aerosol lacquer
- Microcrystalline wax
- PVA adhesive
- Two-part epoxy adhesive

- Abrasives to 400 grit
- Twelve woodscrews 75 x 4mm

Tools & equipment

- PPE and RPE
- Lathe with spindle-lock/indexing facility
- Faceplate (150mm) with eight @ 25 x 4 screws
- Chuck with 100mm jaws
- Bowl gouge
- Spindle gouge

- Parting tool
- Square and curved scrapers (optional)
- Straightedges and pencils
- Marking gauge with pencil hole
- Try-square
- Basic bench tools (drill etc)
- G-cramps or similar
- Bandsaw (optional)
- Mitre/chopsaw or 60° mitre box



1 Cut a 450mm disk for the main body and mount what you choose to be the stand's front face on to a faceplate using eight 25mm screws, 4mm gauge – they need appropriately pre-drilled pilot holes to ensure a strong fix between the wood and the faceplate. Use a bowl gouge to achieve a clean outer edge, reducing the disc to the maximum diameter you can achieve.

2 Mark a circle on the face of the workpiece, its diameter measured to suit your 100mm chuck jaws in expansion mode, then use a parting tool to cut a groove wide enough for the jaws to fit into. The chuck used requires a 7mm-deep recess – if your chuck differs, make the changes to accommodate it. NB: make a note of the inside and outside diameters of this groove.

3 Start marking out the face to establish fixing points for the six front segments. Begin with a centre point and six lines radiating outwards to the rim, equally spaced at 60°. Before drawing the first line, orientate your workpiece in its chuck so your first line runs directly across the grain to give the best pattern on each segment. Having the toolrest as close as possible and at centre height will give accurate lines.

4 Make a pencil mark on any of the six radial lines, 21cm out from the centre. With the toolrest still in place, rotate the workpiece with the pencil held against it – this can be done with the lathe switched on at slow speed.

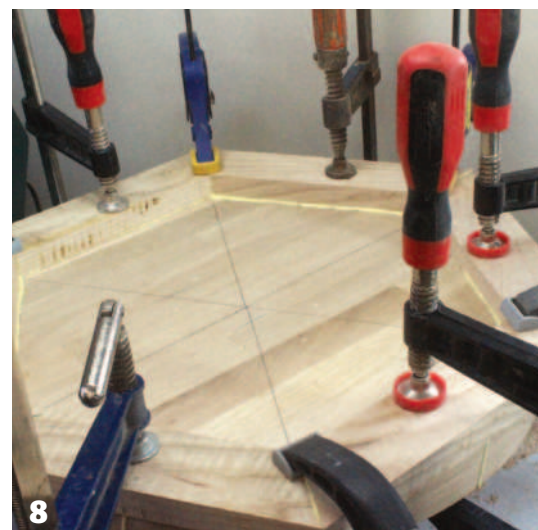
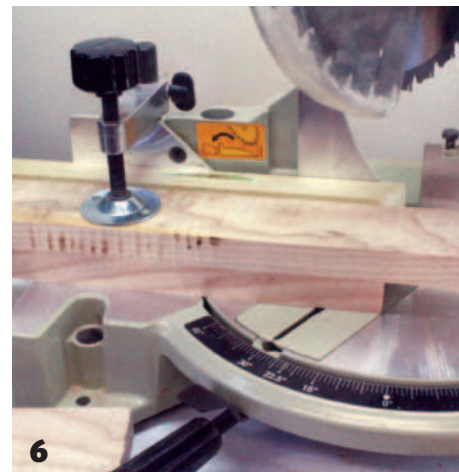
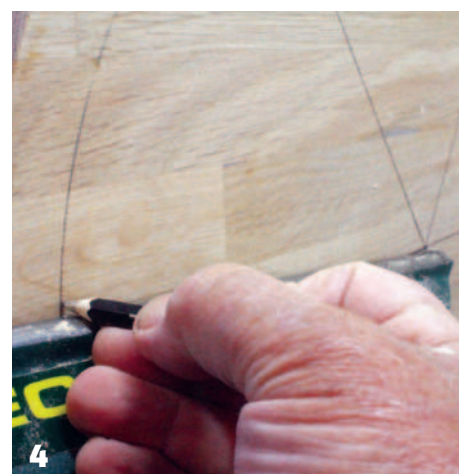
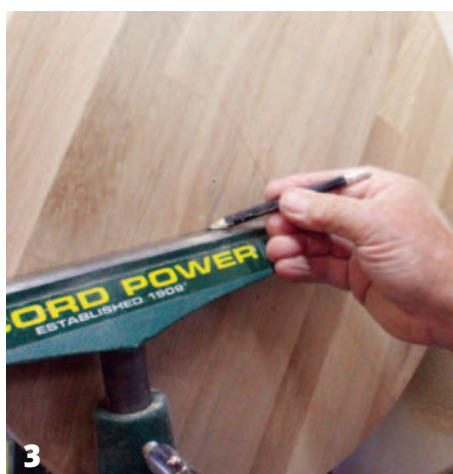
5 Finally, draw six straight lines, each between a pair of the six radial lines drawn in Step 3, and each starting and finishing at the intersection points of the radial lines and the circle drawn in Steps 3 and 4. Remove from the lathe but keep the faceplate attached to the workpiece.

Cutting the segments

6 This step will best be carried out with a chapsaw, but if you don't have one you will need to make up a mitre box with a 60° cut marked in it. Set your chapsaw to 60° and cut each of the 12 segments at one end only, then hold one front segment in place on the workpiece, against a line just drawn in Step 5 and butting up against one of the radial lines drawn in Step 3. Use a pencil to mark its actual length before setting a length stop on your chapsaw and cutting the six front segments to length.

7 Clamp all six of the front segments into place, then remove one and apply PVA adhesive to the relevant position on the main body and on the segment, spread evenly and clamp into place. Repeat for the other five segments, also gluing the end grain of each segment as you proceed.

8 Pay particular attention to the position of each segment relevant to its pencil-drawn location. If your adhesive or your clamping is causing and sideways slip of the segments, 12 cramps may well be needed to ensure that all six segments are held securely in place.





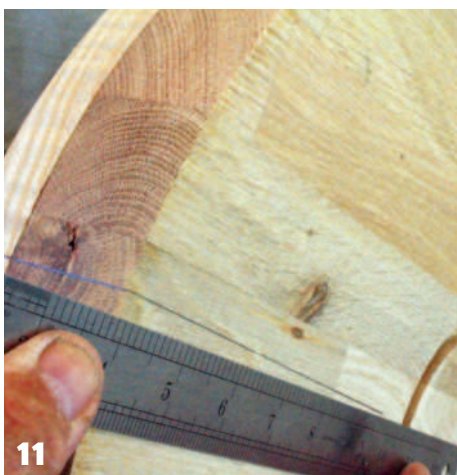
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9 Allow plenty of time for the PVA adhesive to bond and to cure, then remount on to the lathe and skim the outer edges of the workpiece, reducing the six segments down to the diameter of the main body. Start by making very light cuts inward from each of the faces of the main body to avoid the splintering that would undoubtedly occur with a cut through from one face to the other.

10 When the edge has been cleaned sufficiently, take a try-square and mark six small pencil lines across the edge, one to coincide with each of the six joints between the ring segments.



11



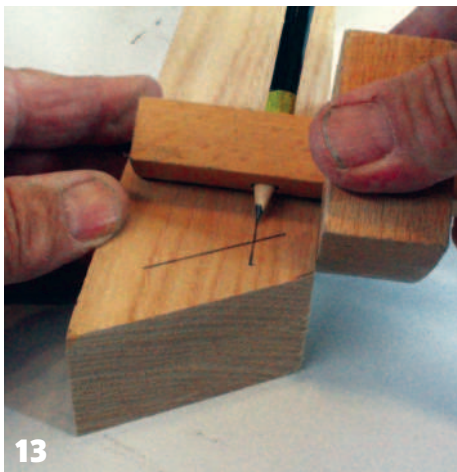
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11 On the outer face (back face of the stands), mark the centre point, then mark six straight lines radiating from the centre to the six lines previously drawn on the outer edge.

12 Taking any one of the six segments previously mitred (on one end each) to form the rear ring, lay it down on the main body with one mitre lying directly over a radial line and its longer edge positioned such that it just lies over the outer edge of the main body. Make a pencil mark where this segment lies over the other radial line, thus marking the segment's overall length. Cut the segment to length, lay it down back on to the workpiece and mark a pencil line along its inner, long edge.

Fixing points

13 Set a pencil into a marking gauge and set the gauge to 18mm. Use this to draw lines on the segment, 18mm in from each mitred end and from the inner long edge, establishing the centre points of two screw holes for fixing the segment into place. Drill and countersink holes at these centres for your 75mm x 4mm screws.



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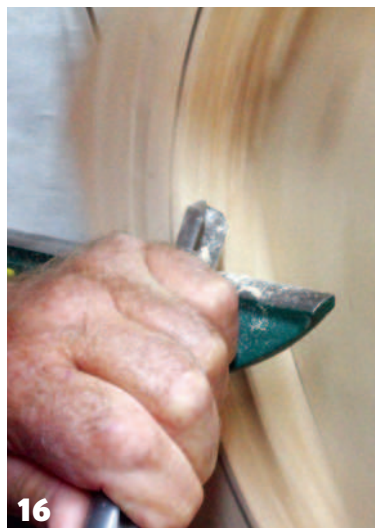
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14 Place the segment back on the workpiece, drill through it into the back of the main body, establishing pilot holes for its two screws, put the screws in place and give a twist to each by hand, then draw a line along the inner edge of the segment to mark the area to be glued. Remove the segment, apply PVA adhesive to the segment and to the main body, and screw the segment into place.

15 Repeat Steps 13 and 14 for each of the other five segments, until all six are securely screwed down on to the main body. The countersunk holes need to be a little deeper than usual to ensure that the screw heads are below the surface by a millimetre or two. Set aside and allow the adhesive to cure.



15



16

Truing up

16 With the faceplate back in place on the main body, replace the workpiece on the lathe and true up the inner edge only of the rear ring of segments that you just fitted in the previous step. This work can commence with a bowl gouge, cutting down from the outer face towards the main body and also cutting across the face of the main body, into the corner between the two surfaces.

17 It is unlikely that you will be able to get your bowl gouge right into the corner, so trim up and clean away the inner corner with a freshly sharpened parting tool, rotating the tool by a few degrees so that its long edge acts as a scraper, gently scraping the surface as you cut it. This will need to be done slowly and cautiously.

18 Abrade the large, flat surface on the back of the main body and the inner edge of the segmented ring cut in the previous step, abrading up to 400 grit in preparation for the satin lacquer. Remove from the lathe and remove the faceplate.

19 Replace the workpiece on the lathe with the chuck and 100mm jaws set into the chucking groove/recess on the rear face the main body. Draw a bold pencil line around the six segments, such that it passes a few millimetres inside the position of the joints between each of the six segments.

20 Repeating the process described in Step 16, use your bowl gouge to slowly cut down across the inner edge of the six segments. Stop the lathe regularly to ensure that you are cutting to within a couple of millimetres of each of the six corners between the six segments.

21 As with Step 17, use a freshly sharpened parting tool to make the final couple of light cuts across these edges, cutting down into and below the face of the main body (see drawing), to a depth of 3mm below its surface, also lightly skimming the rear face of the main body to such a width that you can get a bowl gouge in to start shaping the whole of its surface.

Forming a lip

22 A rebate needs to be cut on the inner edge of the six segments, forming a lip which will help to prevent any displayed item slipping forward. This rebate can be cut with a parting tool and needs to be 18mm wide and 3mm deep. You will need to have your toolrest swung as close in to the face of the main body as you can get it.

23 A spindle gouge will be handy for cutting right into the corner between the face of the main body and the inner edge of the six segments.

24 Now you can start to reduce the thickness of the main body, but bear in mind the chuck recess/groove in the rear surface, as this will restrict the thickness you can work down to. Work from the outside in towards the centre, retaining bulk at the centre for as long as possible, cleaning up/scraping as you progress. A straightedge can be placed across the central area to enable the depth to which you have cut to be measured. With 40mm stock such as this, and with a 7mm deep chuck-recess in the back, there will be 33mm of timber left. 8mm will need to be retained over the top of the chuck recess, allowing the central area of the main body to be just 15mm thick (thus 25mm below the outer face of the timber at its centre).





25 Proceed with caution, making light cuts and continuing to clean up as you progress towards the centre. Remember at all times that once you are cutting within the inner-most 100mm of the main body, the timber is as little as 8mm thick over the chuck recess.

26 When you have finished profiling, a steel rule can be pressed against the surface to ensure an even surface with no troughs or ridges. The rule can then also be used to draw six lines, radiating inwards to the centre, each line starting from a point adjacent to a joint between each pair of ring segments. These are the lines along which the whole body of the stands will eventually be cut into six pieces.

Cutting the stands



27 If you have a bandsaw, the workpiece can now be cut into six stands. The first cut across the disc will offer no problems as it cuts the disc into two halves. After this, it might be necessary to slip a packing piece underneath the workpiece to give it support as you cut it. If you don't have a bandsaw, this will need to be cut by hand.

28 Run each of the six stands over a surface planer with the fence set back to several degrees, to skim the bottom edge so each stand cants backwards. There is no set angle for which you need to do this as it will depend on what you wish to use the stands for.



29 The final part of the construction is to cut and insert a decorative ring into the chuck recess/groove. Mount the blank on to a small faceplate and reduce it to the outside diameter of the chuck groove (as measured in Step 2), then cut a rebate on the outer face of the blank (facing the tail-stock), effectively creating a ring standing proud. Check this ring for a fit into the chuck recess/groove on any one of the six stands that you just made.

30 Use a parting tool to cut this ring away from the blank, keeping it a millimetre thicker than the depth of the groove. Use a little two-part epoxy to glue the ring into one of the six stands and cut the excess of the ring away by hand, repeating this for all six stands.



31 All sawn edges can now be planed and sanded. A bench-top disc and belt sander will prove invaluable, but if you don't have one, you will need to be prepared to spend a considerable amount of time hand planing and sanding the surfaces. Abrade up to 400 grit.

32 Finally, apply a few coats of satin lacquer and microcrystalline wax over it once it has dried thoroughly. ●

Inspired by land and sea

Les Symonds introduces Welsh woodturner Miriam Jones

Miriam first came to my attention when she contacted me to book a tuition session and I was impressed that she was very frank about the difficulties that she was encountering and about the limitations of her skills. When I met her, what excited me was her designs and techniques of weaving various coloured threads into her work, and it has been an immense pleasure to see her skills develop over the past few years.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIRIAM JONES







Tell us about your background and training.

I was introduced to woodturning in my second year at university while studying 3D Design. I was going to specialise in metalwork and jewellery at the time, but really enjoyed woodturning, making simple pen blanks to slot into large metal necklaces. When I did my Masters in Design I knew that I wanted to start a craft business, and wanted to pursue turning as I found it addictive and therapeutic. So, I developed my ideas and started practising on the lathe at university. Totally opposite to how you normally do it, by learning the craft first then developing ideas. I am self-taught and learned a lot from books. However, I received a bursary from the Worshipful Company of Turners and this really helped my skills and techniques as I got tuition with Les Symonds and undertook the Certificate in Woodturning with the AWGB. I have learnt a lot and developed a lot, as simple techniques and methods had never been shown to me before.

What led you to make a business out of woodturning?

Trying it out in university and getting hooked on it. Also I found I could get

free access to offcuts of wood from my uncle, who is carpenter, to work on my ideas with.

How do you like to work? What are your favourite tools and why?

I like to work with the radio on full blast, my favourite tool is the bowl gouge, since learning certain techniques and the push cut. It's so satisfying when you get a nice cut from start to finish in one go.

Describe your workshop – what is the set-up and how long have you been there?

My workshop initially was in my parents' garage, then I outgrew it and was getting into trouble traipsing wood shavings through the house, so me and my dad built a workshop shed near the cow shed in 2017. I love the space, it's ideal, although I do get unusual visitors occasionally, such as chickens, sheep and cows.

How does your design process work?

I normally sketch my initial ideas, then test them out on the lathe and



keep at it to try to get it right. I have ideas in my head for a few years such as my Weave collection, and I hold on until I have time to develop them further. I still have a lot to do to push this collection to a higher standard.

Which woods do you most like working with and why?

I enjoy turning spalted beech. I love how unique it is and that no two pieces of spalt are the same. I work with commercially seasoned wood mainly, as I'm too impatient to wait for green wood to dry, so I mostly get offcuts of sapele, oak and beech from local timber yards.

Do you work with other materials as well, and how do they compare?

Yes, I work with sheep's wool for my Weave collection, and cotton thread for my inlays. Also, I sometimes get commissions where I use plastic. I would like to get metal back into my work in future.

What sort of finishes do you prefer and why?

I like a quite natural, matt finish. I tend to use clear wax a lot as it has a slight shine but maintains the natural colour of the wood.

What inspires you and where do you get your ideas from?

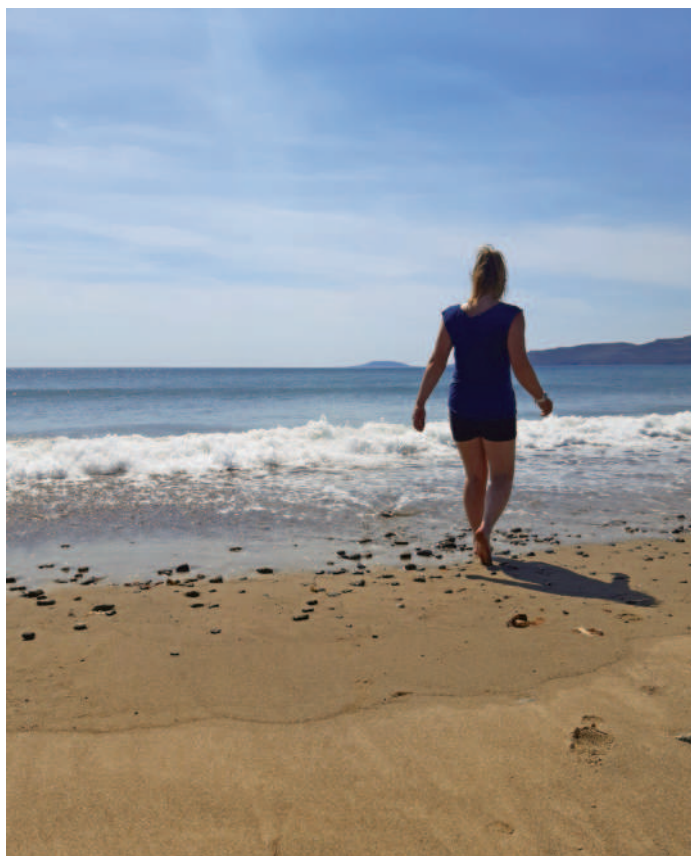
Farming inspires my work a lot; some of the inlays that I do are inspired by rope tyings on the farm, the weaving idea came about from me looking at a structure of a cattle silage holder. The Welsh language and its poetry also feature heavily in my work.

Does the location of your workshop have any effects or influences on how you work?

I think so. With the farm surroundings, and being a stone's throw away from Hell's Mouth beach, it's hard not to get inspired by where I live. I feel very lucky that I can pop down to the beach in my break.

What is your favourite piece you have worked on and why?

I think my bench for an S4C television programme was one of my favourite and most challenging projects. I wanted to push myself and my turning skills in a new way to make something totally different from what I'm used to making.



What is the most challenging piece you have worked on, and why?

I think my Weave collection is still a challenge due to the sometimes-complex angles and shapes that I'm trying to achieve. They are still very much a work in progress!

How has the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns affected your work, and do you think any of the impact will be long term?

The pandemic had a positive effect on my business, it forced me to be online more and understand my website. I designed and made a Rainbow tealight holder, which proved to be very popular and even

helped to raise more than £700 for charities. The success of that exposed me to a wider audience and more customers.

What are your aspirations for the future?

I want to progress more with my turning. Do more courses to develop my skills further and push my work to a higher level.

What do you do when you're not woodturning?

When I'm not turning, I play hockey regularly, and I've played football since I was seven. I also enjoy surfing and walking. ●

On the Register

Les Symonds discusses his involvement with the Register of Professional Turners



The RPT is supported by



The Worshipful Company of Turners



What the Register represents

The aim of the Register of Professional Turners (RPT), is 'to advance the art and craft of turning in the UK by supporting its professional practitioners', and this it does through such practices as the promotion of its members, the setting and assurance of standards, the development of the craft and of its proper teaching. The RPT's professional standing and reputation is significantly enhanced by its support from The Worshipful Company of Turners (The Company), which is one of the oldest livery companies in London, having been established for over eight centuries.

With provenance such as that, I set myself the goal of gaining membership and of getting their impressive certificate hanging on my workshop wall, which I achieved after a lengthy and rigorous process.

My involvement in the RPT

For the past few years, I have been compiling and editing a quarterly newsletter for the RPT, formerly as just another member, performing a role to relieve the busy committee of a time-consuming task, but more latterly as a full member of the committee myself. With any such publication, and especially one with a three-month gap between issues, it can be quite difficult to present our members with interesting articles and newsworthy announcements, especially when our social media page is active and arguably performing a similar task in real time. To overcome this clash, I prefer to concentrate on the more personal stories that tend not to make it into the posts of a professional

organisation's social media, and, of course, my favourite readers are those who don't view social media at all.

Earlier this year we elected a new committee and found ourselves in the interesting and historic position of having two conscientious and dedicated women at the helm, Melissa Scott as the Master of the Company, and Jay Heryet as the chair of the RPT. In our regular Zoom meetings and in the weeks in between, our new committee is forging ahead with the rebranding of the RPT. As we emerge from the worst of the restrictions associated with coronavirus, we look firmly to the future as we strive to build our profile in markets and at events associated with high standards in the fields of interior design and home accessories. We have an exciting new website which has just been launched and which can be found at www.registerofprofessionalturners.co.uk. We are streamlining our procedures for application to join the Register by prospective new applicants, and while the process may become more efficient, the criteria of the standards required will certainly not be relaxed.

Besides the newsletter, my main role as a committee member is that of collating the reviews that we receive of our members' teaching sessions and demonstrations of their craft, be that an in-person demo, or internet based. New online forms have been introduced which will give both qualitative and quantitative data, and which will prove invaluable in the RPT's efforts to maintain and ensure the quality of its members' work.

These are eventful times for the Register. We can look back on a craft with thousands of years of existence, just as we can look forward to a changing, but exciting future.

The ginger jar – part 2

Jim McConnachie completes his segmented design

In part one, I prepared the stock, cut and glued the segmented pieces into place to create the pattern. Once the jar and lid are turned, the barrel is mounted and turned ready to hollow, along with shaping and fitting the lid.



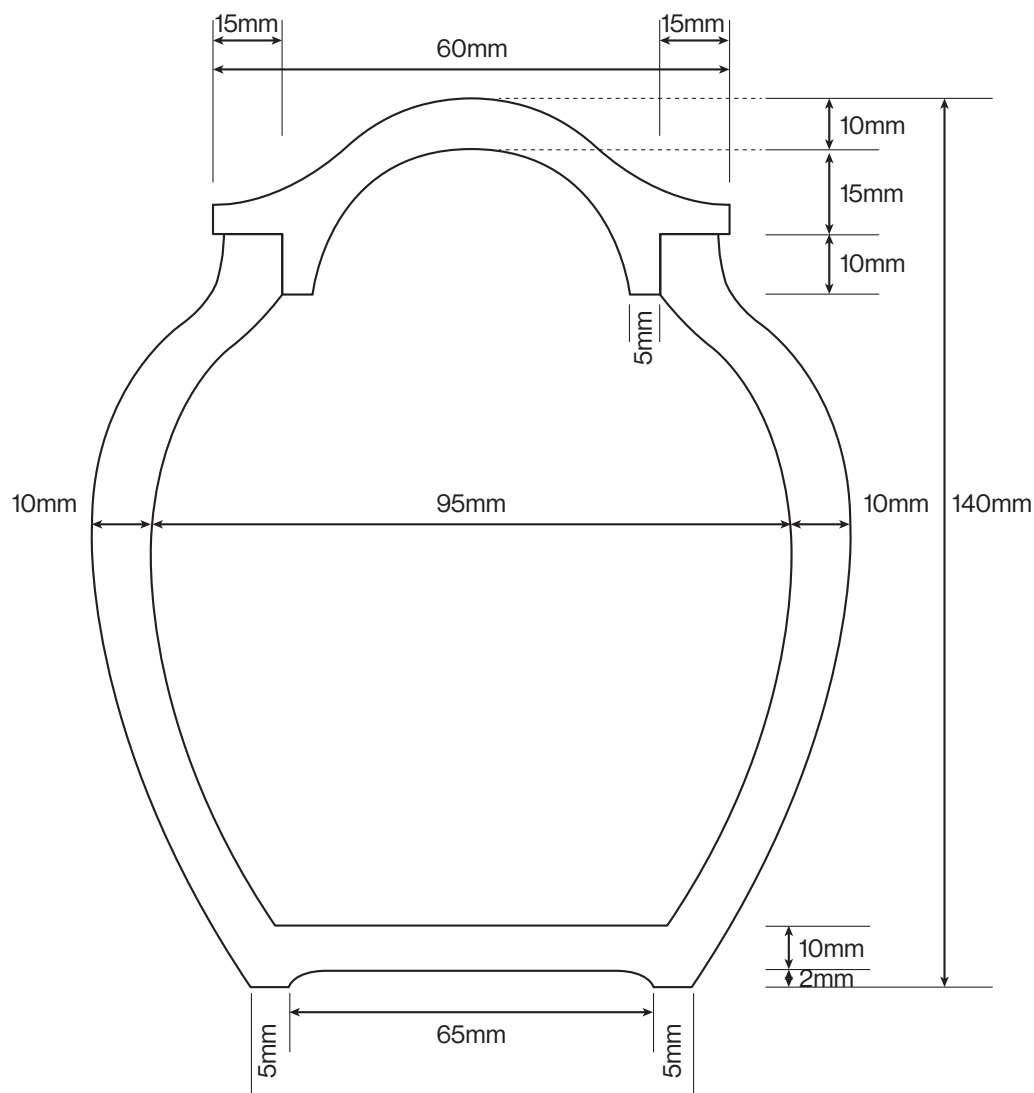
Plans & Equipment

Materials

- PPE and RPE
- Black bean, 90 x 18 x 900mm long
- Veneers: Queensland walnut, silver ash and ebony
- Scrap, eight pieces only
- Glue

Tools

- Glue brush
- Band clamps
- Veneer saw or craft knife
- Spindle roughing gouge
- 12mm bowl gouge
- Parting tool
- 30mm round-nose scraper
- 10mm scraper



Hollowing the barrel

1 Remove the tailstock and check that there is no movement in the barrel. Start to taper the lower portion of the barrel, using the templates as a guide. Start hollowing out the inside from the bottom.

2 I use a 12mm tool ground on both edges to a long taper with a small round-nose, about 8mm wide. After hollowing in about 25mm I change to a 32 x 8mm standard round-nose tool and go in about 50mm. Aim for a 10-11mm wall thickness.

3 Form a rebate about 6mm wide and about 4mm deep on the inside of the barrel. This rebate will secure the bottom disc. Now remove the whole assembly from the lathe.

The bottom disc

4 To mount the bottom disc on a wood faceplate, mark two lines at right angles across an 80mm faceplate. Note the removable wooden spacer under the toolrest. That allows me to position the toolrest to coincide exactly with the centre axis of the lathe consistently, to mark centrelines on any project.

5 Mount the bottom disc with two glue lines at right angles to each other, coinciding with the pencil lines on the faceplate, and hold with the tailstock for gluing with hot-melt glue.

6 At this point, due to a lapse of concentration, there was an 'Ooooops' moment that required me to make a new segmented disc to replace the original. I decided that the finished piece would look better without the veneer in the bottom disc.

Turn a rebate with a parting tool to fit exactly into the rebate on the bottom of the barrel. Turn a shallow recess in the disc about 3mm deep. At the centre point, there may be a small hole that needs attention.

I made a small segmented button to do the job. Turn it flush and sand smooth. Apply a coat of a sanding sealer. This will be the inside face of the bottom. Now glue the bottom disc on to the barrel, using the lathe as a press. When the glue has set, cut the faceplate off at the bottom disc with a thin parting tool.

Finish the barrel

7 Turn a shallow depression in the bottom but leave a 12mm-wide rim around the edge, 4mm deep for re-chucking to turn the top of the barrel. Turn another plug to conceal the hole in the centre of the bottom to match the plug on the inside of the bottom disc. Sand and apply a coat of sanding sealer, but leave the rim clear. Again, here I had previously made a motif just for this project. Bring up the tailstock centre for support. Place a small block between the centre and the bottom to prevent damage to the bottom. Start roughly shaping the barrel by using the templates as a guide. Leave 1-2mm oversize for cleaning up later. Stop the lathe frequently to see how the pattern changes, for future reference.

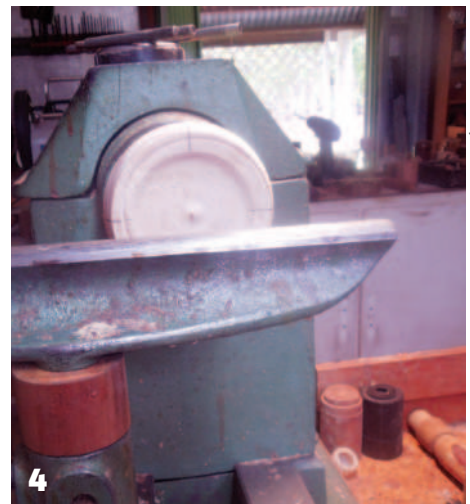
8 Take the assembly out of the lathe and replace with a wooden faceplate on the headstock. Reshape the faceplate to fit the step in the bowl bottom. The barrel will be reglued to the faceplate with hot-melt glue, to complete the top section of the barrel.

Take the time to get the narrow round-nose scraper and true up the end of the barrel. Mark the inside and outside diameters for the top end with the dimensions from the drawing. Use a bowl gouge to shape the outside top of the barrel, referring to the profile drawing as a guide. Now use a sharp, 30mm round-nose scraper to refine the shape.



Remember to adjust the toolrest level with the lathe centreline and hold the handle of the scraper up higher than the cutting edge.

9 Now start on the inside. Again, use the narrow, pointed round-nose scraper to turn out the inside. If there is some vibration, increase the lathe speed and take lighter cuts. Refine the inside with a 30mm standard round-nose scraper, or use one of the swan-neck scrapers available now. I used a Sorby-Stewart arm rest hollowing system for this project. Sanding the inside presented me with a new problem. After a few attempts I took a piece of white polystyrene about 35 x 35 and 175mm long, and shaped the end to a curve that matched the inside profile of the barrel. I cut a strip 35mm wide



from a sheet of 240 sandpaper, folded it over the end of the polystyrene, and held it by hand to sand the inside.

10 One of the wooden faceplates was shaped to a cone and fitted to a threaded revolving centre for temporary support. Shape the outside, again using the templates as a guide and taking the time to observe how the pattern changes. I used purpose-made callipers that I designed about 25 years ago to check the wall thickness. I went through a phase of making small opening hollow forms and needed a way of checking the wall thickness. These callipers allowed me to read the wall thickness directly.

Making the lid

11 Remove the barrel assembly from the lathe



and replace with another wooden faceplate. True up the face of the faceplate and turn back to a diameter of about 85mm, then mark the centrelines on the faceplate. Hot-melt the disc made for the top to the faceplate, as we did previously for the bottom disc. Make sure it is accurately glued in place, otherwise the lines will not match with the lines on the barrel. On the disc, cut a spigot about 10mm long and a diameter to fit snugly into the top of the barrel. Turn the diameter of the disc to about 16mm larger than the barrel top. Again, refer to the profile drawing and use the template for the shape of the inside of the lid. Turn to shape using a 12mm round-nose scraper. Turn a 12mm hole about 5mm deep in the centre, for a short length of 12mm dowel to fill the hole. I have used



a piece of ebony left over from another job. For something a bit different, soak the piece of dowel in black or red ink, or stain it a bright colour before gluing in place. Sand smooth and apply a coat of sanding sealer.

12 The top of the lid re-chucked.

13 The top is now cut off its faceplate. While the faceplate is still in the lathe make a friction chuck to fit the lid into, to turn the top face. You need to decide whether to continue and fit the scalloped segments to the top. If you decide not to, go ahead and shape the top according to the template. Sand and polish to your desired finish.

If you decide to try for the scalloped edge, shape the top face along the general lines of the template, but leave the 30mm flat on the top, and glue it to another faceplate, using the threaded live centre. When the glue has cured properly, remove assembly from the friction chuck.

To cut the scallops, I made a 'drum' sander by laminating 19mm pine, to make a 90mm diameter 'drum' 100mm long, with 80 grit paper glued to it. This was fitted to a drill press. I used a dividing head to control cutting the scallops.

14 Scalloped infill clamped in a vice. This process could conceivably be done manually by fitting the drum sander to the lathe with the lid held by hand. The lid disc is slowly introduced to the sanding drum until a scallop is sanded out to meet the veneer lines. Do this on two sides opposites only. From the scalloped shape recess, make a cardboard template for the pieces to fill the scalloped shape and cut eight segments. Cut enough veneer to size, for all eight scallops. I would normally cut the veneer so the grain ran around the perimeter, but if you cut the veneer so the grain is vertical it will be less frustrating.

The thickness required will be evident from the scallop out portion. Cut out the pieces on a bandsaw. Check the fit and sand to adjust the shape. Glue in the two opposite segments. When dry, re-chuck the assembly and turn away the surplus segment, until it is just proud of the lid edge. Take the assembly out and cut the next two scallops out of the lid. Glue in two more segments and turn away the surplus material again just proud of the edge of the lid. Repeat the process until all eight scallops are done.

15 Return to the lathe and trim the lid under the surface of the lip, turning away as little material as possible. Shape the lid to fit firmly to the top of the barrel and use the barrel as a friction chuck to finish the top. Cut the top from the faceplate and replace it in the friction chuck. Bring up the tailstock with a small piece of softwood for safety and protection. Turn the top of the lid to the pattern, remove the tailstock and finish by hand. If required, turn a small 12mm button with a spigot to make a feature on the top. Sand and polish. Remove the lid and ease the top of the barrel to make a snug fit for the lid. ●

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CHESTNUT

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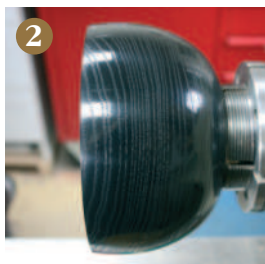
FINISHING SCHOOL

Using Gilt Cream over Ebonising Lacquer (2)



1

1 Gilt Cream is a firm wax blended with metallic pigments and is available in Gold, Silver and Copper. It can be used to colour an entire piece or to highlight grain.



2

2 A bowl has been prepared by having the grain opened using a Liming Brush and then having a coat of Ebonising Lacquer applied and allowed to dry.



3

3 Using it as sparingly as possible wipe a coat of Gilt Cream over the surface, making sure that all the grain is covered.



4

4 Using an oil such as Finishing Oil, Hard Wax Oil or even Food Safe Finish, on a cloth, clean the excess Gilt Cream off the surface. As the lacquer has followed the contours of the grain it will remain there, while the close grain areas will be cleaned. This can be done most easily with the lathe running.



5

5 To finish another coat of oil or WoodWax 22 can be applied to seal the Gilt Cream in and protect the finish from handling. It is not advisable to apply lacquer over a surface which has had Gilt Cream applied to it.

See our YouTube channel for more tips!
More information available from your local stockists or contact us at:

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Putting threads on lidded jars

Brian Horais discusses techniques enabling you to make threaded jars using available threading rigs

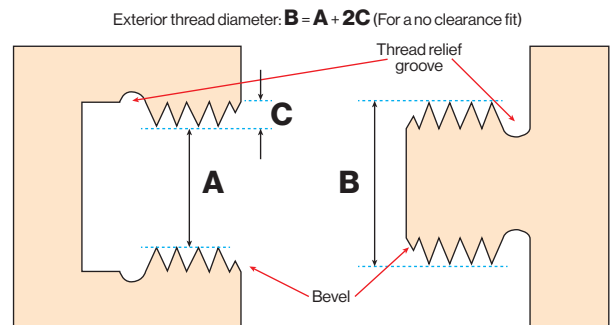
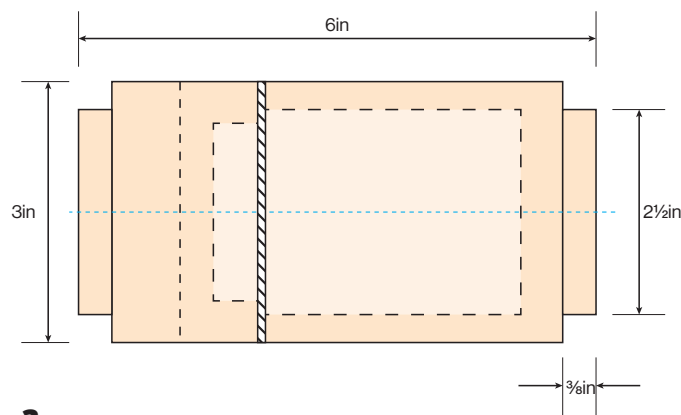
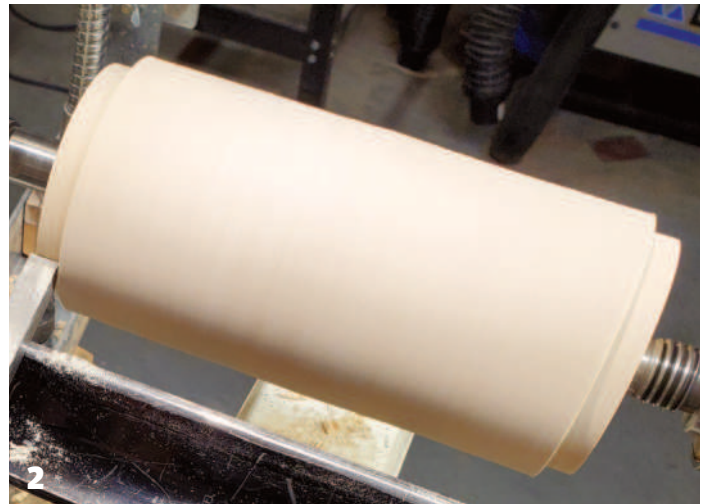
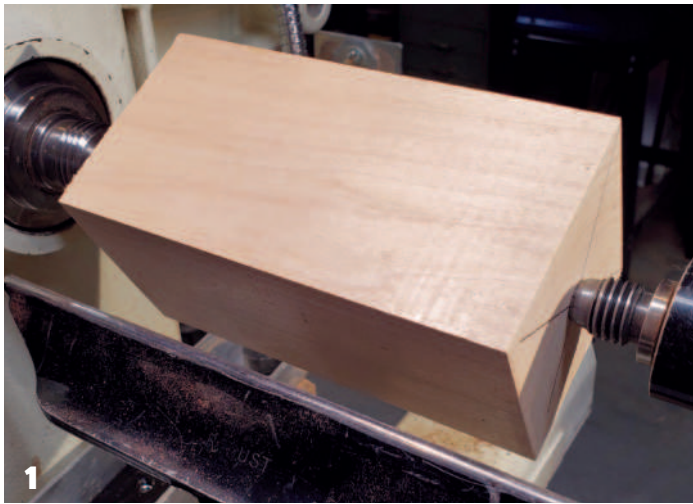
Making a threaded jar has always seemed like something I would like to try. I read a number of articles on the topic and decided that hand-chasing threads would require a lot of skill and practise. Later I discovered threading rigs for the lathe in my readings and began looking into how difficult they were to use.



My first reaction was that the price was too high. I let the topic slide to the bottom of my 'things to try' list until I attended a local woodturning symposium a couple of years ago. I made my decision and purchased one of the rigs at the conference and have been very happy with it ever since. There are other jigs on the market which I am certain perform the job perfectly well. You may be wondering, why not try hand-chasing threads because the cost of the tools is much lower? My answer is that, for occasional use, a threading rig will provide more consistent results. If you do a lot of threading and are willing to spend some serious time getting proficient at hand threading, give it a go. If you plan on doing production threading, you should give serious consideration

to a high-end rig. A sidebar provides more detail about hand threading.

This article is intended as a walk-through of the process I use to make threaded jars using a rig. My intent is to dispel some of the mystery and misunderstandings about the complexity of making threaded woodturnings. There are a number of tips and cautions that I will provide. Based on my experience, I think anyone who has been turning for a while can become proficient at turning well-fitting threads using a rig like the one I have. It probably goes without saying that anyone with some turning experience also realises that nothing worth doing on the lathe comes easily. Some practise and precision are always needed. Turning threads, even with a threading rig, certainly benefits from practise and precision.



A = Interior thread diameter **B** = Exterior thread diameter **C** = Thread depth

Cut interior threads first, measure and then add twice the depth of threads to determine exterior thread diameter. This would result in too tight a fit, so only use 60% of the value 2C

Therefore, $B = A + 2 \times 0.6 \times C = A + 1.2 \times C$



1 Basic blank **2** Tenons added **3** Basic dimensions **4** Thread dimensions **5** Callipers

Top tip

Using hand-threading tools

Using hand-threading tools is commonly called thread chasing. This is a topic that takes a lot more explanation than can be provided in a short sidebar. An image of the interior and exterior thread chasing tools is shown. These cost a lot less than thread-turning rigs, but the amount of training and experience necessary to create good threads by hand far exceeds what is needed to operate a thread chasing rig.

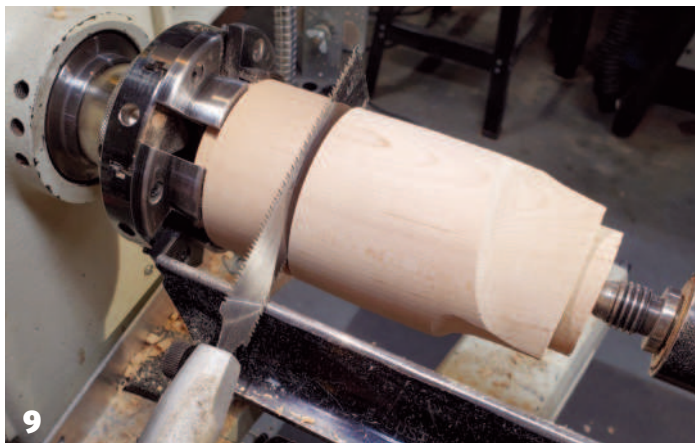
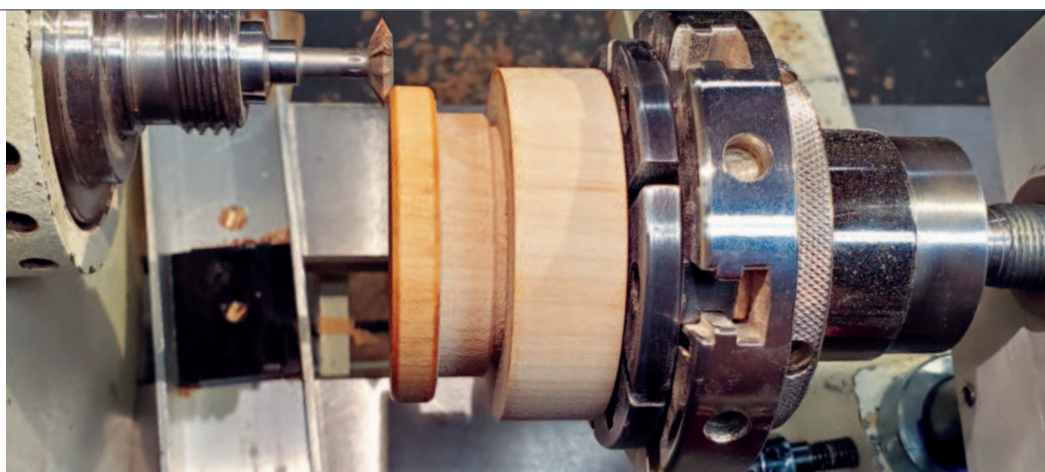
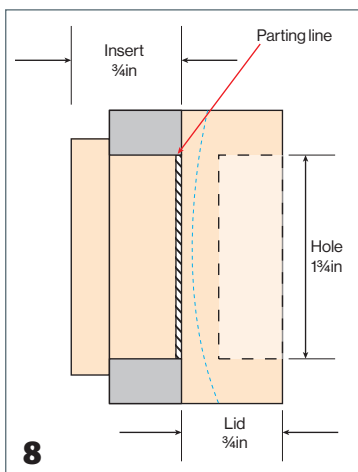
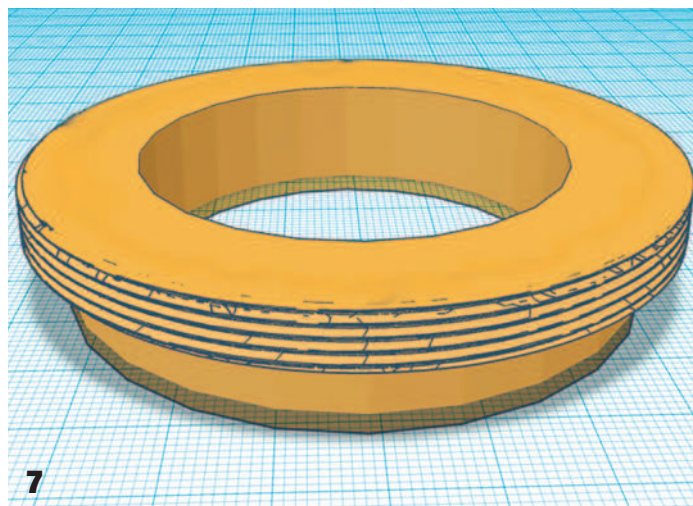


Preparing the blank

Harder, denser woods work better than softer woods when cutting threads. This is mainly because softwoods do not cut cleanly and will not hold a good thread. Bocote and boxwood are good for cutting threads but walnut tends towards the softer side, as does poplar. Maple is denser than walnut and works sufficiently well for cutting threads. If you have a favourite piece of softer wood you can compensate for the shortcomings by making a partial cut of the threads and then coating the thread area with CA glue. Once the CA glue is dry, the final thread depth can be cut. In this article, I used a 6in-long blank of hard maple, 3in wide. Half-inch tenons were cut in each end after turning the blank into a cylinder. Dimensions are shown with tenons sized to be compatible with your four-jaw chuck. The tenons will be used to hold the jar and jar parts at various stages of the turning process.

Understanding thread dimensions

For this jar I have chosen to turn the exterior, or male, threads on the upper section. The interior, or female, threads will be turned on the lower section. I have chosen to do this so the threads will not be exposed on the lower section of the jar. You can reverse this approach if you wish. Thread pitch is measured in threads per inch (tpi). For smaller threaded cylinders, 16tpi works well. If you are threading a larger opening, 5in or more in diameter, 10tpi will work better. The threading rig I am using, the Chefmate EZ Threader, comes with 16tpi and 10tpi threading adapters. Thread depth is a function of the threads per inch – 16tpi has a thread depth of 0.039in. With numbers to this precision, you are probably not surprised that an accurate set of callipers will be needed for measuring diameters. Digital callipers have come down in price recently but dial indicator callipers also work very well.



6 Grain patterns 7 Threaded insert 8 Turning the insert 9 Handsaw 10 Boring the base

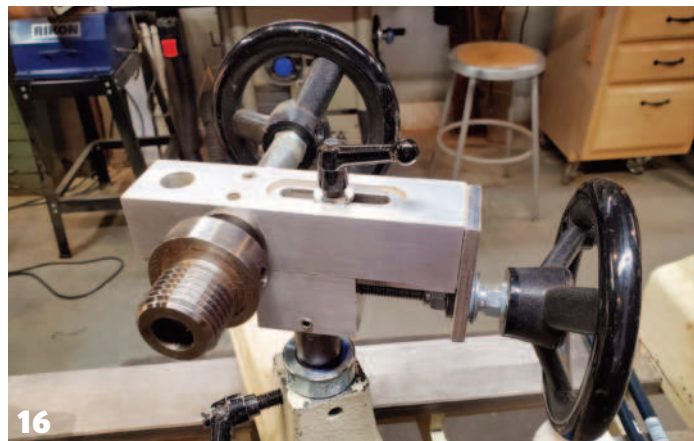
Grain matching

A detail often overlooked when making threaded jars is ensuring the grain lines match when the lid is fully threaded on the base. A number of factors are involved here, including randomness of grain patterns, width of parting cut and how to approach the fabrication of the threaded lid interface. You can see that grain patterns are not always parallel, as shown where the upper and lower sections are being parted. If you parted these two pieces with sufficient material remaining to make threads on the lid, chances are your grain patterns will no longer match because few wood grains are truly parallel. In fact, the interesting grain patterns are usually random. My method for handling this is to do a narrow parting cut as shown then use the upper portion of the lid section to make a thread insert similar to the drawing. This allows you to align the threads with the lid fully seated by adjusting the position of the thread insert before gluing it in place. A few steps are added to the overall process, but the end results are worth it. If you are not interested in grain matching then just make the parting cut tenon wide enough for the desired thread

dimensions. For the case of 16tpi threads that we are using here, four to five threads are sufficient. This results in a total threaded length of approximately $\frac{3}{8}$ in, including the thread relief groove (four threads at 16tpi equals $\frac{1}{4}$ in, plus another $\frac{1}{8}$ in for the thread relief groove). The sequence of steps for making this threaded insert is shown, but I am getting a little bit ahead of myself. Let's work on the base section first.

Parting the cylinder

The cylinder is parted to provide a base approximately 4in long. This leaves enough material on the upper section for the lid and the threaded insert. A narrow parting tool is used to minimise loss of grain continuity between the top and bottom pieces. I use two narrow cuts to part the turning and complete the parting with a handsaw. Using just a parting tool to separate the parts often results in the cut-off piece flying across the shop and finding its way under the largest table. With the lid and bottom sections separated, the bottom section is bored out to a depth of 3in with a $\frac{1}{4}$ in Forstner bit. You can use a larger bit for this process. The inner section is turned to an



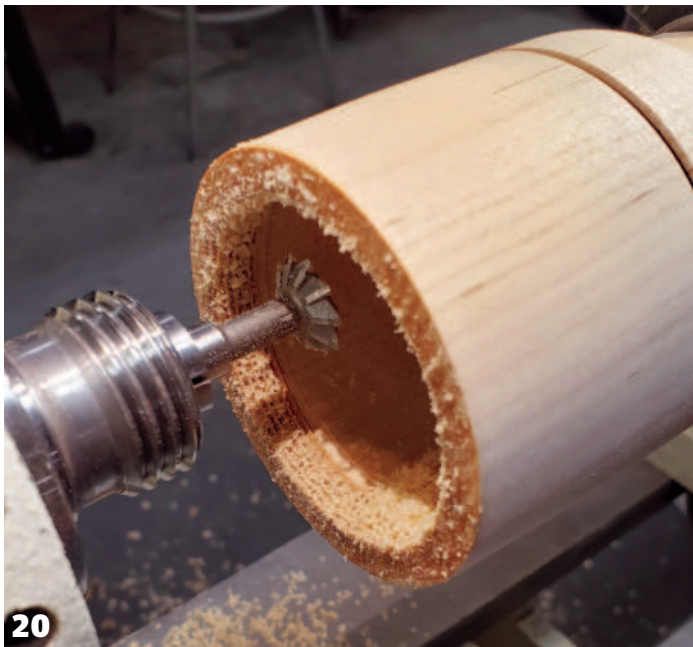
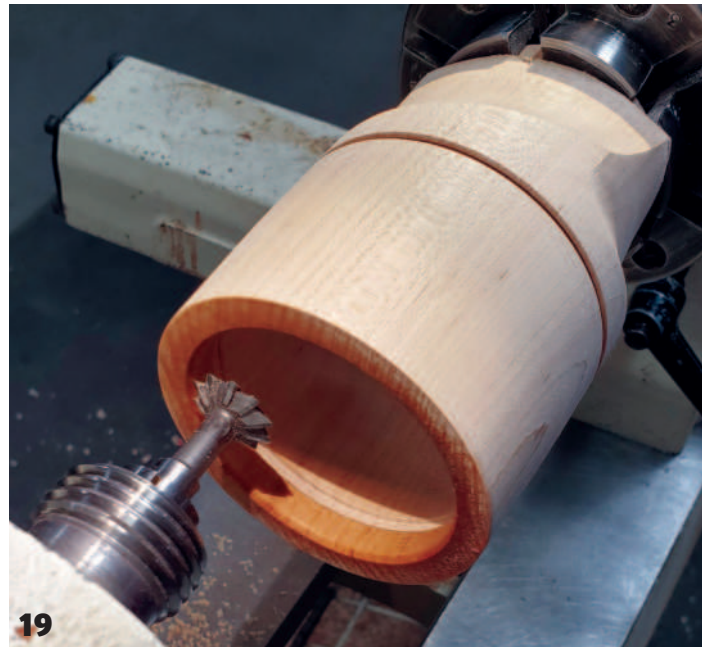
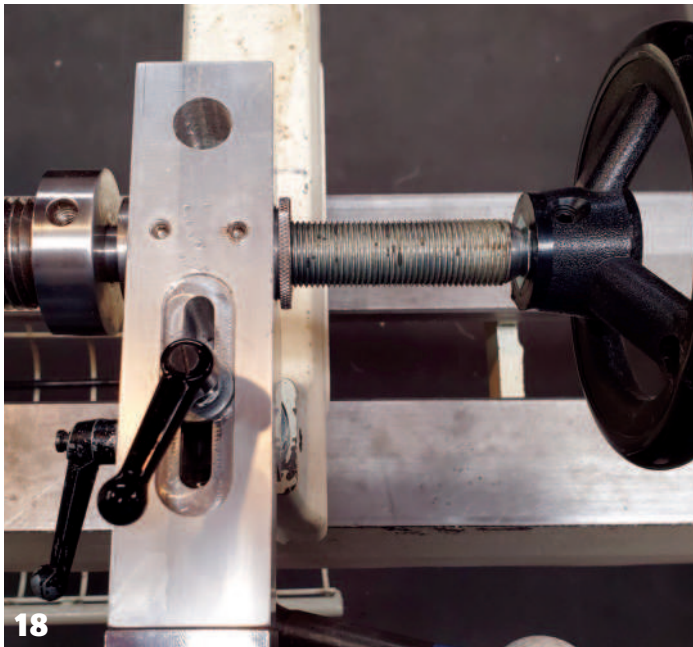
11 3in depth **12** Parallel check **13** Inner thread area **14** Thread relief tool **15** EZ Threader rig **16** Rig with locking collar **17** Threaded rod

inner diameter of $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. A small ruler is used to make sure the inner turned surfaces are parallel to the centreline. This is an important step to make sure the threads all have the same inner diameter. Different diameter threads will lead to binding of the threaded section. The inner diameter is chosen to provide a pleasing outer wall thickness (approximately $\frac{3}{8}$ in) while allowing sufficient thickness to cut the internal threads. The final step to prepare the inner surface for threading is to cut a groove on the inside of the base wall at $\frac{3}{8}$ in below the rim. This allows for four threads to be cut and provides a relief area for the cutting tool when the thread cutting is complete. The thread relief cutting tool is a screwdriver with the tip bent to a 90° angle and then ground to a chisel point. This is a good time to add a bevel to the entry edge of the thread area, as shown in the earlier thread dimension diagram.

The threading rig

The EZ Threader rig shown is solidly made from various metals and has two large round handles to control the positioning of the turned piece and the progression of the thread cutting tool. It mounts on the toolrest and has a

large threaded interface that provides a mounting position for your chuck to hold your turned item during the threading process. The chuck threaded interface is on the end of a shaft that has threads to match your desired thread pitch. Shown here is a shaft with a 16tpi thread pitch. The side handle controls depth of cut for the threads. This handle is calibrated so that one full turn yields 0.039in of movement, the depth of 16tpi threads. The entire rig mounts on the toolrest with a locking collar that allows you to position it on centreline once and then not have to do it again while using the same lathe. The smaller handle on top controls the smoothness of movement of the thread cutting handle. The cutting head is mounted in the headstock centre shaft by using a long $\frac{3}{8}$ in threaded rod, which attaches to a collet holding the cutting tool on the working side of the headstock. The thread cutting head turns very fast (2500rpm) when in use. Make sure the threaded shaft is tight in the headstock and the cutter is secure in the collet before starting to cut. The $\frac{3}{8}$ in rod is not supplied with the rig due to the variations of lathe headstock dimensions. It is readily available at your local hardware store. Detailed instructions are provided by the manufacturer to set up and use the rig.



18 Aligning on centreline **19** Positioning the base **20** Thread cutting complete **21** Oiling the thread area

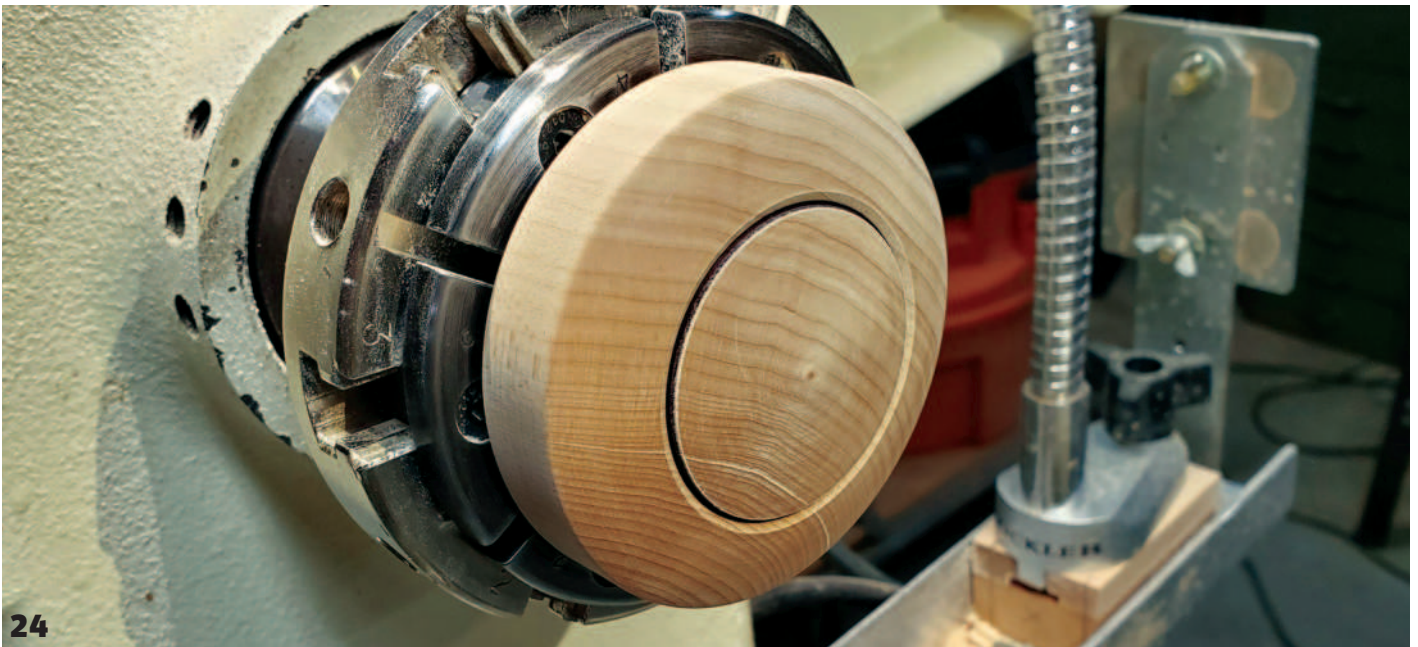
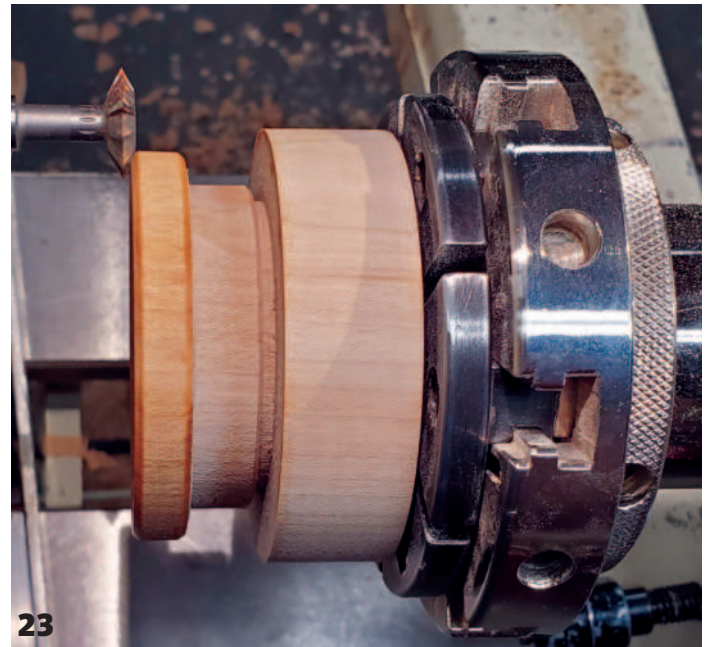
Preparing to cut the internal base threads

Before aligning the thread cutting head to the upper edge of the part, the threaded shaft holding the chuck needs to be aligned parallel to the centreline by sighting down on the lathe rails. This alignment is essential to make sure the threads are cut uniformly and the threaded surface is perpendicular to your turned item's centreline. With the bottom section still mounted on the chuck, the next step is to position the surface to be threaded so that the cutting tool is just touching the inner surface of the jar. This requires turning each of the adjustment wheels to position the part next to the cutting tool tip. The wheel at the end of the shaft holding the chuck adjusts position along the lathe axis and the side wheel provides adjustments across the axis.

If you have done a reasonable amount of turning, you realise that attention to detail results in a better end product. That is very much the case with turning threads using a rig such as the EZ Threader. The first detail you need to observe was described in the earlier paragraph on 'Parting the cylinder'. Making sure the inner surface of your jar's base has walls parallel to the centreline is a detail that needs to be closely observed. I like to turn the inner threads on the jar base first so that I can measure the inner diameter of the thread area and then determine the outer diameter of the lid thread section. The next detail, setting up the threading jig with its centre shaft parallel to the lathe centreline, is an

equally important step. With both of these details observed, you can use the two circular handles to adjust the mounted jar base so that the cutting tool is just touching the inner edge of the jar wall. This will require moving the cutting tool into the jar in a little bit past the bevel you cut earlier by using the threading rig handles. With this setting done, move the cutting tool back out of the jar a slight amount and get ready to cut threads. One tip I have begun to use is to coat the threaded section with oil to reduce splintering. I use orange oil, but mineral spirits will also do nicely.

Cutting depth is a function of the thread size or pitch. For 16tpi threads the thread depth is 0.039in. On the EZ Threader rig, you can set this thread depth by rotating the depth handle one full turn in the appropriate direction (the direction that moves the tool towards the surface to be cut). With these steps completed, turn on the lathe and set the tool speed to 2000-2500rpm. Now you can start the cutting process by slowly and smoothly turning the handle at the end of the threaded shaft so the cutting tool engages the wood. I like to cut the threads in a single pass, but if you are using softer wood, it is best to make a half-depth cut then coat the threaded area with CA glue before returning to make the final glue. The CA glue hardens the thread area you are cutting. Smoothly engage the central shaft handle while holding the base of your clamp steady and turn the handle smoothly to advance the jar towards the cutting tool. Continue this process, cutting the threads completely, until the cutting tool is past the



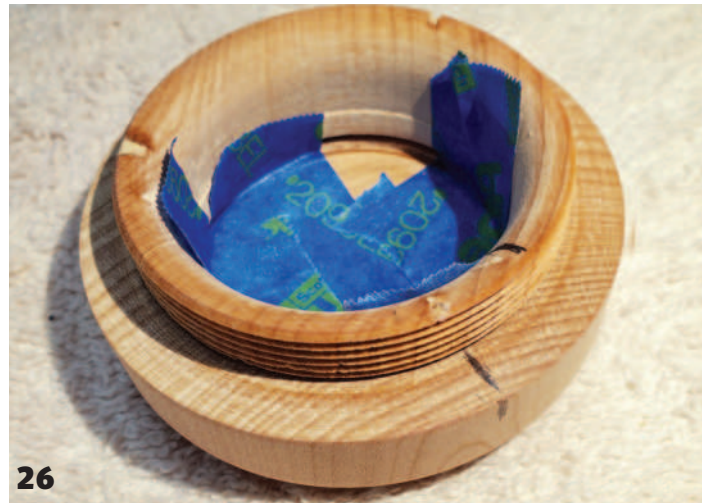
22 Thread inner diameter **23** Positioning the lid **24** Completing the upper lid surface

threads and in the thread relief area. Now you can turn off the lathe, move the cut area away from the tool and back out the completed jar base. The oil coating reduces the chances of splintering but also makes the cuttings adhere to the surface. You will need to clean out the threaded area with a stiff brush. I also like to touch sand the sharp points of the threads to make sure they don't break off or splinter. Your jar base is nearly complete.

Preparing to cut the internal base threads

The next step is to cut threads on the lid insert. First you need to prepare the lid section for threading. As discussed earlier, I am using a thread insert to make the grain alignment easier. Note that the exterior thread section is slightly larger in diameter than the inner diameter of the jar base threads. Following the simple equation shown earlier you might think that you would just add twice the dimension of the thread depth to the inner diameter to determine the outer thread diameter. This would provide a perfect fit with no clearance, but if you have made many tight-fitting joints in wood, a perfect fit seldom fits at all. You need to leave some clearance between the thread interface dimensions to make sure they can engage smoothly and repeatedly without binding. The EZ Threader instructions recommend that you only add 60% of the value of twice the thread depth to determine the outer diameter of the lid thread section. For this jar, the inner diameter is 2.288in as shown. Adding 60% of two times

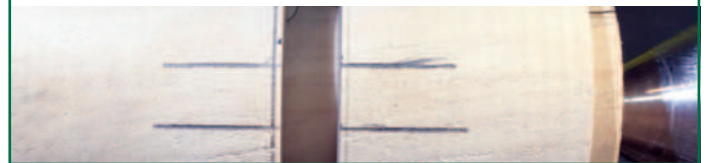
0.039in yields an exterior thread diameter of 2.335in. Before mounting the lid thread section on the threading rig, turn the outer diameter of the lid insert to this dimension, checking with your dial indicator or digital measuring gauge. Because you are only removing small amounts of wood at a time and re-measuring repeatedly, take your time. If you take off too much wood on the exterior thread section, your threads will have a very sloppy or non-existent fit. I like to turn the exterior thread dimension last because I find it easier to control this dimension. With this step complete and the desired dimension achieved, coat the thread area with some oil and mount the lid section and clamp on the threading rig. The steps to align and engage the threading rig are the same as for the interior thread. The only difference is the direction you will turn the thread depth handle before starting the thread cutting process. I prefer to position the lid section between my side of the lathe and the cutting tool so that the tool is cutting into an advancing surface instead of a retreating surface. After cutting and cleaning the exterior threads, don't remove the threading rig and the lid section. Just move the rig back from the cutting tool and pivot the rig outward, then you can check the thread engagement with the jar's base. This way you can realign the rig and still make a final cut if the engagement is not smooth. With the thread fit-check completed, you can part the thread insert from the lid and then finish the top of the lid. I added a design feature and colour to the lid.



Top tip

A simpler approach to grain matching

If you don't want to match grain patterns, you will not need the added steps involved in creating a threaded insert. In this case you can part the top and bottom sections of your wood cylinder by using a wider tenon. You need to decide what dimensions you desire for your inner wall thickness and then allow sufficient material in the upper tenon for the exterior threads. The tenon shown here is probably a little too small in diameter but shows the concept of a large tenon size.



25 Mark the thread alignment **26** Insert thread insert **27** Add embellishments **28** Finish the wood **29** The completed threaded jar

Matching the threads with the grain lines

Aligning the grain lines when the lid is fully screwed in will take some marking and threaded insert position adjustments to locate the thread insert properly before gluing it in place. Mark the thread alignment on the base and lid with a pencil. Next put the lid insert into the $1\frac{3}{4}$ in hole you bored on the inner side of the lid and line it up with the marks you have made for grain alignment. Then tape the thread insert securely into the lid. It should be a snug fit if you turned the outer surface diameter to match the bored hole. If not, you can add three equally spaced 'tabs' of thick superglue to the outer edge of the insert, allow them to dry, and then sand them as necessary to make a snug fit. Screw the lid in until it seats and check your grain alignment. It probably will be 'off' the first try. Use the amount it is off to adjust and retape the threaded insert into the

lid. Repeat this process until you are happy with the thread alignment. Then mark the location of the thread insert in the lid and remove the tape. Glue the insert in place and then check out the alignment after it is dry.

Finishing the threaded jar

If you have been noticing the images, I have added some embellishments to my threaded jar, including a twisted base and some coloured sections on the base and lid using coloured pens. The twisted bottom section with feet was a design choice, but a simple cylindrical base also looks good. You can complete your threaded jar with a finish of your choice. I prefer a wiping oil finish for the clear wood areas. Watco oil is my finish of choice. Put some beeswax or candlewax on the threads to make them turn smoother. Add your own creative touches and don't forget to sign your work. ●

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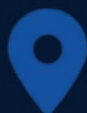


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Burl platter

Andrew Potocnik finally gets around to the challenge posed by a burl – after 10 years

Several years ago I was approached at a wood show by a friend who was interested in seeing how a platter could be turned from a burl. He then bought a burl from a vendor at the show, which I accepted and left on the floor of my workshop with notes on how to process it. The point of leaving material on the floor is that by stubbing my toe, I'd be prompted to move the project along sooner rather than later.

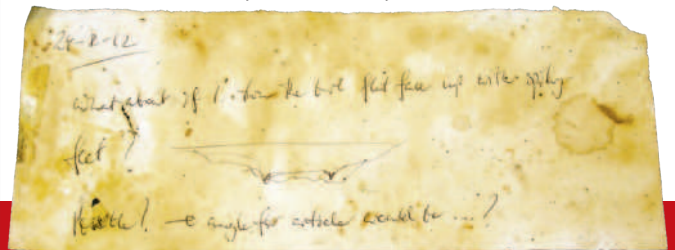


Not to be rushed, this piece sat – irrespective of my frequently stubbed toes and notes made on how to make the most of it – until I recently decided enough was enough and got to work, 10 years after the project was prompted.

The bonus that came from stubbing my toes was that the burl had time to dry slowly and stabilise. I didn't take moisture readings 10 years ago, but markings from the seller showed that it weighed 7.5kg, and it now weighed 6.1kg – a decrease of about 20%.

Inspired and ready to begin work, I flicked through notes taped to the

black box burl, which showed possible ways of turning it, then I realised the latest idea was exactly the same as the one drawn in 2012 (pictured below). What does that say about how my mind works?



HEALTH & SAFETY

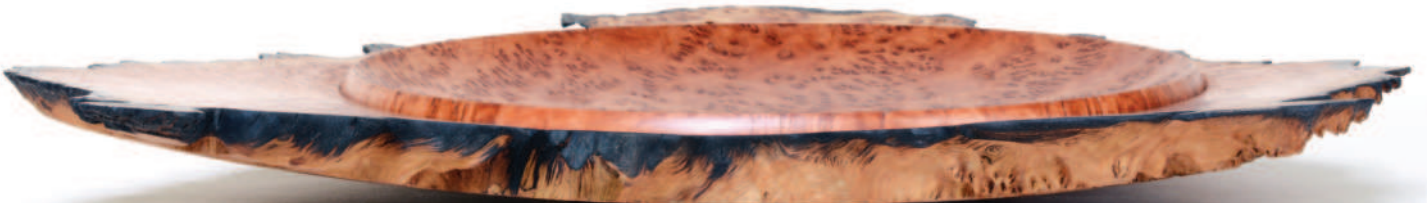
- Turning irregular blanks presents several problems, beginning with how you deal with 'stray' portions of the burl that become nothing more than a 'ghost' as the wood spins.
- Bringing the tool into contact with spinning wood should be done gradually, with fingers kept well behind the toolrest but also anchored firmly to provide maximum support for the tool as portions of the wood hit, miss and hit again before a level surface is achieved.
- Sanding those sections poses another safety issue, providing you're keen on preserving your

fingers, and then there is the matter of irregular weight spinning around, which can create problems with your lathe if it isn't secured firmly to the floor of your workshop. I used my Omega Stubby lathe, which weighs about 250kg and has a variable speed switch, allowing both stability and an incremental increase in speed as material is removed.

- I recently saw a post on social media by fellow author Mark Sanger, who adds brightly coloured red tape to stray edges of irregular pieces of wood so he can see the sharp edges

as they spin by (almost) invisibly. I wish I had seen Mark's post before beginning this project. Even though I didn't have any accidents, I still like this safeguard.

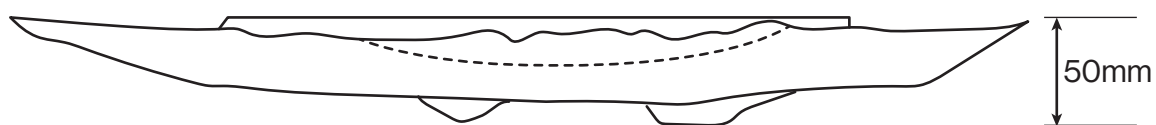
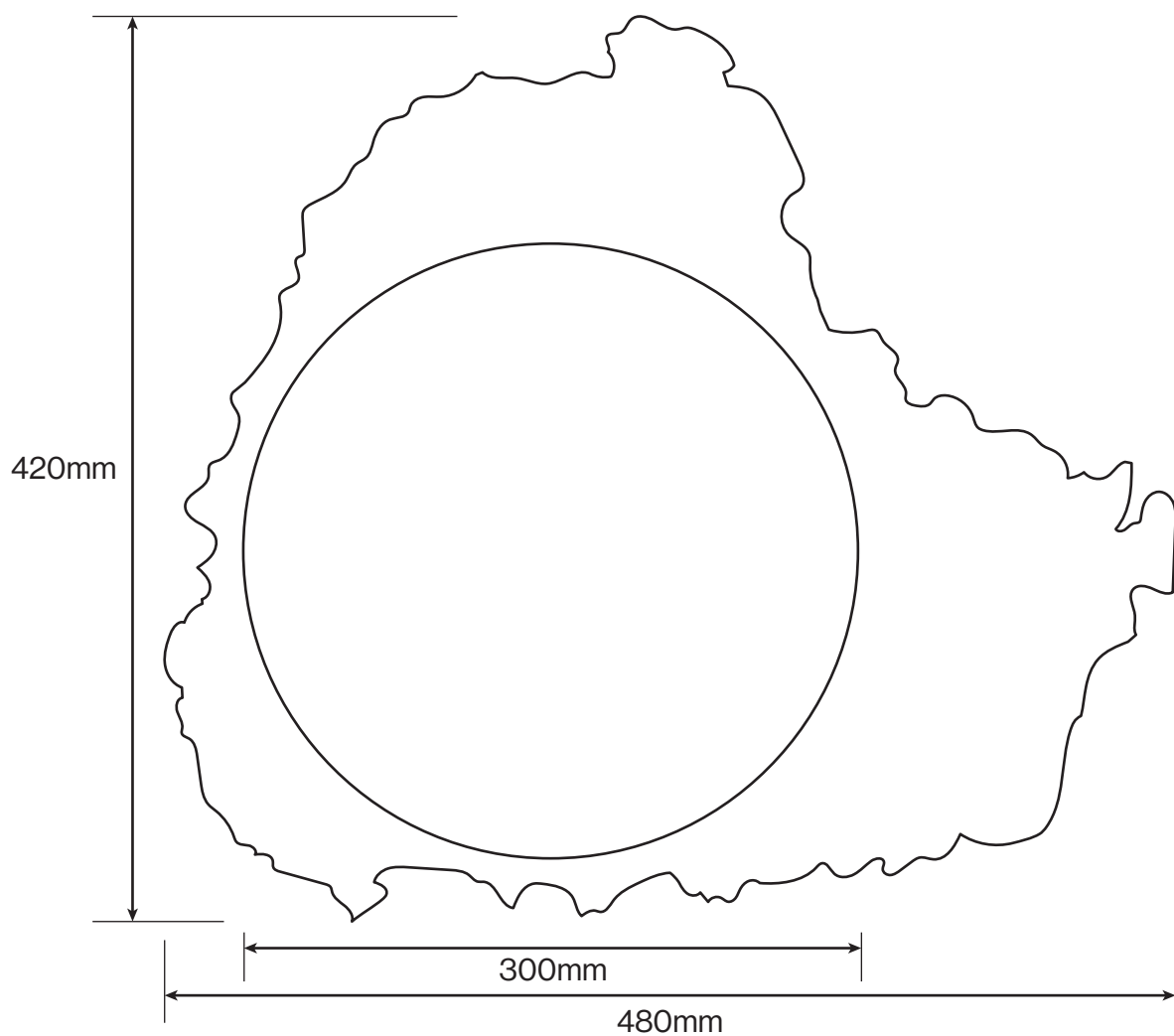
- If at all possible, scorching should be done outside the workshop in the open air, but if it has to be done in the workshop then take all necessary precautions to prevent fire or accidents. Ensure all shavings, dust and other combustible materials are first removed from the area around the lathe. Always ensure that you have a suitably rated fire extinguisher close to hand.



Plans & equipment

Tools & Equipment

- Face shield
- Dust mask
- $\frac{3}{8}$ in gouge
- $\frac{3}{4}$ in scraper
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ in scraper
- Round skew
- Parting tool
- Figure 8 gauge
- Profile gauge
- Masking tape
- Power carver fitted with a burr
- Rasp and file



1 You can see this burl was far from circular, which is a common feature of any growth and something you need to deal with on a burl-by-burl case, hence...

2 ...to gain maximum return from this wonderful piece I used one of a series of discs I've cut from MDF to locate its centre point before mounting a faceplate so it could be fitted to the Stubby.

3 Create the base of the platter. This method also works very well when band sawing blanks with a natural edge.

4 Intending the piece to have three carved feet, I needed to turn a ring that protrudes from the bottom of the form, so there is a flow of material once unwanted timber is carved away. A profile gauge helps visualise how much material you've removed on either side of the ring. You'll also notice that I turned a tenon in the centre of the burl so it could later be reversed and held in a scroll chuck.

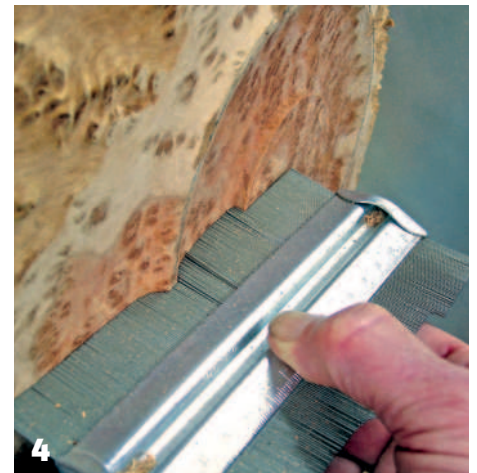
5 Here you can see how pins of the profile gauge show what the eye cannot determine when looking at the turned surface. The stepped profile visible on the right-hand side of the gauge shows my 6mm-deep tenon.

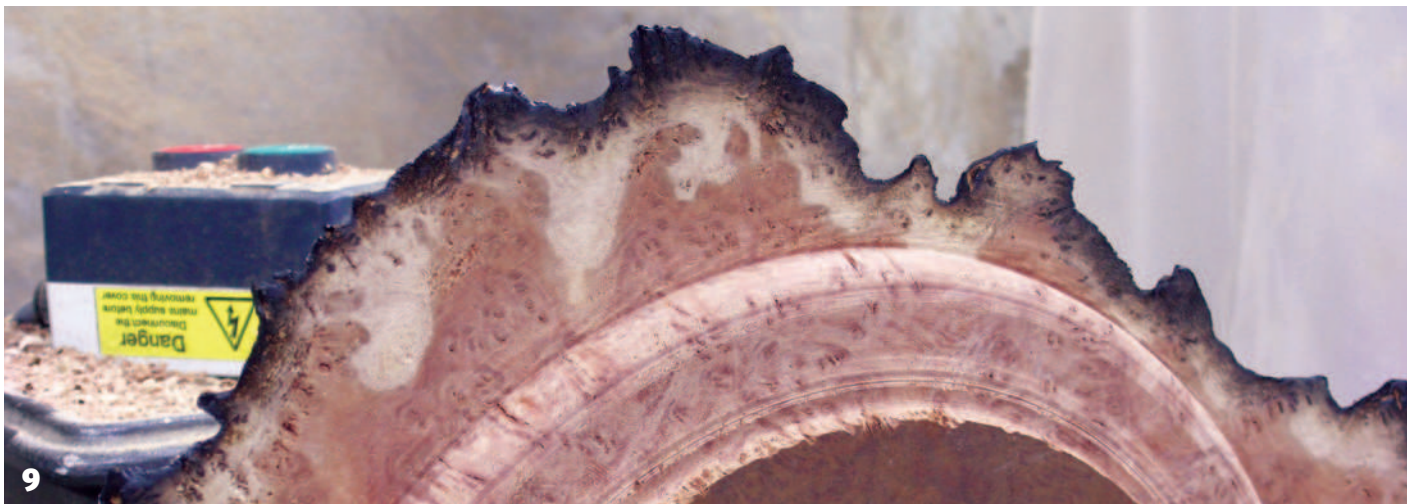
Trimming to level

6 The top surface of the platter was still uneven, so to establish how much material I had to work with, I needed to trim it to a level surface. The danger in turning an irregular form is that outer edges become almost invisible once the lathe is switched on – hence a small piece of masking tape indicating the outer edge of the burl was applied to the toolrest. This provides an indication of where to begin cutting into the burl.

7 With the lathe running, there is only a 'ghost' visible of the outer edges of the burl, which are dangerous unless you keep fingers behind a firmly located toolrest, so it is best to slowly 'nibble' away until the surface is levelled.

8 Returning to the underside, it was smoothed using a combination of power sanding on solid sections, hand sanding, with the lathe switched off, and 'elbow grease' on extremities that were too dangerous to sand while the wood was revolving. Next the blank was reversed and gripped in a scroll chuck so the upper surface of the burl could be shaped, with the tailstock providing extra support.





9 Thinking one step too far ahead, I used a gas torch to burn the outer edges of the burl to take away sharpness and create a darkened edge; however this was eliminated...

10 ...as the surface was initially power sanded...

11 ...followed by more hand sanding to be safe.

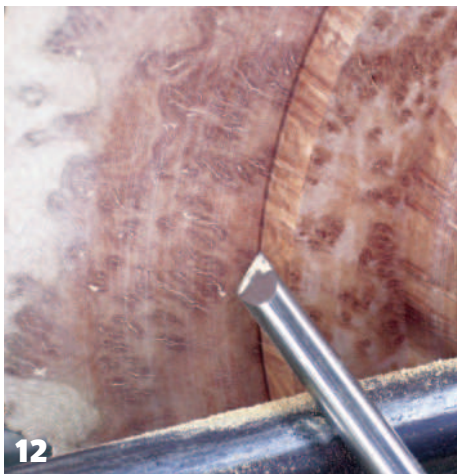
12 To refine the outer rim of the bowl section I used a round skew to cut a V intersection between it and the sanded flat 'wing' area.

The 'dished' portion

13 Now for the easy part, turning the 'dished' portion of this piece while retaining a central stub enabling the tailstock to provide support. This was the first stage of this project where tools were in constant contact with wood, as you would expect in general faceplate woodturning.

14 Once the bulk of the material was removed, the stub and tailstock could be removed allowing a smooth, flowing curve to be turned and sanded through to 320 grit. I used a combination of sheet sandpaper in combination with inertia sanders.

15 Although I had burnt sharp edges on the burl, sanding had removed burn marks which I wanted to be a feature of this piece, so a light scorch with a gas torch was applied again and rubbed back with a stiff plastic brush. This removed the burnt material without marking the sanded surface, allowing a smooth, tactile transition between the turned upper surface and the natural lower edge.



16 The burl was reversed, pressed up to a padded carrier and held in position with the tailstock live centre so the tenon could be reduced and the resulting surface sanded.

17 With all turning completed, the small centre stub was carved away, the round base divided into three parts and unwanted material 'carved' away with a power carver fitted with a coarse burr. When working with a form that has variations in weight due to material mass, it's important to ensure at least one foot is located at the heaviest section so the platter will not tip over.

18 Refining of the resulting surface and each of the three feet was completed with rasps and files, followed by hand sanding.

19 The best part of any project is when a finish is applied and the wood comes to life. I used Danish oil, brushed on and allowed to dry before several more coats were applied. ●



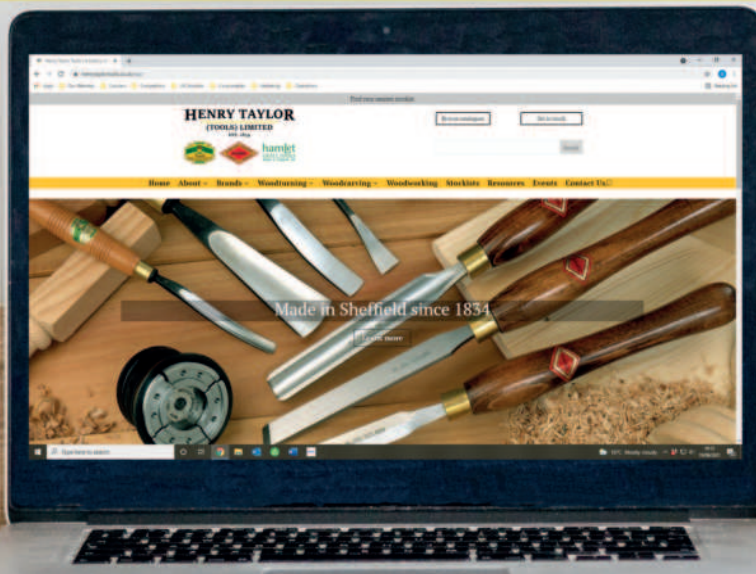


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Kurt's clinic

Kurt Hertzog answers readers' questions



1 All these tools can be part of your beading arsenal. Mastering beading with beading/parting tools, skew chisels, and spindle gouges is a valuable skill

I'm having difficulty rolling beads on my turnings. I've used various spindle gouges and skew chisels with limited success. I'm at the point of buying one of those beading tools. What's your opinion of those tools? Any recommendations on brand?

I'm unsure of your current woodturning skill sets or experience. Rolling beads might just be one of those more difficult cuts beyond your current capabilities. Rolling a bead properly – i.e. symmetrical and truly a half round with the peak at the height desired that is properly 'tucked' – is not an easy task to perform properly. Especially difficult is having more than one bead adjacent to others and having them identical. The smaller-sized beading tools are gaining popularity, especially with the resurgence of the Lincoln Seitzman-inspired turnings. The need for small and identical beads that are virtually impossible to cut makes these very small beading tools a necessity. The advantages of larger beading tools are that they let you always succeed at beads and they can produce uniform beads in any quantity on demand. The downside is that you are

limited to the bead size of that particular tool unless you have additional differently sized tools. Beads, typically on spindles, are cut into face grain. Beading tools are scraping tools and scrape the features into that face grain – not the best way to create a cleanly cut and crisp feature. I own beading tools and do use them. I do try to cut my beads whenever I can because I find the results superior when I'm successful. My beading tools find the most use when there are many beads that I really want uniform. The tools I'm familiar with from various manufacturers all work well. If you buy from any of the quality houses, you'll do fine. Regardless of your goals in woodturning, I'd suggest that you strive to master cutting beads. No need to aggravate yourself with a skew if you aren't at an adequate proficiency with that tool. The skew certainly is a tool to master but a spindle gouge, properly sharpened and used, will do a fine job. My suggestion really has little to do with beads. It is solely using beads as a milestone in your tool control skills. Your ability to cut beads, whether skew or spindle gouge, adds to your repertoire of skills that find use in all of your turnings.



2 Just part of the wall of CD racks stacked on top of end-to-end workbenches illustrates easy storage of a large quantity but also quick visual location



3 For example, while not labelled or in any real organisation, easy and quick location of one cubby of undyed, stabilised blanks allows for easy choosing

How do you store your woods? Different for wet vs dry? If I store outside, what do I need to do to provide the best storage?

I have storage in far too many places, much to the chagrin of my wife. I store woods outside, in our garage (unheated), in our basement, and in the sunroom. The reasons for so many places are the size, wetness, critter potential, and immediate access. I turn in all those places. Yes, I turn outside during the summer rolling the large Oneway out of the garage on to the driveway to turn enjoying the sunshine. Green wood, left in short log form appropriately end-grain sealed, is stored outdoors. It is kept off the ground and covered. The covering(s) need only keep the bulk of the rain and the snow off the wood. Keeping it off the ground can be as simple as stacking it on 4x4 pressure treated wood or patio blocks. Coverings I use are weather-proof tarps that are fastened to the pile. Being large, not immediately needed, and having potential for crawling critters relegates this green wood to live outdoors until cut as needed. Obviously, anything cut that is in the process of drying should be stickered as needed. Dry,

cut to reasonable size, waxed, critter-free, or imminently needed wood is stored indoors. The indoor selection of unheated garage, basement, or sunroom is made for convenience. My favourite method of storage is on large, stainless steel, food service shelves on rollers. These floor-to-ceiling shelving racks have incredible load capacity of several hundred pounds per shelf. I've located many of these racks in the garage and basement to store most of my wood except for my pen blanks. Being small blanks and in myriad materials, species of wood, dyed or not, stabilised or not, colours, various sizes, exotic or not, and more, they require something more cubby style. Long ago I stumbled on to a very workable pen blank organisation and storage system. I bought a bunch of CD storage racks and stacked them on top of a couple of end-to-end workbenches. The CD racks are pushed to the back edge of the bench tops up against the wall. I have full use of the bench drawers and some of the bench tops. The number of cubby holes in these CD racks has let me separate my blanks into a very visually organised, separated, yet dense storage system.

You seem to have an answer for everything. What makes you Mister Know It All? Why should I believe your answers are correct?

Any answers I offer in this Q&A column, as well as materials for my over-200 published woodturning articles, are my accumulated 25-plus years and ongoing learning of woodturning. I read extensively, learn from the internet, and try to attend the meetings of the four AAW chapters I belong to. Also, over these years I've attended two international symposia, many local symposia, and try to spend a week studying with one of the great teaching turners nearly every year. All done with the goal of learning from every source available. It's the curse of being curious about just about everything and an incorrigible lifelong learner. All of this, combined with my own years of learning in the shop, making possibly every mistake imaginable at one time or another, and hopefully learning from them, is where I draw my answers. Do I have all the answers? Certainly not. When questions arise that I feel need more information, I research the topic through trusted internet sources, my own or the AAW libraries, and consult my network of woodturning friends. I'm fortunate to know hundreds of accomplished and knowledgeable woodturners well enough to reach out for their expertise. Remember, I can pick and choose topics to write about as well as the questions selected to answer in this column. This lets me use topics and questions where I feel I have or can get sufficient accurate information to be of value. I always try to share any expertise in a manner that is never condescending or 'from on high'. If

you've ever gotten that impression from me, please let me apologise. I never intended it that way. Woodturning is all about sharing. It is the only craft I've ever known that is so freely giving of expertise from one to another. As far as accuracy or validity... I either know the answers I give to be accurate from my own experience or from the experts in the field I trust who I know have that particular expertise, knowledge and experience. Remember, there usually are several solutions to any problem, so what I may offer is only one of potentially many. If there is ever any conjecture contained in an answer, whether mine or theirs, I try to indicate that. However, I suggest that any answers or advice, whether from me or others, be only one data point. It is always wise to gather information from many sources.

I've been told I need use the same brand accelerator as my CA adhesives. Since I change CA brands based on availability, and especially price, I really don't want to buy accelerator too with any brand change I make. Should I worry about this? What's the story?

There are many variants of CA for different purposes, ranging from its Eastman 910 origins to medical grades of CA that have largely replaced sutures in surgery. I'm sure that each manufacturer touts that their accelerator works perfectly with their own CA products. That said, I haven't run into issues by using a quality accelerator with the various CA brands I purchase from woodturning retailers. As long as I have a quality CA that is fresh and properly used, the couple of different brands of aerosol accelerators I tend to buy seem to work fine. I use those accelerators on any of the CA adhesives I have with no ill effects yet. My PhD adhesives researcher friend with whom I double checked had a brilliant way of answering my query. His words are enlightening and straightforward. 'The answer to the question posed depends upon who answers it. The marketers would say use only our accelerator with our CA but the chemists say they are interchangeable. The molecules don't know who made them.' Minimising variation in any successful process is always directionally correct. I'd suggest finding products that work together and stick (no pun intended) with those. If you have any concerns about specific brand mix interactions, run a quick test on non-critical scrap materials that are the same materials you are going to use. Shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes to be certain of the compatibility or not. My past, more in-depth articles regarding CA adhesives are available in WT298 (11/16), WT269 (8/14), and the AAW Journal of February 2017 and can further cover the CA topic. ●



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4 The AAW has a great vetting system for woodturning videos and a 35-year deep archive of the AAW Journal contents available to members. Both are great resources **5** No brand endorsement intended, these are the CA and accelerators in my shop today. I've used many different brands and find all quality brands work well when used properly

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Scrap and pewter

Andy Coates looks at using 'scrap' to save it from the fire

In an ideal world there would be no need for a scrap bin in a turner's workshop; every piece of wood that was brought in would be fully utilised somehow, and maximum benefit would be made of all our wood acquisitions. But the world is not ideal, and neither is our use of wood. If we waste a few pieces of something we have been given free it may not seem so bad, we probably don't even register it as waste, but if it's an offcut of something we have paid for, and perhaps paid dearly for, we are more inclined to ensure we use it all. This is no bad thing... until we use it unwisely. We must all have seen objects that have been made with more regard for using the whole blank than was ever given to the design and creation.



We tend to think of anything we cut away from a board or log to make a blank as being waste, and often it is simply tossed into a sack as firewood, but with a little extra work you can usually cut a small blank from waste, be it a tiny spindle blank suitable for a finial or drawer knob, a pen or a bobbin, a tiny bowl blank, or a boss to add to another piece of work. Each one is a saving of material and money, and a potential attractive addition to something else.

Sometimes, and this has happened to me only this week, a whole block of wood you thought was a potential blank suddenly reveals itself to be essentially scrap due to some severe fault. Some time ago I wrote a series of articles on 'problem wood', and this block would have made the perfect candidate for a starring role.

It was a large lump of burr sweet chestnut, cut from the top end of a whole butt prior to being milled for boards. The miller, Patrick Turk from Sherwood Forest, dropped it off while on a short break in

Suffolk and wondered if I could do anything with it. It had severe ring shake and was still green and probably would not survive seasoning properly or conventionally. In order to get anything from it I had to cut it in two, and I used the best portion to make a tall, vase-type vessel that (eventually) turned out to be very nice. But it took more work than it should have done. It left another piece that was/is essentially scrap. I hate scrap. So how can I use the very small portion of good material that I believe is hidden under all the ring shakes and fissures in part two of the block? And is that even possible? Hopefully it will be, because if it isn't then this article will be very short and rather dull. And this is a genuine journey, so it could all go pear-shaped.

Obviously, you will not have a block of flawed wood to match this, but you could follow the process with a perfect piece of wood and complete the bowl. More importantly, it may show how to assess and deal with flawed material.

Plans & equipment

Materials

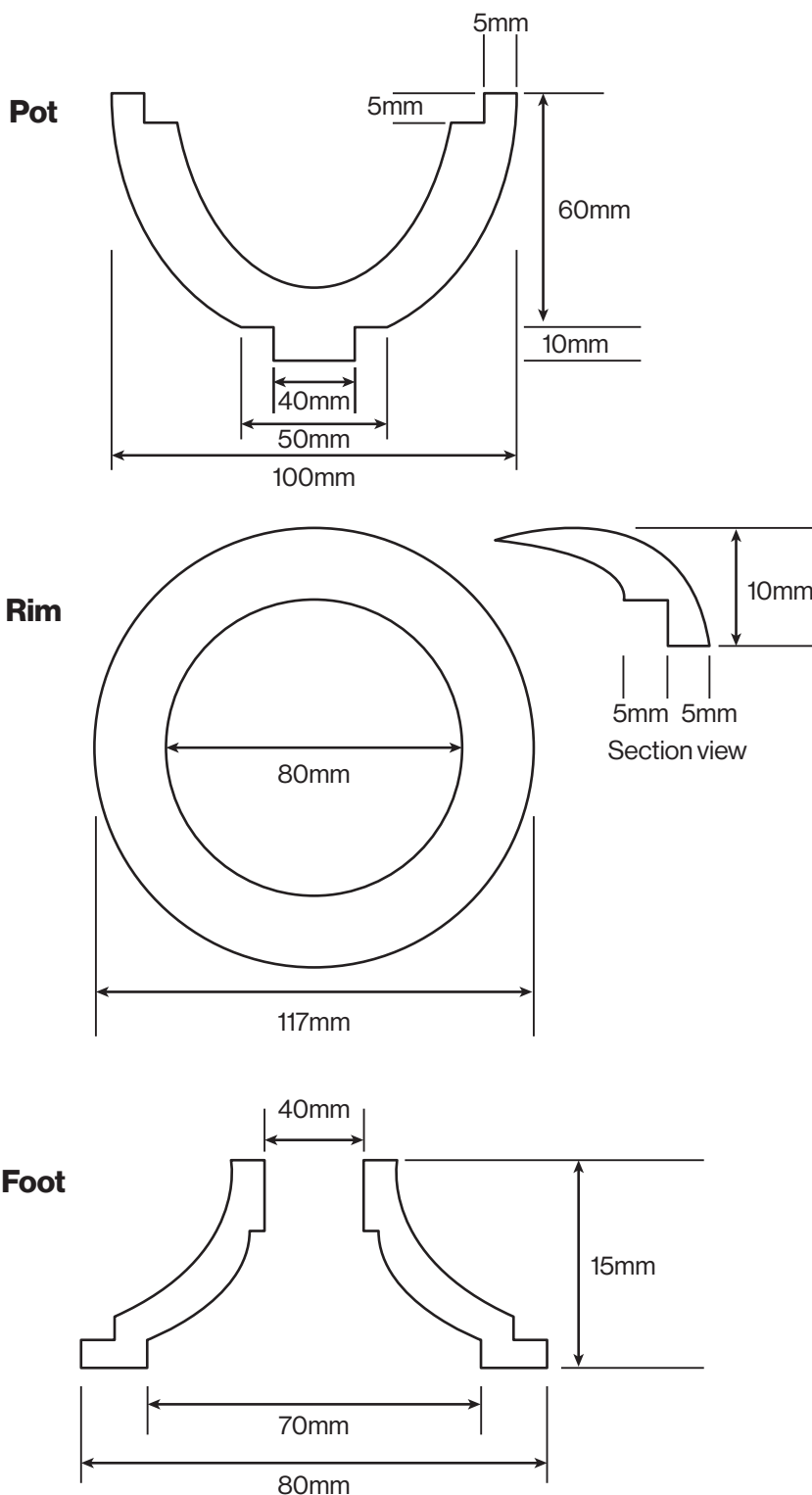
- Scrap lump of sweet chestnut approximately 5 x 5 x 8in
- Pewter

Tools

- PPE as appropriate

- 18mm bowl gouge
- 10mm long-ground bowl gouge
- 10mm spindle gouge
- Selection of carbide-tipped tools – square, round and diamond point
- 2mm parting tool

- Abrasives 120-400 grit
- Wirewool 0000 grade and superfine grade
- Metal polish
- Pewter melting pot and associated equipment



Top tips

Tips for working with pewter

- Sometimes when turning pewter in a mould you will hear a change of pitch in the noise. This can mean that the pewter has lost its grip in the mould and is loose. Stop the lathe and gently pry the casting from the mould. The casting can then be glued back into the mould and once the glue is cured it can be remounted for turning.
- Alternatively, make your first cuts to clean either the inner or outer surface of the ring so that if the casting does become loose it can be taken from the mould and held in conventional chuck jaws, either internally or externally.

Did you know?

Design considerations

- Making an object from wood of questionable suitability requires constant assessment and a willingness to change the plan. Choosing to build the piece up with an added foot is an example of this.
- I chose pewter because it's something I use regularly, so I have the material and equipment, but you could just as easily make a foot from another wood species using the same process. Aim for something contrasting and pay attention to the grain, orientation, and compatibility if you go down this route. The finished foot should complement the body.
- If you wish to try pewter as an option, I wrote a series of articles on using pewter in the magazine in issues 337, 338 and 339.
- At the point of making the mould for the pewter foot I decided that a pewter rim would also be appropriate, and make the most of the sweet chestnut pot. Always be ready to change your plans.



Preparing the block

1 The block of sweet chestnut is approximately 5 x 5 x 8in, and effectively end grain. The major faults are marked in black felt pen to see which areas need to be cut away. Lines are chalked to show where to cut the wood to leave what will hopefully be a usable block. It is important to resist the temptation to keep as much wood as possible; the important thing is to remove all material that could present a safety issue during turning. If you end up with an eggcup blank at least it will be a safe eggcup to turn.

2 Take care to ensure the block is sitting as flat as possible to prevent the blade catching or snagging, the waste material is cut away on the bandsaw. If the block is uneven where you need it to sit flat, pieces of baton or plywood could be hot-melt glued to the blank to level it off.

3 The block that resulted is not much to look at, around 4½in square 3in deep, and might usually have been discarded to the firewood sack, but hope springs eternal.

Roughing down

4 The blank is mounted between a Steb centre and a revolving centre in the tailstock and roughed to true with an 18mm straight-ground bowl gouge to help reduce vibration and knocks.

5 The orientation the blank was mounted in was a conscious choice; a small crack remained that I hoped could be removed in the shaping. I decided some of the crack would remain in the tenon, but could be consolidated with CA glue. Medium viscosity CA was allowed to wick into the crack before accelerator was applied and the tenon re-cut to remove the excess glue.

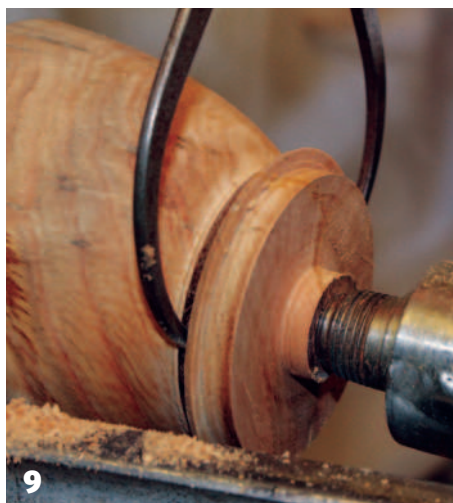
6 Shaping the pot continues with a 10mm long-ground bowl gouge. The lathe is stopped regularly to check for further cracks, ring shakes or other faults.

7 Once the tenon and initial shaping had been done I brought the toolrest around to the front of the blank to clean up the top surface. Any severe faults here might suggest the blank is not viable, so it can save time checking before you proceed. A 10mm spindle gouge is used to true the top, checking for faults as you progress.





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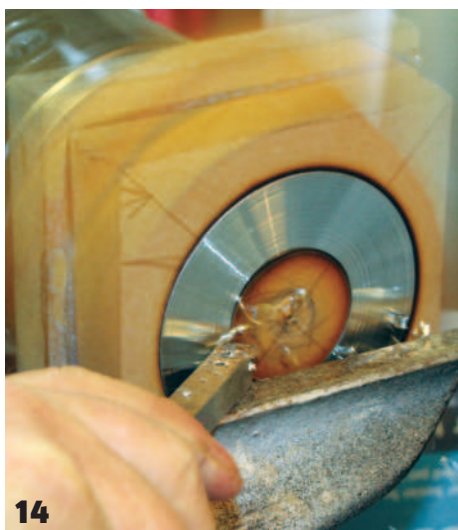
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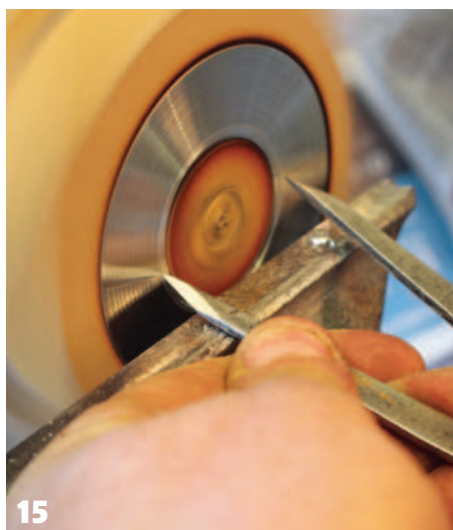
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8 Satisfied that the blank is viable, the shape of the pot is finalised with a negative rake tool. The wild grain in this sweet chestnut responds well to a negative rake tool.

9 After completing the outside shaping I examined the blank again. I decided the crack that I thought I had removed at the base was probably still there – it was certainly still in the tenon, so decided upon another approach. I could turn the crack away but this would mean remounting in smaller jaws, so the tenon was re-cut for O'Donnell jaws.

10 At this point I realised this change would result in the pot being too squat, and in my eyes this would be unappealing in a finished object. I had two options: I could reduce the diameter to reflect the height, or I could somehow raise the pot higher. I wasn't too keen on removing even more of what was now perfect wood so I decided to add a pewter foot to raise the pot up. A secondary tenon was cut between the mounting tenon and the base and a narrow flat area was cut up to this secondary tenon. These two features would be used to mount a pewter foot.

11 Two moulds were prepared from 25mm MDF mounted on hardwood tenons. Having decided to also add a pewter rim, the pewter is poured into the moulds and left to fully cool.

Tools for turning pewter

12 Carbide-tipped and negative rake tools are ideal for turning pewter and are my go-to choice. CTTs cut cleanly and leave a virtually flawless surface. Gouges will cut pewter but heat from the friction between the bevel and pewter cause dragging and leaves lumps of partially melted pewter on the surface and can also lead to catches. Negative rake tools also cut the pewter very well and are useful for refining a CTT cut surface on pewter.

13 The Sweet Chestnut blank is removed from the lathe and the foot mould is mounted on the tenon. If you are making the foot from pewter remember that the shavings you produce are recoverable. Lay a sheet of paper on the lathe bed and catch the shavings to be re-melted later. Lathe speed is set to around 600rpm and gentle cuts are made to first clean up the surface.

14 The foot mould is made to be slightly over size relative to the imagined finished dimensions. This also allows for any flaws in the casting to be removed during the truing up. Cut the top surface absolutely flat; this surface will be the mating face for the flat left next to the secondary tenon on the sweet chestnut pot.

15 Measure the diameter required for a set of engineering jaws in expansion mode and mark this dimension on the face of the pewter casting. I use sharp-pointed dividers to scribe a line on the revolving pewter. Only the front leg of the dividers should contact the pewter, and the scribe line should be on the rear leg. Cut the recess using a square carbide-tipped tool, or the point of a freshly sharpened parting tool.

16 The casting is removed from the mould by taking careful parting cuts on either side and, with the lathe stopped, gently prising the casting away from the MDF. Mount the casting on engineering jaws. The internal hole is first turned to match the diameter of the secondary tenon at the base of the sweet chestnut pot.



17 Once the recess has been cut some initial shaping can be done while the casting is held in the jaws. Some weight reduction is made on the underside of the foot and some initial shaping of the top surface is done. A shallow recess is turned on the underside to enable the casting to be sighted held in conventional jaws in expansion mode. In this case I was able to turn a 70mm recess to mount on C jaws.



18 The pot is mounted in O'Donnell jaws and parted off, leaving a short stub of the secondary tenon. (This was a change to the anticipated process due to the on-the-fly redesign.) This was about 10mm long. The pewter foot is now mounted on C jaws and the pot tested for fit. The fit needs to be tight but allow for a layer of epoxy resin. Resin is mixed and the pot clamped in place using tailstock pressure. Ensure it runs true on the foot before allowing the resin to cure. Ensure it is fully cured before continuing.



19 Once the resin is cured the outer face needs to be prepared for the rim casting. The face is trued up and a step 5mm wide and 5mm deep is turned. A matching step will be turned in the pewter casting. The step provides a mechanical aspect to the fixing of the pewter rim. Some of the material between the step and the centre of the face is removed by dishing it out slightly.



20 The pot is removed from the lathe. The fact that it is now mounted on a recess in the pewter foot means remounting will be perfect. The rim casting is mounted and the outer surface trued up. Mark the 5 x 5mm step to sit on the top of the pot and gently turn it away. The casting is over-size again, so do not worry about the rough outer edge when removing from the mould.



21 The rim casting is glued to the pot using two-part epoxy resin, just as for the foot. The mould can be reused as a clamping plate while the resin cures.



22 Once the resin is cured the rim casting can be cleaned up before shaping. Because you need to take gentle cuts it doesn't pay to try to clean up and shape at the same time. Clean the surfaces and then begin to apply shape.

23 The top surface is swept inwards towards the solid wood. The underside of the pewter rim is swept downwards to meet the body of the pot by taking small arcing cuts with the CTT. The last cut you make should barely cut into the surface of the wood to ensure continuity between the two surfaces. Aim to meet the inner surface of the rim to form a blunt, narrow transition. Abrasives and wirewool will complete the surfaces later.





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24 Next we can return to the foot and complete the shaping. Try to ensure that the shapes complement those of the rim, and aim for a nicely flowing transition between wood and pewter. Be particularly careful at the join, a catch here would be catastrophic. It can be difficult to take the last cuts in the corner, so I usually use a shop-made negative rake tool with a very small profile. Providing the toolrest is brought in very close and you take light cuts it should be achievable.

25 Rim and foot completed we can return to woodturning. The interior of the pot is turned away in the usual manner, but with the unusual difficulty of cutting towards a non-wood rim edge. A catch at this point would at best damage the pewter rim and at worst tear it off, so take real care. It helps to set the wall thickness immediately and then work from this into the pot.

Continue to stop the lathe periodically and check the wood for ring shakes, cracks, and other problems. If you do hit a shake flood it with CA glue and hit it with accelerator. After the wall thickness has been turned evenly throughout (10mm in this case), any small cracks or shakes can be glued and back-filled with dust to stabilise them.

Finishing

26 The wood can be finished as usual, working from 120-600 grit, sealing with cellulose and then applying oil or wax. The pewter finishing process is slightly different. If you have any significant gouge marks you may have to use conventional abrasives, but start at 320 rather than 120 grit and be very gentle and keep the abrasive moving constantly to avoid deep scratches.

27 After conventional abrading you move on to 0000 wirewool then super-fine wirewool. The safest method is to use the wire wool with the lathe stopped. Wad the wirewool into a tiny pad the size of the tip of a finger, and, holding it tightly in one hand with the other hand gripping the wrist, gently apply to the surface of the pewter. It must keep moving constantly across the surface. If it feels like it is catching something let it go and turn the lathe off.

The final stage of finishing the pewter is to polish with a metal polish paste, such as silver or chrome polish. Do not allow this to run on to the wood or it will blacken it.

28 As with any pot the final stage is to reverse chuck and finish the underside of the foot. A jam chuck is turned to fit the rim and paper towel used to protect the pewter.

Conclusions

29, 30 & 31 This process can be followed for almost any piece of wood with flaws that would otherwise see it into the firewood pile. There are only two considerations – will it be worth the effort and can it be turned safely? Pictured are another sweet chestnut pot turned from the unlikely lump shown and what was a small piece of severely flawed Australian burr that was saved from the fire. Both sold within hours of completion. So hunt out some scrap and give it a go. •

Community news

What have you been turning? Please email your images to WTEditorial@thegmcgroup.com

Wizardry in Wood



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SANGER

Are you ready for Wizardry in Wood, 13-16 October 2021 at Carpenters' Hall in London? Check out the website for details: turnersco.com/turning/wiwi/

We ask how the pandemic affected two of the demonstrators and why they are looking forward to Wizardry in Wood 2021.

Mark Sanger says: 'Currently I am working on various pure wood lidded forms, as well as building upon my textured and coloured form with new pieces being created specifically to exhibit at Wizardry 2021.'

'The pandemic has been a difficult and interesting time with my work, stopping me from demonstrating and teaching so losing a major income stream. In addition to the pandemic, I received a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis that has forced me to look at so many aspects of my life, including the way that I can work.'

'The condition impacted my ability to stand for hours at the lathe and, while this was initially hard to deal with, there is always a silver lining if I only look. My diagnosis forced me to reflect on much as well as the direction of my work. It has forcibly nurtured me into letting go of what I could do physically, slowed me down to focus on maximising positive use of my time. This time will now be spent producing highly textured, coloured, and sculpted forms, a few of which are included here, and that will be exhibited at Wizardry 2021.'

'My passion has been to move more into and develop my finely textured and sculptural designs, many of which have been sitting patiently in sketch books. Wizardry is a wonderful opportunity to connect with other makers and friends as well as a great platform for makers to show beautiful

and thought-provoking work to those attending; inviting them to view woodturning in a way that perhaps has not been seen before, to enthuse those passionate about the craft and art to keep moving the craft forward. So what am I looking forward to the most about Wizardry? Well that's easy – the wonderful experience and all that it will bring to a ll.'

Ron Caddy says: 'I am currently working on some new ideas for pen making and creating associated products.'

'The past 18 months has been very difficult for business with all gift and craft shows being cancelled, but some orders did come in via the internet and some personal recommendations.'

'I am a member of the AWGB education committee and we continued 'meeting' regularly via Zoom. With some relaxations I am now busy planning for some Young Turners' Training Days with some additional venues being available. I am also the chairman of Test Valley Turners, so we have used the 'new' opportunity of the internet to arrange meetings and demonstrations from near and far.'

'Wizardry is an event that I always look forward to, with the opportunity of seeing the amazing skills that those within our craft have and share, and being able to discuss with numerous enthusiastic people all aspects of woodturning. This year I feel very honoured to have been invited to be one of the "Great 14" and being able to exhibit my woodturning in the art of pen making and to have been able to teach the craft in India in 2017/18.'

Tickets available to book now, link through the website.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RON CADDY

2021 AWGB Online Seminar

When is the seminar?

13 and 14 November 2021. There is an international group of turners lined up from a number of countries who will be demonstrating from their workshops. This is a must-see event for woodturners of any level of skill. Even if you are just curious about woodturning this could be your best opportunity to see artistry and creativity from some of the best exponents of the craft.

Why attend our virtual seminar?

It's an event where turners can come together to learn, share their skills, and just enjoy the company of fellow enthusiasts. You will be in the front row to enjoy the skills of some of the world's best turners from the comfort of your own sofa. No need to travel many miles, so even better for our environment than ever before.

Demonstrations

Each 90-minute demo will be pre-recorded and during the demo the demonstrators will be available to receive live chat questions. After the broadcast, demonstrators will be available for a live Q&A session. Sessions will run from 10am until 8pm both days. Each demonstration will only be broadcast once, but all will be available online for 30 days after the seminar for paid subscribers.

Breakout sessions

There will also be breakout sessions covering various topics, where subscribers can ask questions on the topic or share their experience with others. These sessions will run in parallel with the demonstrations and will be an opportunity to share knowledge and experience, and to learn new and different methods from fellow turners from around the

13 & 14 NOVEMBER
2021
AWGB
VIRTUAL SEMINAR
www.awgbvirtual.co.uk

world. Often new products and new ways of approaching problems are highlighted from overseas subscribers and vice versa.

Website link: www.awgbvirtual.co.uk

Ticket prices for both days and ability to view all 12 of the presentations for up to 30 days after transmission, as well as participation in the breakout rooms and the other online activities during the seminar weekend.

AWGB Members – £50.00. Non Members – £65.00.

How to buy your ticket

Go to our website, www.awgbvirtual.co.uk, and click on 'buy a ticket'.

To obtain a discounted price for AWGB members, you will need to enter the promo code virtual2021. You will also need to enter your AWGB membership number in the appropriate box on the payment form.

You can pay by direct bank transfer or by PayPal. Direct bank transfers should go to AWGB Trading Ltd, sort code 09-01-28 (Santander), account number 41132390. We are unable to take card payments by telephone.

UK demonstrators



Margaret Garrard

Margaret lives in Swaledale in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales and started her woodturning journey in the shed of a friend. She joined the Jorvik Woodturning Club and over the years has won many competitions, awards and bursaries.

www.margaretgarrard.co.uk



Mary Ashton

In 2004 Mary started teaching woodturning and works with adults from many walks of life, including vulnerable adults with learning difficulties. She was accepted on to the Register of Professional Turners in 2009.

www.maryashton-woodturner.co.uk



Jay Heryet

Jay began woodturning 25 years ago, while living in New Zealand. His early work was driven by a desire to perfect technique. Latterly his work has become more considered but he never wants to lose the sense of humour that he imparts to his work.

www.jayheryet.co.uk



Chris Fisher RPT

Chris is known as the Blind Woodturner and is currently the UK's only completely blind professional and accredited woodturner. He lost his sight due to toxoplasmosis in 2008 and is self-taught, listening to YouTube video tutorials for over 600 hours.

www.theblindwoodturner.co.uk

Irish demonstrators



Emmet Kane

A self-taught woodturner, coming from five generations of Master Craftsmen. In 1996/7 he won a place on the Crafts Council of Ireland Business & Design Development and set up his own business in Castledermot, Co. Kildare. He enhances his work with metal leaf and lectures and demonstrates all over the world.

www.emmetkane.com



Pat Carroll

His work is in collections across the world and when Mark Baker approached him to write for the GMC magazine *Woodturning*, Pat became a regular contributor. He has been involved in many interactive remote demonstrations and runs a meeting called Meet the Woodturner, interviewing artists from wall over the world.

www.patcarrollwoodturning.com

◀ French demonstrators



Joss Naigeon

Joss is a member of many artistic associations and the president of a local association of arts and crafts. She began turning in 1998 and became professional after spending two years with Jean-François Escoulen, where she now also teaches. Her speciality is turning small items such as boxes, spoons, and pierces spheres.

www.jossnaigeon.fr

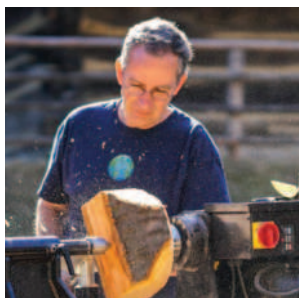


Yann Marot

Yann's passion is being a woodturning artisan. He divides his time between teaching and creating – teaching helps him deepen his own craft and his creative work is inspired by the curves of the human body.

www.yannmarot.com

American demonstrators



Jacques Vesery

Jacques Vesery is an artist/sculptor in Maine, US. He strives to create the illusion of reality, using the repetitive patterns derived from the 'golden mean' or 'divine proportions'. His work is in numerous public and private collections, and he has lectured on design and concepts within his work internationally.



Tim Yoder

Tim Yoder is probably best known for his YouTube woodturning videos where he combines humour with a unique approach to teaching. With over 20 years' experience, he breaks down techniques in such a way that both beginners and experienced turners can learn something new.

www.wtwtim.com



Michael Kehs

Michael, from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, is an accomplished woodturner and custom furniture maker. He has won many awards and been commissioned to produce work for individuals and special events. He teaches both woodturning and carving in his studio.

www.michaelkehswoodworks.com



Keith Gotschall

Keith has worked as a cabinetmaker, furniture designer/maker, carpenter, graphic artist, and woodturner. He has demonstrated at woodturning seminars internationally, and clubs around the US. Sometimes whimsical, often classical, Keith turns a broad range of styles using different techniques.

www.keithgotschall.com

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From the Community



Segmented shade

I would like to show you my latest lockdown creation.

My niece asked me to make her a table lamp complete with shade and this is what I came up with.

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*Kind regards,
Ron Ingall,
NW Leics.*

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Diary of a professional woodturner – part 3

Richard Findley continues sharing the highlights of his working month. It's holiday season and there's a new arrival in the workshop...



After a break in the diary while I was guest editing last month, it is back with more tales from the workshop. Guest editing was a change from just writing articles as I am normally used to. As I mentioned in my opening letter, I didn't get involved in selecting and editing all the articles, as a full editor might, and I certainly didn't need to get involved in any of the other aspects of producing a magazine, but I was given the opportunity to try out a new type of article, which I think worked pretty well, although was

harder to organise than I had imagined. I got to speak to Azadeh Masoomi (albeit via email) for the interview, which gave me, and hopefully you, an insight into being a female turner in Iran. I also got the chance to have some input on the front cover design. I hope you enjoyed the issue.

Now, back to my latest diary. I was lucky enough to enjoy a holiday by the seaside and upgraded a piece of machinery in the workshop. I will also talk about a couple of interesting jobs from the last month.



1 Me operating the old Wadkin LS router in the mid 2000s in my dad's workshop **2** My old saw being loaded on to the lorry **3** New saw in action

New saw

I've been thinking about upgrading my circular saw bench for a while and had even got as far as researching machines that might fit my needs. With the whole Covid situation, I had decided to leave it until things calmed down and perhaps visit a showroom and see the machine first-hand to make sure it really did what I need. Earlier this year, however, the make and model I had been looking at came up at a machinery dealer I follow on Instagram and it seemed like too good an opportunity to miss, so I took it.

When I set up my workshop in 2008, I had a Jet 1442 lathe and bought a new bandsaw and planer-thicknesser. I was writing my previous diary series back in 2011 when I bought my Wadkin RS8 lathe, the first in a series of upgrades. If you've been reading the magazine for a while, you might remember me writing about it. My dad and I drove up to Lancashire to see it and, after a test run, we organised for it to be delivered to my workshop. I haven't regretted that purchase for a second. I have since upgraded both the bandsaw and the planer-thicknesser for older, more robust industrial machinery.

When we sold the family business back in 2008, the new owners already had a couple of circular saws, so allowed me to buy back the one from my dad's company for the value quoted by their machinery clearance firm. They'd decided most of the machinery from dad's company was pretty much worthless, so I got my Evenwood saw for a very good price. My dad had originally bought it in the late '70s and it had served us well, so I saw no reason why it wouldn't continue to do so for me.

I have to admit to getting slightly sentimental about machinery. Some people get attached to classic cars, others to fast planes – who doesn't appreciate a Spitfire flying overhead? – but for woodworkers (or at least, this woodworker), machines are the same. When the clearance company took the old Wadkin LS router that we used to use at my dad's company, I could have cried. I would have had it in a heartbeat if I'd had space but, in reality, it would have been too big for my little workshop and I don't do enough routing to have such a large, dedicated machine. That machine had history too. My grandpa had a factory at the start of the war and when the army found out about it, they took his machinery for the war

effort. Rather than taking the compensation offered, he agreed that they would give him the machines back when the war was over. That router was the machine he was given back after the war, it even had its faded army numbers still on its side. The story goes that this router was a bigger machine than the one they took several years earlier, so it turned out to be a good decision!

Anyway, back to the saw. Dad had bought it to replace a homemade machine they'd been managing with and I'd imagine it was quite a step up at the time. It was the saw I'd trained on so I was very familiar with it. It was also the saw that removed the top of my dad's left thumb.

You can see that deciding to upgrade it was not as straightforward as it might be. In the past, I would have had a good chat with dad about my options and got his opinion on the matter. Sadly, he's not around to ask anymore, so I can only imagine what he'd have said, but he was a very pragmatic man and would have told me to stop being so daft and upgrade if I felt the new machine would do a better job for me.

Buying blind was another cause of worry. Had I been able to go and check the measurements of the machine I could be sure it would fit, but all I had to go on were the drawings from the manufacturer's instruction manual, which I had no reason not to believe, but there's always that thought in the back of my mind, 'what if it doesn't fit?'. The size was a major issue when looking at the new saw because my workshop is not the biggest, so although a massive saw would be lovely to own, it would be completely impractical.

As it was, the new saw was perfect. It was delivered by the same driver who delivered my lathe 10 years previously, on a flatbed truck with a small but powerful crane.

They offered me a good price in part exchange for my old Evenwood saw. The new (to me) Sedgwick TA315 had one previous owner and is similar in size to my old one, but with more power, making ripping boards of hardwood even easier. It has a sliding table, which is great for cross-cutting – something I could do on my old saw, but was increasingly difficult as the pieces of wood got bigger. This saw also has a tilting blade, which I'm certain will be useful, even if it's just for removing corners of large turning blanks.



4 New removable router table in place on the side of the saw 5 Beautiful sea view on the Dorset coast 6 Ruins of Sherborne Castle 7 Markings on the base of the shell case

Router table addition

I had made a side table for the old saw, which doubled as a router table. I don't do a huge amount of routing, but couldn't be without it for various jobs, so I made a removable table for the new saw. The sliding table runs on a round steel bar, which I used as a support for the back of my new router table. I used a turned leg to support the front. I had rejected the leg some months before from a job as the design didn't work, but it seemed a bit too good to throw away. For once keeping something 'just in case' actually paid off.

The new router table is far more sturdy than the old one and the new surface allows the work to slide over it with ease. All round, I am very pleased with my decision to upgrade.

Holiday season

The new purchase was a few months ago and the saw has settled in well. I'm now used to the large emergency stop foot switch, which is exactly where I'm used to putting my foot, and after a few bruises on my leg from the steel bar that the sliding table runs on, I'm mostly used to avoiding it. Now, though, it is holiday season, a time of year most people in standard employment look forward to, but a time that causes a bit of stress for most self-employed people I know.

The thing about being self-employed is that I enjoy my work, so I don't feel the need to escape it in the same way as those who hate their 9-5. But the main thing I've heard so many times from almost everyone who is self-employed is that, in the week or so before and after a holiday, you have to work extra hard to get everything done that won't get done while you're away, that it can be an incredibly

stressful time, despite the fact that it should be quite the opposite.

This has always been the case for me, and this year would have been double the stress because we ended up having two holidays quite close together due to Covid. During the long, dark winter months, amid the peak of the virus and the longest lockdown, we decided to book two holidays, assuming that at least one was bound to be cancelled due to having to self-isolate or a local lockdown or some other unforeseen problem. We enjoy the south coast and, working around the children's school holidays etc, we booked two weeks, just five weeks apart, at our favourite place in Dorset. As it was, the lockdowns eased and we avoided isolation and were fortunate enough to go on both of our week-long breaks.

We had two lovely weeks of building sandcastles at the seaside, taking boat trips, visiting ruined castles, and of course, eating ice creams. Even the unpredictable British weather was largely on our side.

In previous years, having two breaks so close together would have sent me into a spiral of juggling work and deadlines, long hours and struggling to get things back on an even keel, but with my new diary system that I described in my last article, the holidays didn't cause me too much undue stress and I was able to plan around them without so much as stretching a single deadline. It still amazes me how that one simple change has revolutionised the way I work. I can't see myself going back to the old list system now, I am a changed man.

There is one other more intangible thing surrounding holidays and the self-employed, being that I have this slight feeling of guilt that I really should be in the workshop making things, and so earning money. This is something I put entirely on myself, but I have heard other people in a similar position say the same thing, so it must be a common feeling. Once



8 Finished shell 9 Damaged handle on the ship's wheel 10 New handle finished and fitted 11 Finished ship's wheel

I'm away from the workshop, I am thankfully able to shake the feeling and fully relax and enjoy the holiday, but it's certainly something that is mixed in with the emotional baggage of a holiday and working for yourself.

Odd jobs

As usual, I've had a couple of noteworthy odd jobs among the usual mix of stair spindles, finials and table legs. Some might see them as too small to bother with, but the variety and challenge of something different is what I enjoy about my work.

A chap turned up out of the blue at my workshop door brandishing a 350mm-long brass cylinder, which turned out to be a World War 1 shell case. He had seen them fitted with a turned wooden 'shell' and thought it looked good, so wondered if I could do the same for him. It was quite a simple job, but I decided to do a little research before I started, to make sure I got the shape of the shell right. As I researched, it piqued my interest and I found myself falling down a rather deep internet-based rabbit hole, reading about the markings on the base of the shell case that looked like they might tell a story.

Sure enough, it seemed these shell cases are quite a common collectable, some had even been turned into 'trench art', making them even more collectable. The markings on the base of the case seemed to read 75 DEC at the top and PDPs 2948 L17N beneath the central primer. After a bit of searching online, I discovered that 75 DEC stands for 75mm de Campagne – for a 75mm French field gun. PDP is the factory in which the case was made – Parc d'Artillerie de Paris. 2948 L17N is a batch number with the 17 referring to the year, 1917.

I turned and dry-fitted the oak shell and returned it to the customer,

along with the additional information I had found out about it. He planned to stain and finish the oak shell himself.

Ship's wheel

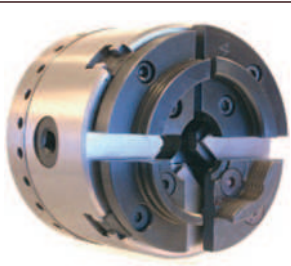
Another customer contacted me with a tale about how he was rebuilding a boat and had bought a wheel for it online, but in transit one of the handles had been broken off. He wondered if I could replace it in some way. I explained that I would be able to cut off the old one and replace it with a new handle, staining it to match so that he should barely be able to tell which the new one was.

I cut off the damaged handle with my dovetail saw and planed the remaining surface flat with my block plane. I then drilled a 16mm diameter hole in which I could fit the new handle.

I turned a new handle based on the broken one. As I checked various measurements on the handles around the wheel (there were eight to choose from), I realised that they probably were originally hand turned as they all varied to some degree. I found it interesting that one of the handles had some turned grooves on it to show which should be at the top, and presumably to help the helmsman know when the course is set straight ahead.

I always enjoy colour-matching, adding layers of stain until it matches the original, then finishing it with tinted lacquer and cutting back to match the sheen of the originals. My aim was to make it as difficult as possible to spot which the replacement was. As I handed the customer the heavy brass-bound wheel, he inspected it and only by knowing that it was the opposite handle to the one with the lines, was he able to spot which it was. Another happy customer. ●

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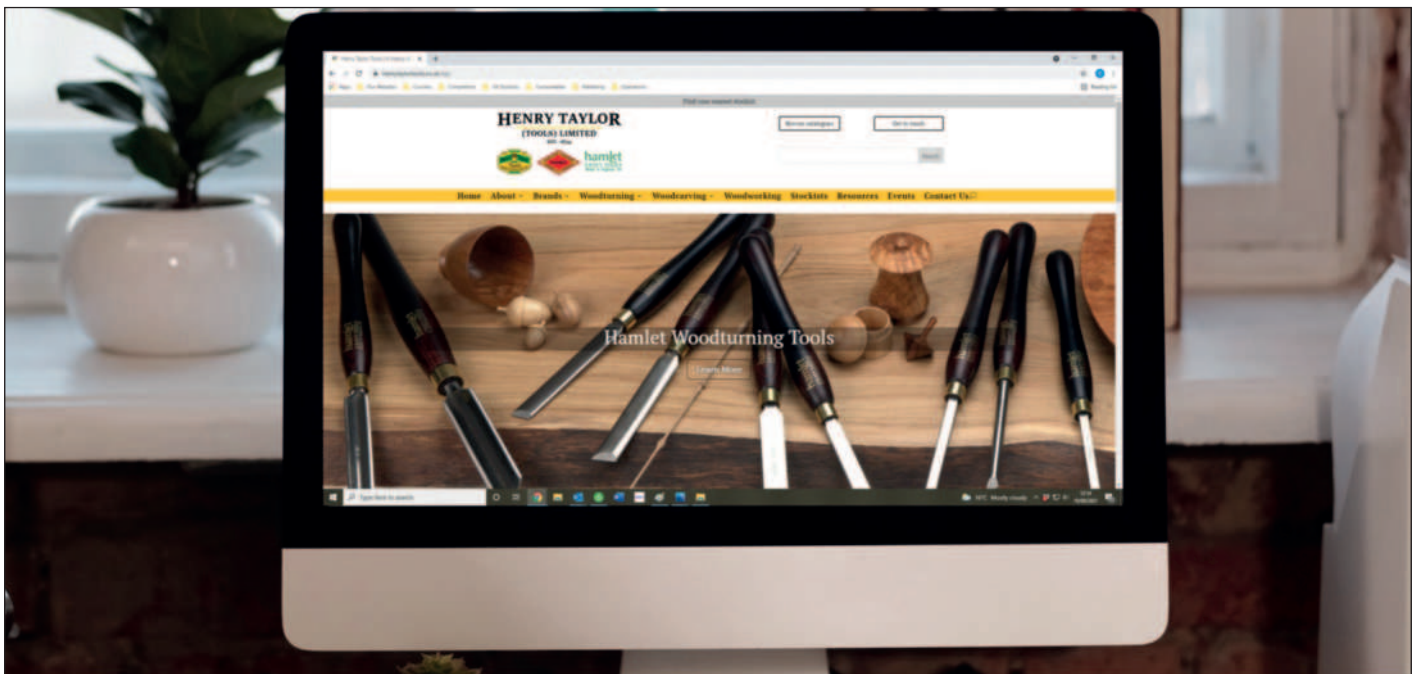


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Skeleton candle holder

Sue Harker gets to the bones of this stylish yew log piece

The first time I saw this technique used was some 20 years ago when Graham and I attended a demonstration at our local club. The demonstrator used a fine parting tool to create grooves, leaving 'fins' the same width as the grooves. I was very taken by the effect. Later I became aware that professional woodturner Melvyn Firmager uses this technique to create extremely thin fins turned in wet wood. When the wood dries, the fins warp, creating some beautiful pieces which look amazing.

I have made a variety of shapes using this technique over the years, including vases, bowls, and goblets. I have a candle holder I turned some years ago in the style of Art Deco and decided it would be a perfect shape for this. I am using seasoned yew log and have chosen to cut 10mm-wide grooves, leaving fins of approximately 4mm wide. This enables easier access to create a curved shape on the inside and when finished gives a clear view of the thinner internal shape. It is also the reason I have named this project a 'skeleton' candle holder, When the timber was on the lathe with its grooves cut it resembled the ribs of a skeleton.

Top tips

- By mounting the yew branch off centre, the finished candle holder will have some sap wood as well as heart wood, which adds to its beauty.
- Remove any loose bark before turning on the lathe. This will prevent the bark flying off and causing possible injury.
- When cutting the grooves into the taper, a fluted parting tool will greatly reduce the amount of torn out fibres.
- To set callipers to the correct diameter to match a hole cut with a Forstner bit, tighten the callipers around the cutting part of the Forstner bit.



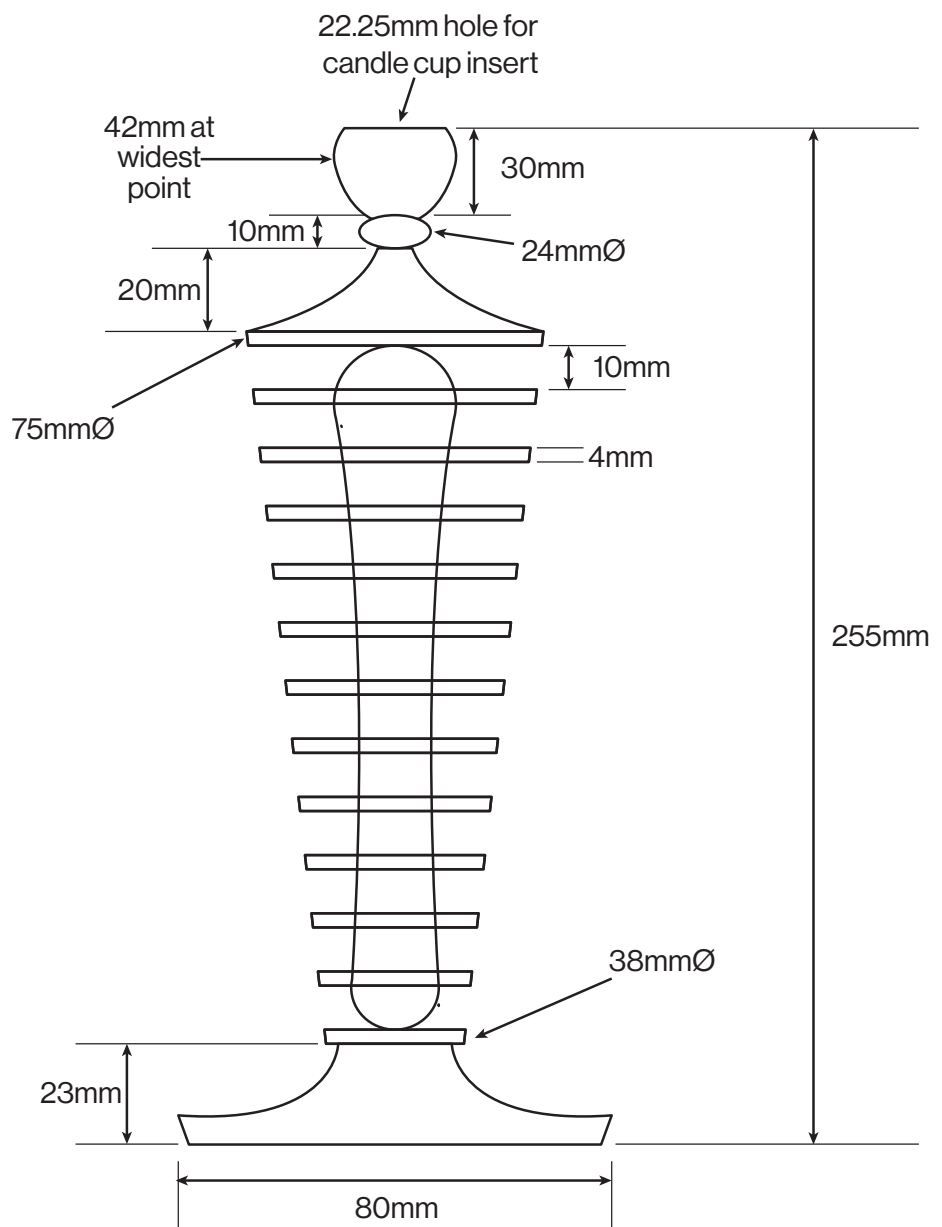
Plans & equipment

Materials

- Yew log measuring approx. 275mm long x 90mm diameter
- Scrap of timber approx. 70mm x 70mm x 50mm long
- Brass candle cup insert

Tools & equipment

- PPE as appropriate
- Steb centres
- Spindle roughing gouge
- ½in fingernail profile spindle gouge
- ⅜in fingernail profile spindle gouge
- ⅝in parting tool
- ⅜in fluted parting tool
- ⅜in parting tool with angled grind
- Proxxon carving tool with flat cutter attached
- Sanding arbour
- Abrasives, 120, 180, 240, 320, 400 grits
- Skew chisel
- Jacobs chuck with 7/8in Forstner bit attached
- Superglue



HEALTH & SAFETY

- Yew wood is toxic and can cause breathing difficulties, sneezing fits and dermatitis among other health issues, so extreme care needs to be taken. It is always advisable to wear some form of respirator when turning but it is a must when turning yew. The dust created by sanding can be greatly reduced by applying oil to the wood as a lubricant for sanding, re-applying as required to keep the dust to a minimum.
- Use an appropriate heat shield made from either metal, ceramic or glass.
- If you stick the heat shield insert in place, use a heatproof adhesive and make sure you leave a little bit of an expansion gap between the hole and the holder insert to allow for any wood movement.
- Never leave a lit tealight or candle unattended or place one near any flammable material.
- Never place tealights or candles too close together.

1 Mount a piece of yew log measuring approx. 90mm at the narrowest point x 275mm long on the lathe using a Steb centre fitted into the headstock end and a revolving Steb centre in the tailstock. Remove any loose bark so it doesn't fly off when the lathe is turned on.

2 Using a spindle roughing gouge, turn the log into a cylinder, taking care with the irregular shape. Cut a chucking spigot the correct size to fit your chuck.

3 Draw a reference mark 60mm along the wood from the tail drive end. From that point remove some of the surplus timber, tapering down towards the tail drive. Next, reduce this section to a diameter of approx. 55mm – to assist with this, use a set of callipers set to the required diameter. NB: The tips of the callipers should be filed round to prevent catches.

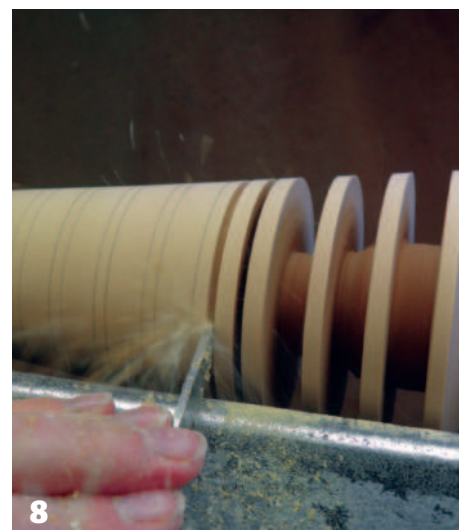
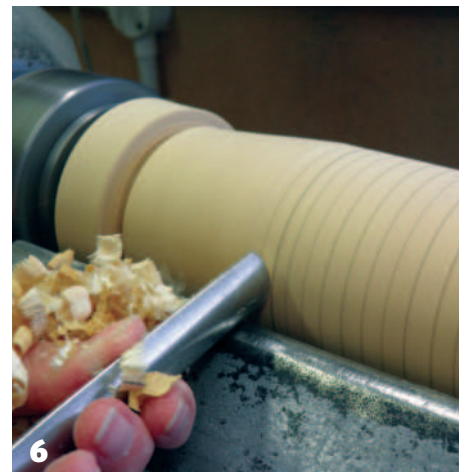
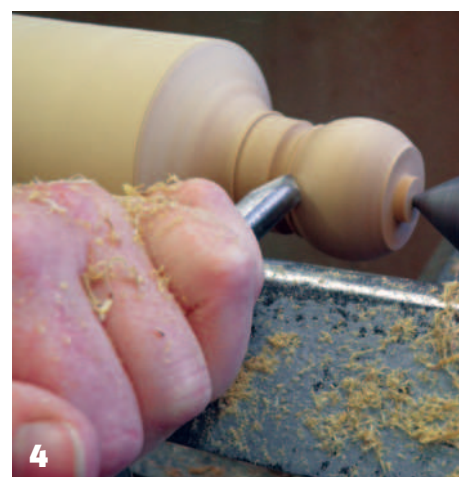
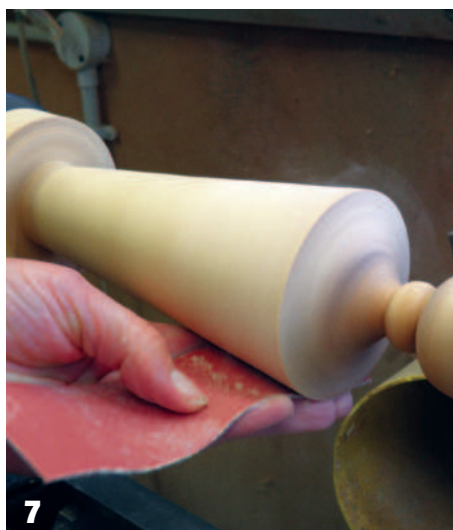
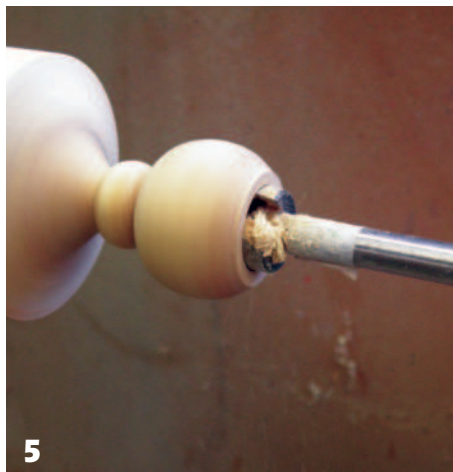
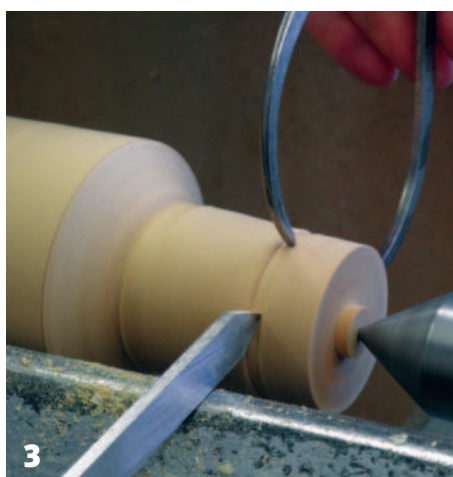
4 The reduced section is for the candle cup and bead section to be shaped. A ½in fingernail profile spindle gouge is used for this. Form a cove starting from the full diameter and down to the bottom of the bead to complete the top part of the candle holder.

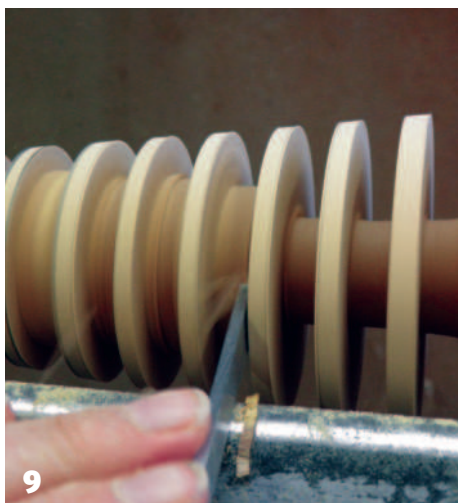
5 Turn the lathe speed down to approx. 500rpm and drill a hole for a candle cup holder to fit into. A 7/16in Forstner bit fitted into a Jacobs chuck is used for this. Measure how deep the hole needs to be and make a reference mark on the drill bit. I have used masking tape for this. Try the candle cup insert for fit before proceeding.

6 Draw a reference mark 25mm from the headstock end and part down to a depth of 40mm, this will be for the base. Draw rings around the cylinder at approx. 1cm intervals to help with turning a taper. Starting at the first line nearest the headstock, cut from the line towards the bottom. Move along each line in turn, cutting all the way to the bottom.

7 Check the taper for any bumps by laying a ruler along its length. When happy with the taper, sand with a length of 120 grit abrasive. Lay the abrasive across a couple of fingers to offer a wider sanding area and work through grits 120, 180, 240, and 320, finishing with 400.

8 On a piece of card or similar, lay out your desired spacing for the grooves and fins (solid timber). Lay the card against the taper and transfer the reference marks – this can be done with the lathe running very slowly and using the toolrest to support the card. Here I have the grooves marked at 10mm wide and a 4mm width for the solid timber. Using a parting tool, cut the grooves to an approximate depth. This can be refined when all the grooves have been cut. A fluted parting tool works well for this as it minimises torn-out fibres.





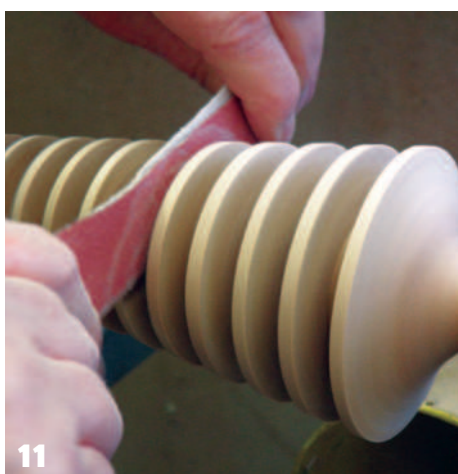
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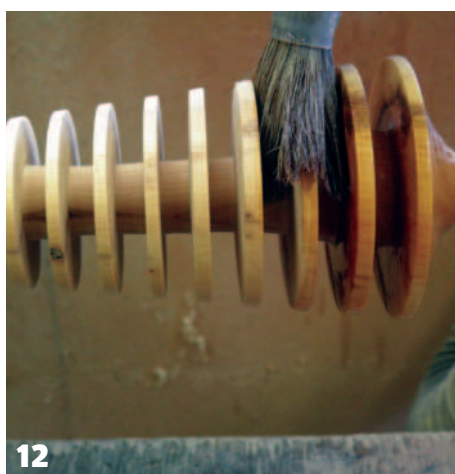
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9 With all the gaps cut to a rough profile, refine the inside shape using a $\frac{1}{16}$ in parting tool which has been sharpened at an angle. The tip of the tool should be an approximate angle of 45° instead of the standard 90° . Using the tip of the angle as the leading edge, refine the inside shape, getting as close as possible to the base of the fins. This tool must be used at right angles to the fins to avoid them from being caught.

10 For continuity of shape, turn a curve the same as the one at the top of the candle holder with a fingernail profile spindle gouge.



11



12

11 The cut sides of the grooves and the internal shape need sanding. Lengths of abrasive long enough to keep your fingers clear of the revolving timber are needed. Fold the abrasive in two and insert into the grooves, using its thickness as the sanding pressure. Sand all the turned areas, working through the same grits as used previously.

12 Apply two coats of cellulose sanding sealer with a brush. Allow the first coat to dry before applying the second. Next apply some microcrystalline wax to the candle holder and allow to sit for 20 minutes before buffing to a shine with the lathe running. Folded-up kitchen roll can be used to buff the sides of the grooves.



13



14

13 To hold the candle holder on the lathe, for removing the chucking spigot, a jam chuck will be needed. For this a scrap piece of timber approx. 70mm wide x 50mm long is used. Mount the scrap of timber on the lathe between centres and turn into a cylinder before cutting a spigot the correct size for your jaws. Mount the timber in the chuck using the cut spigot and turn a cylinder approximately 20mm long, the correct diameter for the hole in the candle cup to fit into. A set of callipers tightened to the required diameter can be used for this.

14 Leaving the jam chuck fastened in the chuck, push the candle cup on to the cylinder. Bring the tail drive up and secure in place. Using a $\frac{3}{8}$ in fingernail spindle gouge, turn away as much of the chucking spigot as you can, leaving a pip in the centre so the tail drive can remain in place. Take a couple of smoothing cuts across the underneath of the candle holder. Cut a small groove about 40mm in diameter and sand to a finish.



15



16

15 Remove the tail drive and, with the candle holder still held on the lathe by the jam chuck, remove the pip using a carving tool.

16 To smooth the carved area, a sanding arbour with a disc of abrasive slightly larger than the diameter of the arbour can be used. Fit the arbour in the chuck and, with the lathe running no faster than 1000rpm, offer up the centre of the candle holder to the edge of the abrasive. Sand the carved section only, working through the same abrasive grits used earlier. Apply two coats of sanding sealer to the underneath of the base and when dry buff to a shine with microcrystalline wax. To finish the candle holder, a candle cup insert is glued in. ●

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Oak

Anthony Bailey looks at oak and its characteristics



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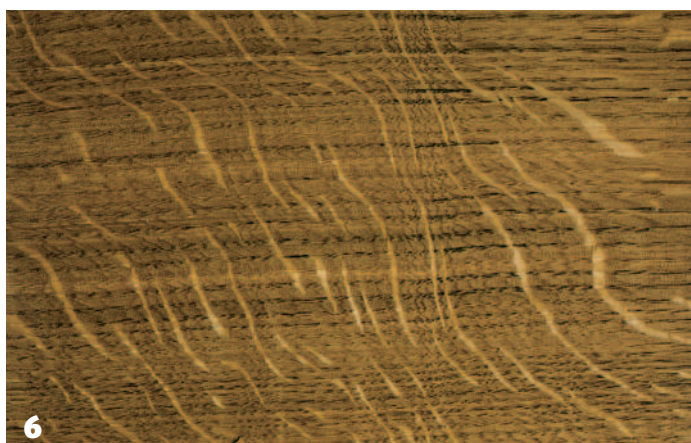
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN BULLAR



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN BULLAR



1 The English oak (*Quercus robur*) **2** *Quercus robur* acorns & leaves **3** The sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) **4** Sessile oak leaves and acorns **5 & 6** A section of a typical oak, showing the distinctive figure and 'ray' pattern

English oak

Known as English oak, common oak, European oak or pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), this oak sometimes produces local variants as tiger oak (when quartersawn) or brown oak due to growing conditions. The wide spreading 'field oak' with a level underside to the leaf canopy where it has been grazed, is the quintessential image of an English meadow landscape.

Sessile oak

Sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), like the English oak, is home to lots

of wildlife, from plants to insects and birds. It differs in that the acorns are not carried on stalks (peduncles) but on the outer twigs (sessiles). The sessile oak is the national native tree of Ireland and is also common throughout Europe.

Sessile oak is much straighter than English oak but still gives some waste. Nowadays it is unusual to have logs quartersawn because of economics and the method of resaw machining, which is only capable of 'through' cuts. This is a shame because oak on the quartering can show exceptionally fine ray-figuring. However, it can still be found in the top and bottommost slices in a log.



7



7

7 Burr, brown and bog oak turned bowls 8 Oak leaf mildew

Choosing the timber

When you are trying to work out how much timber to buy for a project you may need up to 50% more than the job would suggest, due to removing the wane edge and working around natural defects and splits.

Working characteristics

- English oak is harder to work than more even, softer grained American white oak or Japanese oak.
- You can't beat really sharp edge tools if you want a good trouble-free finish without too much effort.
- Always respect grain direction so you don't tear angled grain.
- Oak often forms burs (burls), which are highly prized by turners and cabinetmakers.
- Chamfers are visually and touch-wise more pleasing than roundovers or complex profiles.
- Oak carves well, but not for fine detail because of the coarse grain structure. It doesn't bend well, thus is not suitable for curved lamination.
- It is a dry, non-greasy wood, the porous grain makes it a natural for glue jointing. A hand scraper will give a good result after.
- Oak only needs a sealer coat, such as hard wax oil and then paste wax unless you need a tough coat.
- Wire brushing the grain and rubbing in liming wax creates a distinctive appearance.
- It can also be darkened through a process called 'fuming' using strong ammonia.

- Unfinished oak will stain badly if damp or wet due to the presence of tannin reacting with traces of iron.
- Oak sands well with power or by hand, and both surface and penetrative finishes can be used with ease.
- If oak is freshly seasoned, it produces little dust when turned. Old wood, however, can generate lots of dust, which is quite choking and has a musty smell.
- Always protect against dust inhalation as it can cause irritation, dermatitis and nasal cancer.

Food

Acorns from 'white oaks' (not the English oak) can be processed and turned into food. The tannins are removed by a process called leaching. This makes them safe and removes the bitterness. They are a source of vegetable protein and can be cooked like chestnuts or ground to turn them into flour for baking.

Diseases

Like most native species the oak has its enemies – acute oak decline, chronic oak decline, the oak processionary moth and powdery mildew.

Make your own discoveries

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Johnstone bagpipes

Ross Johnstone has been handcrafting and rejuvenating Highland bagpipes in Scotland for a number of years. We look at how this traditional instrument is at the heart of his successful business

As a master pipe maker, Scottish-based Ross Johnstone has acquired a unique set of skills. Based near Stirling, north of Edinburgh, Ross creates custom-made bagpipes and is one of only a few pipe makers who works on the pipes by hand. He also provides a refurbishment service for all types of pipe and is able to refurbish them to the exact specification required.



Old set of pipes from 1840s



Fully restored

Ross started training at the age of 18 and did a five-year apprenticeship under the stewardship of master pipe makers in Edinburgh. He then set up his own business in 2013. He has further developed his skills and passion for the task over the past 25 years and is regarded as a master pipe maker himself.

A national instrument

The bagpipe is, of course, the national instrument of Scotland and is responsible for the music of the Scottish Highlands. The Highland bagpipe is perhaps also the best-known pipe in the world.

Most Scottish Highland pipes comprise a blowpipe, bag, chanter and three drone pipes (two tenors and a bass) as the main components. The chanter has finger holes to control the melody. Air is blown into the bag through the blowpipe, filling the bag with air while the piper squeezes the air out using their arm while playing the chanter with both hands. Air passes through the reeds, creating the continuous sound expelled from the drone pipes at the top of the bagpipes and the chanter at the base.

Ross has customers of all musical levels and abilities but he works

mainly with more advanced players. These include some of the world's leading pipers, such as Pipe Major Ben Duncan of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, the Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band (who were crowned champions at World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow in 2018) and the Perth & District Pipe Band, plus a number of world pipe silver medallists. Customers admire the pipes Ross makes which produce a full-bodied, rich sound with an excellent tone and finish.

The pipes

Johnstone Bagpipes offers its own range of custom, handmade bagpipes, such as the JB1, JB2 and the special Johnstone Bagpipe model. Instruments are made to commission and produced in the same way that bagpipes have been made for centuries. Hardwoods such as the finest African blackwood are used for the drones and chanter.

Creating drone pipes in the workshop requires expertise with the lathe. This process involves drilling and reaming through hardwood to create cylinders with long bores before the cylinder is turned on the lathe. The conical-shaped chanter requires a tapered bore prior to turning.



Turning bagpipe mount from boxwood



Beading and combing



Finished beading and combing

For decoration, combing (parallel ring grooves) and beading (the wider areas between sets of ring grooves) is applied on the lathe using special tools.

The mounts for bagpipes JB1 and JB2 can be created from African blackwood or imitation ivory, while nickel is used to create plain ferrules, slides and ring caps. There is a range of options for engraving if required. The beautiful Johnstone Bagpipe special model includes imitation ivory for the mounts, while the ferrules, slides and ring caps are made in silver, again with a wide range of options for engraving.

Refurbishment

Ross loves refurbishing historic bagpipes and has worked on bagpipes that date back to the 1840s. He enjoys this work as he loves giving old instruments a new lease of life while maintaining a piece of history. Most of the jobs involve repairing cracks, splits and turning new pieces to fit the individual pipes. Wood may need cleaning and a light recombining, usually followed by a wax and polish. Sometimes nickel or silverwork needs removing and refitting, or completely replacing. Ivory may need carefully cleaning and polishing.

A David Throw bagpipe came into Ross's workshop without mounts,

ferrules or caps for refurbishment. All the fittings were replaced in imitation ivory, copied from a similar Throw set from the same period, which rejuvenated the instrument for the customer. Similarly, a sorry-looking Robertson bagpipe was given a thorough clean up and refurbishment. The wood was deep cleaned, recombined, waxed and polished. All the nickel was removed, refitted and polished – another successful achievement for the customer.

As a highly talented craftsman Ross has a great attention to detail. His skills and experience over the years mean his work is to an exceptionally high standard. Each job Ross does is completed with care and attention, providing a fast, reliable service and great workmanship.

The future

Johnstone Bagpipes was accepted into the Guild of Master Craftsmen in 2019. Ross's plans for the future are to continue aiming to be recognised as the top master bagpipe maker in the UK. Ross wants to build and grow the business and continue to work in an industry he has always been passionate about. ●

Website: johnstonebagpipes.com

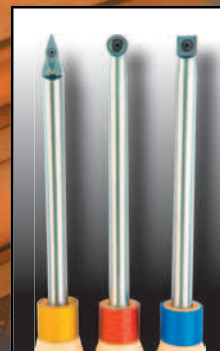
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Matching jewellery set

Janice Levi creates a bracelet with matching pendant and earrings

The combination bangle bracelet/pendant/earrings is a beautiful set to make and it is an excellent gift – if you can get the wrist size of the recipient. Because you'll be making a bracelet, select a good hardwood. Maple, mahogany, mesquite, pecan, even oak and ash are a few woods that make elegant sets. The exotics are also good choices and because this set takes such a small amount of wood, you can splurge. Purpleheart, bloodwood, ebony, yellowheart and others are good choices.



Materials

- 3½ x 3½ x 1in crossgrain wood blank
- 3 x 3 x 1½in wasteblock, trued flat

Tools & equipment

- PPE as appropriate
- Double-sided woodturner's quality tape
- Spacer or pen bushing
- ½in bowl gouge
- ½in spindle gouge
- Parting tool with low height profile
- Three-point tool or skew
- Fine-tooth saw
- Sandpaper, 120-600 grit
- Jewellery equipment and findings



Alternative completed sets



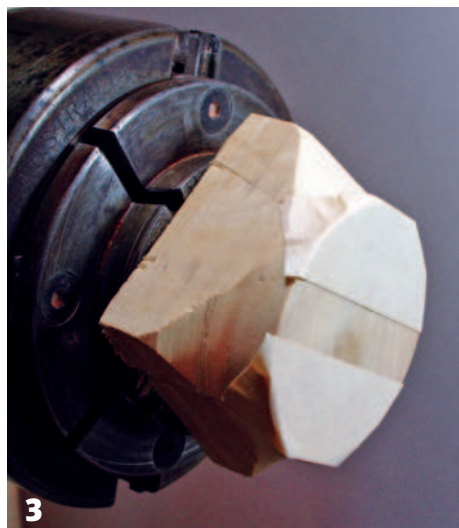
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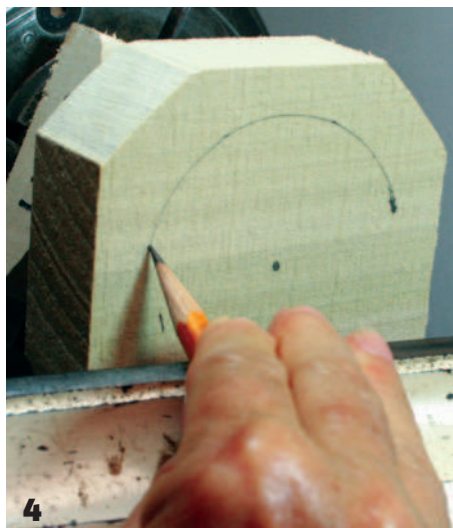
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1 Your blank will need to be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ x $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 1in thick. To determine the size of the interior opening, ask the lady to wad up her hand as if she were going to put on a bangle bracelet, then use a soft tape measure (like seamstress tape) to measure the circumference of her hand at the widest point. Now for a little math. Divide that circumference by 3.14 (pi) and you will get the diameter of the interior opening. The opening will generally lie between $2\frac{3}{8}$ in for a small hand to $2\frac{3}{4}$ in for a larger hand. Using this method allows for the bracelet's perfect fit.

2 To make turning easier, remove the corners of the blank on a bandsaw. If the flat surfaces of the blank are rough, sand one of the surfaces smooth and flat on a belt sander. Mark the centre of the un-sanded side with a pencil.



3

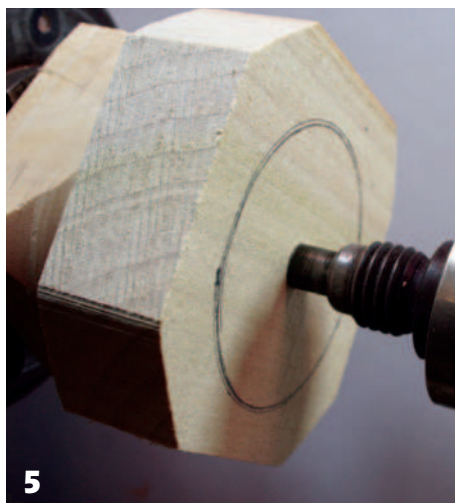


4

3 You will need a waste block to hold the blank that measures 3in diameter. True the face of the waste block and use double-sided tape to hold the blank to the waste block. Use a quality double-sided tape from a woodturning supplier, not the craft store variety or carpet tape.

4 Mark the centre point then use a ruler to mark the interior diameter of the finished bracelet.

5 Before pressing the sanded side of the blank tightly against the tape, bring up the tailstock and centre the point on the pencil mark. To avoid puncturing the wood with the centre point, use a spacer to protect the wood's surface. I use a metal spacer from the speciality fastener section in lumber supply stores, but an old pen bushing will work just as well. Apply firm but not excessive pressure with the tailstock.



5

6 True the outer surface of the blank with a bowl gouge. The finished wall thickness of the bracelet will be about $\frac{3}{4}$ in x $\frac{1}{4}$ in and the profile of the exterior is open for artistic interpretation. I like a simple, slightly domed profile.



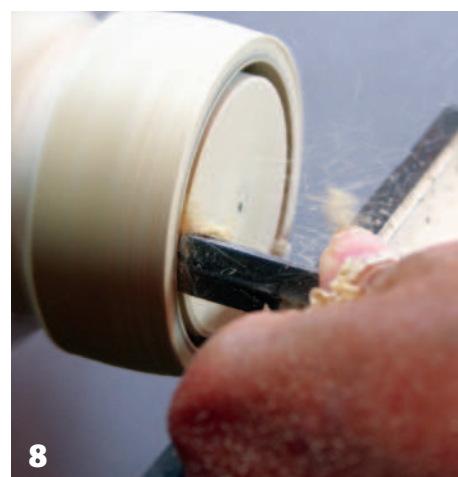
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7 Because the blank is attached to the waste block on one side, you are limited in how much shaping you can do, but you can work more on that later. When the overall thickness is about $\frac{1}{4}$ in from the pencil line marking the interior diameter, it's time to part off the bracelet from the interior wood, which will become the pendant and earrings. I use a parting tool with a low height profile.



7

8 Be sure to line up the parting tool with the bed of your lathe and go straight in on your cut. Keep going until the bracelet is free of the centre wood.



8

9 Set the bracelet aside for now. It's time to work on the earrings and pendant. You are left with a blank attached to the waste block that is about $2\frac{1}{4}$ in wide and 1in thick. With a bowl gouge, true the outside surface then shape the face so that it is slightly convex. This will become your pendant, so you may choose to add some enhancements.



9

10 First, sand the surface through all grits, then using a three-point tool or a skew, you can add little grooves that dress up the surface.



10

11 Use the tip of a skew to lightly cut the fibres about $\frac{1}{8}$ in from the outer edge. This helps prevent the fibres from chipping out when parting off the pendant.

12 Angle the parting tool slightly to the left and begin parting off the pendant.



11



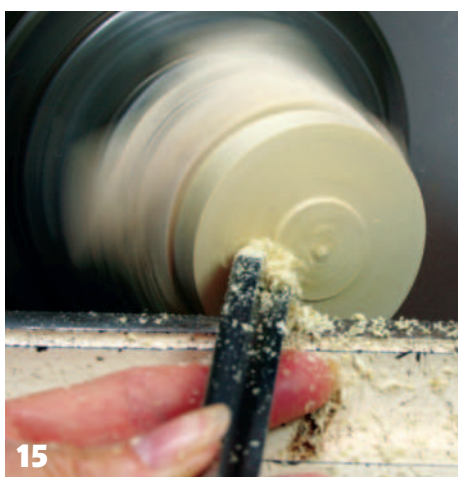
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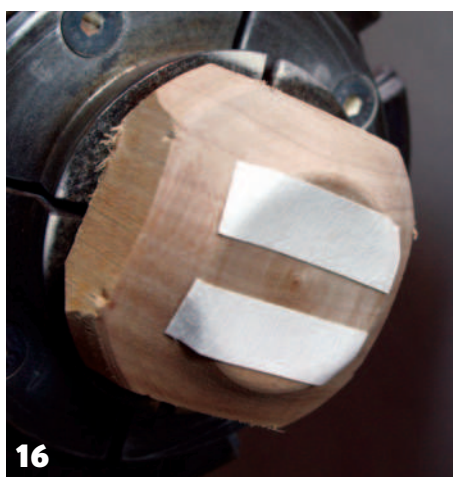
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14



15



16



17



18



19



20

13 Before the pendant is completely parted off, sand the outside edge to a smooth curve.

Parting off

14 Proceed cautiously and with light pressure as the blank is held in place with tape only. Rather than part the pendant completely off, I like to use a fine-toothed saw to cut through the last 1/4 in or so to prevent tear-out.

15 Even though the back side is rough, set it aside for now. The remaining wood on the lathe will become the earrings. The outside edge has already been trued, so use your bowl gouge to turn the surface slightly convex, just as you did with the pendant. Sand the surface and add enhancements with a skew or three-point tool. Use a skew to lightly cut the fibres about 1/4 in from the outer edge, just as with the pendant, then use the parting tool and angle it so that the back side of the earrings will be slightly convex, as with the pendant. Before parting it off completely, sand the edge to a rounded surface, then use the saw to cut it off the waste block. Both the pendant and the earring blanks will be about 3/4 in-1 1/4 in thick at the thickest point.

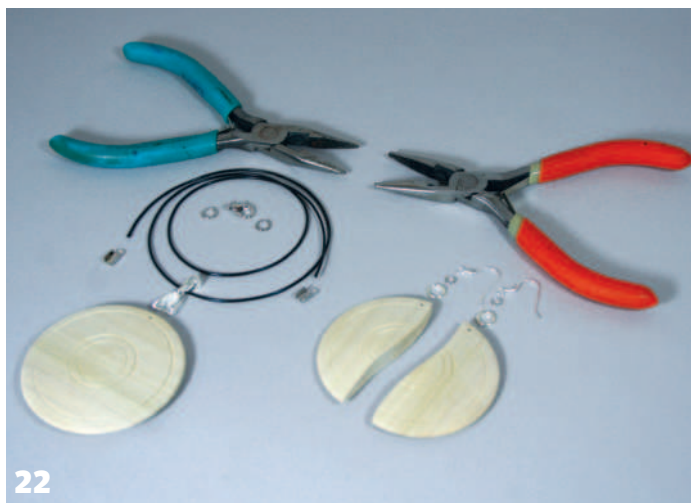
16 To finish the back side of the pendant and the earrings, you have two choices. You can mount them on a small diameter waste block with double-sided tape and turn and sand the back side on the lathe. The waste block will need to be shaped with a slightly concave curve to accommodate the convex-shaped pendant and earrings.

17 Or, you can mount a sanding disc holder in your drill press or into a Jacobs chuck on your lathe (NB: If using a Jacobs chuck in the headstock Morse taper a draw bar should be used for safety) and sand through all the grits to finish the back side.

18 When the earring disk has been completed, use a scrollsaw or bandsaw to cut it in half. You can cut a straight line or a slightly curvy line. Hand sand the cut edge.

19 Now it's time to get back to the bracelet. Carefully expand the jaws of your scroll chuck into one side of the bracelet. Use a bowl gouge to gently round over the surface and the outside edge.

20 If the inside is quite rough or has been cut on a slight angle, you can use your spindle or detail gouge and lightly sheer scrape the inside down to the jaws. Sand the exterior, edges and as much of the inside as you can reach.



21 Turn the bracelet around and repeat the process for the other side. You may choose to add enhancements with a skew or three-point tool. If there are some rough areas inside the bracelet, you may use a Dremel sanding bit to smooth the area or you can hand sand it. It's now time to apply the finish of your choice.

Assembly

22 You will need some jewellery findings, which can be found in most arts and crafts stores. You will need ear wires, 6mm jump rings, chain or cord for the necklace, and a neck clasp. If you choose to use cord, you will also need crimps with rings on one end. The first step will be to drill a hole at the top of the pendant and in both earrings about $\frac{1}{8}$ in from the edge.

23 I use a Dremel drill press with a bit less than $\frac{1}{8}$ in in diameter, but a regular drill press or hand-held drill will work.

24 Using two sets of needle-nose pliers or jewellery pliers, open three jump rings. Do not pull them straight apart, but push one end of the ring away while pulling the other end toward you, creating a spiral shape. Slide the open rings through the holes in the pendant and each earring.

25 Before closing the jump rings, attach an ear wire to each of the earrings. Close the jump rings by reversing the push-pull process.

26 For the necklace, close the jump ring on the pendant and slide a length of chain or cord about 21in long through the ring. Use two additional jump rings – one at each end to secure the ends of the chain to the neck clasp. If you have chosen a lobster clasp, you will attach the clasp on one end of the chain with a jump ring and install another jump ring on the other end to secure the clasp. If you are using cord, install a crimp with a ring on one end onto each end of the cord. I use a set of jewellery pliers to press down each edge of the crimp.

27 You can then use a jump ring to install a lobster clasp on one end of the cord and a jump ring on the other end.

28 Your beautiful turned jewellery set is now complete. ●





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Gavel

Alan Holtham suggests something that will bring order to your house – or tenderise your steaks!

Strangely, a gavel is probably one of the most popular items in the professional woodturner's repertoire. It is amazing how many organisations there are that need some means of bringing their meetings to order. Once you have made one, word soon spreads and the orders should flow in.



It is a relatively simple project to make and you can make gavels as plain or as decorative as you like, as the only area needing careful attention is fitting the head of the gavel on to the handle. Remember that an over-zealous chairman trying to quell an unruly gathering may use it a bit over-enthusiastically and the head might loosen. You have two choices for fitting the head firmly: either bring the handle right through and wedge it like a conventional hammer, or wedge it internally using an adaptation of the fox-wedged tenon found in general woodworking. I chose this latter option, as I think it is neater and it requires no hand finishing later. I have made hundreds of these gavels and never had

one come loose yet, but you need to spend a bit of time to achieve a really accurate fit.

You don't need much in the way of materials. For this gavel you need a piece for the head $4 \times 2\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ in (100 x 63 x 63mm) and a piece $8 \times 1\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ in (203 x 32 x 32mm) for the handle. Here I used a piece of gonçalo alves with some really rich figuring, but anything strong will do, depending on the likely use.

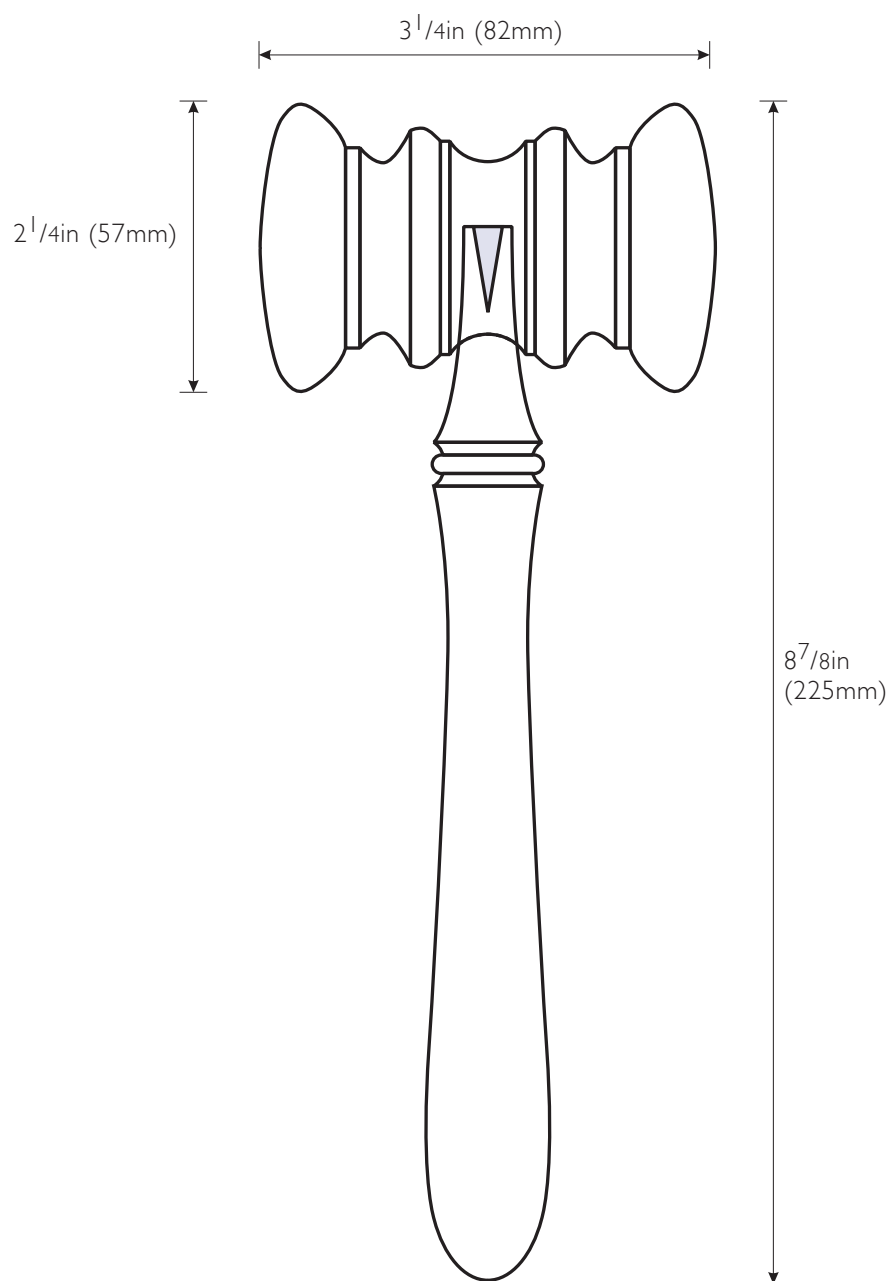
However, try to use timbers that are fine-grained enough to take the detail and hard enough to resist the inevitable wear. Among the cheaper home-grown timbers, ash and elm are both good candidates.

Plans & equipment



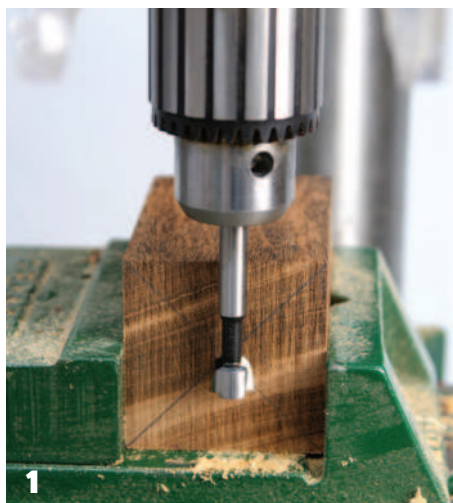
Tools

- 1** $\frac{3}{8}$ in (10mm) bowl gouge
- 2** $\frac{1}{4}$ in (6mm) spindle gouge
- 3** $\frac{3}{4}$ in (19mm) roughing gouge
- 4** Standard parting tool
- 5** $\frac{3}{4}$ in (19mm) skew chisel
- 6** $\frac{1}{2}$ in (12mm) sawtooth bit



Top tip

It is vital that the head sits squarely on the end of the handle, and this is down to really accurate drilling. It is much easier to drill before the block is turned, so make sure it is properly square and cut to length, and then find the centres of either end and on one face.



1 Ideally the drilling should be carried out on a drill press to get the handle square to the head in all planes. Start by setting the drill depth deep enough to allow plenty of penetration of the handle, but not so deep that the hole goes right through when the centre of the head is shaped away later.

2 Drill a $\frac{1}{2}$ in (12mm) hole using a sawtooth bit accurately centred on the intersection of the diagonals. Keep withdrawing the bit as you drill to clear the swarf and prevent it overheating.

3 You can now either hold the block between centres, or in your chuck. I prefer the former as it allows me to complete most of the turning in one go and then just rechuck for final cleaning up of the ends.

4 Check the blank for clearance past the toolrest and make sure the rest and banjo are tightened up firmly.

5 You would normally need a lathe speed of about 2000rpm for a small block like this, but nothing is critical, so set it at whatever feels comfortable to you.

6 Rough down the square using a $\frac{3}{4}$ in (19mm) gouge. This will be very quick and easy at this speed and it is quite safe to work along the full length of such a small blank, rather than working out from either end.

7 When the blank is cylindrical, use a pencil to scribe a line round the centre. This should also coincide with the centre of the head hole.

8 Use the parting tool to cut in a small waste spigot at both ends, but make sure it is exactly the same width at either end.





9



10

9 Use dividers to set out the main detail points using the ends as the reference each time.

10 Callipers are essential to get matching diameters the same at either end, but take your time with this setting out, as the two halves need to be perfectly symmetrical for the finished head to look right.

11 Turn the head profile using a $\frac{1}{4}$ in (6mm) spindle gouge, taking light cuts to try to keep the design centred about the handle hole.

12 Work on the same bit of matching detail at either end, gradually working in towards the middle and stopping the lathe frequently to check that it's all still looking symmetrical.

13 Tiny beads can be worked with the parting tool, by using it as a very small skew chisel.



11



12

Top tip

Finally 'sharpen' the detail by incising a tiny line at each main change of detail. This makes everything look much crisper.



13



14

14 Complete as much as possible of the shaping at either end, leaving just a small pip to accommodate the centres.

15 Sand the surface very carefully to maintain the sharp edges to the detail. These are easily spoiled by careless sanding, so work down to about 400 grit paper, slowing the lathe speed down if the surface appears to be getting hot.

16 Rub in several coats of cellulose sanding sealer with the lathe stationary, flattening them down when dry with very fine abrasive – I used 800 grit.



15



16

17 Burnish the final; coat with 0000 wire wool. This leaves a super-smooth surface ready for polishing and is the only way to get an even, high gloss.

18 For small, decorative items my choice of finish is friction polish applied with a cloth as the lathe is revolving. Don't use too much, or the surface will end up quite streaky.

19 Using a strip of cloth to protect the polished surface, grip the finished head in some long jaws in the chuck. Tighten up firmly, but not so tight that it marks the surface.

20 Clean up the spigot left by the centre, cutting the bulk of it away with the parting tool, then cleaning up with a quick slice, using the skew chisel on its back.

21 Sand and polish this surface, blending it into the existing polish on the outer edge to disguise the join (although this shouldn't really be visible).

22 The handle is next, so rough the blank down using the gouge and the lathe set at about 2500rpm.

23 Set your callipers to the diameter of the sawtooth bit you used to drill the hole in the head.

24 Next, size down a small section at the end of the handle using the parting tool, until the callipers just slip over the diameter.

25 Check that this is a tight fit in the hole before you reduce the full length of the section to fit inside the head.





26 Complete the shaping of the handle – the roughing gouge and skew chisel are the best tools for long, gently curved sections like this.



27 With the bulk of the shaping complete, reverse the handle, gripping it at the headstock end in some small jaws in the chuck. Only grip on the section that is going to be hidden inside the head, so it doesn't matter if the surface is marked slightly by the jaws.



28 Complete the shaping at the top end of the handle, working down as close as possible to the centre, leaving just a small nib to take the tailstock centre.



29 Sand and polish the handle to match the head, then use the skew chisel to slice off the final supporting nib.



30 With the wood still gripped in the chuck, there should be enough support to sand and polish this final cut area, but do steady it with your fingers.



31 To assemble the head and handle, use a saw to make a cut down the centre of the end, to a length equivalent to just less than the depth of the hole in the head.



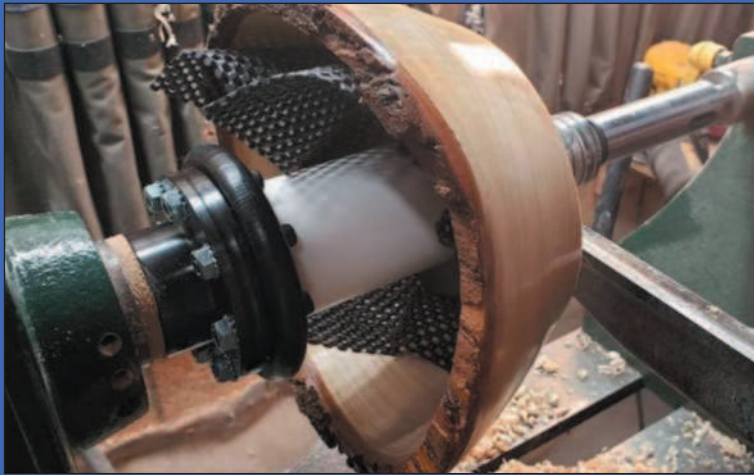
32 Cut a thin, tapering wedge equal in length to the saw cut and the same width as the handle diameter. Cover the wedge with glue, smear a little inside the hole in the head and push the two components together. The theory is that the wedge bottoms in the hole in the head and is then forced into the handle, opening out the saw cut and wedging it all in a really tight. It relies on accurate fitting of the components and the slightest of tapers on the wedge, but it has never failed me yet. ●

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Turn a banksia pod box

Paul Maddock seeds a great idea for an attractive lidded box

This delightful lidded box is made from a combination of a banksia pod, a piece of laurel hedge and Milliput epoxy putty, but it does require some accurate turning skills.



Banksia pods grow on banksia trees in Western Australia and are collected after the seeds have been discharged. Their export/import is controlled to ensure no unwanted insects have taken up residence to travel to foreign countries. They can be bought from turning and hobby supply shops as well as online. Make sure you buy large, well-formed pods with a regular shape – some suppliers grade the pods and the lower-priced, irregular-shaped pods are not suitable for this project.

I have used a piece of laurel to form the basis of the box as my house is surrounded by an old, mature laurel hedge and every so often when I am pruning it I have to take out some of the trunks and branches, which provide a source of dense white wood, sometimes with attractive colouring where decay has started to set in. Alternatively, any close-grained hardwood with a colour to complement the reddish-brown of the banksia pod will work just as well.

Milliput is a two-part epoxy putty available in various colours from turning and hobby supply shops as well as online.

Design

The body of the box is formed from the banksia pod and the lid, body insert and base from the laurel or chosen hardwood.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Banksia pods by their very nature can be brittle, so when turning them eye protection is the very least precaution you should take; pieces of the outer section of the pods are prone to chipping off and flying at your face. A full-face air-flow helmet is even better due to the very fine fibres/hairs that will be cut during turning. These fibres are a potential respiratory irritant and all mitigations should be taken to avoid inhalation.

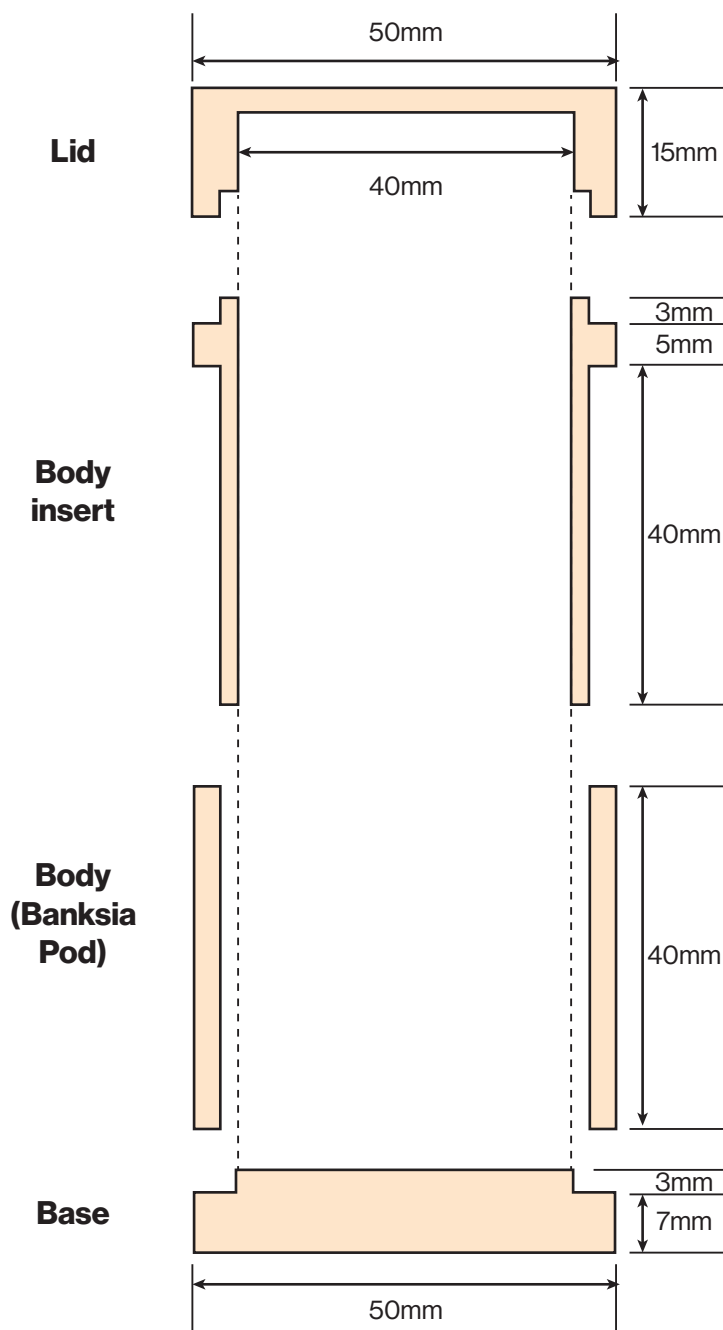
Plans & equipment

Materials

- Box body: banksia pod
- Lid body insert and base: laurel or chosen hardwood

Tools

- PPE as appropriate
- 25mm spindle roughing gouge
- Skew chisel
- Box scraper
- Bedan
- Slim parting tool
- 10mm spindle gouge
- Jacobs chuck
- 40 and 45mm Forstner bits



Section through Banksia box

Preparing the banksia pod

1 Initially the pod needs to be prepared for turning between centres. This entails cutting off the top and tail ends to provide a flat surface for the centres, for which I use the bandsaw.

2 A simple jig made from a piece of ply and two triangular fillets of timber provides a safe way to hold the pod while cutting with the bandsaw. This jig is also useful for holding cylindrical lengths of timber if you need to cut them lengthwise on the bandsaw.

Turning the pod

3 Mount the pod between centres on the lathe – I find that Steb centres work well and provide a firm drive. When turning the pods the outer layer tends to come off in chips so eye and face protection is essential. Underlying the hard exterior is a layer of soft, fibrous material, which comes off as a reddish brown dust, so wear a good-quality dust mask and use dust extraction to protect your lungs.

Use a roughing gouge to turn the pod to a cylinder until the majority of the fibrous material is removed. Bear in mind that this cylinder will form the body of the box, so don't turn away more than necessary – at this stage a diameter of 55-60mm is good. The exterior will be finally turned later. Form a chucking point on each end of the pod. I use O'Donnell jaws as they provide good all-round access for making boxes.

4 Mount the pod in the chuck, supported by a rotating centre in the tailstock, and part off a section 50mm long. Clean up the end of the pod section to ensure it is dead flat so it will fit tightly to the flange on the body insert.

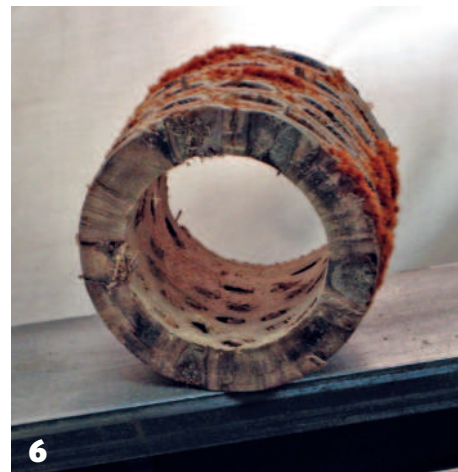
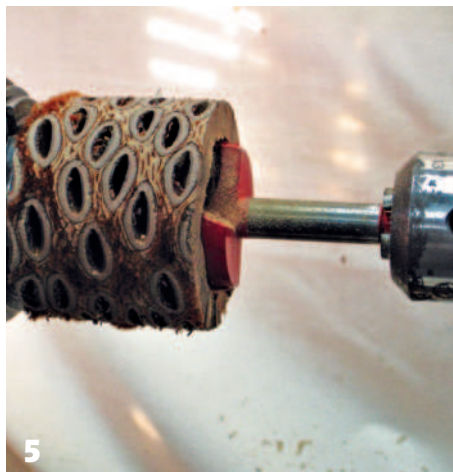
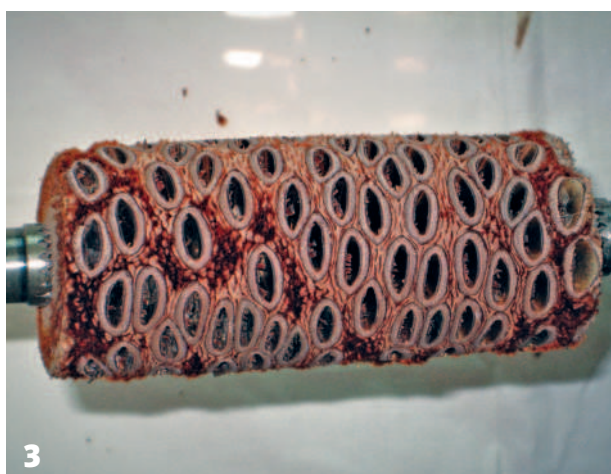
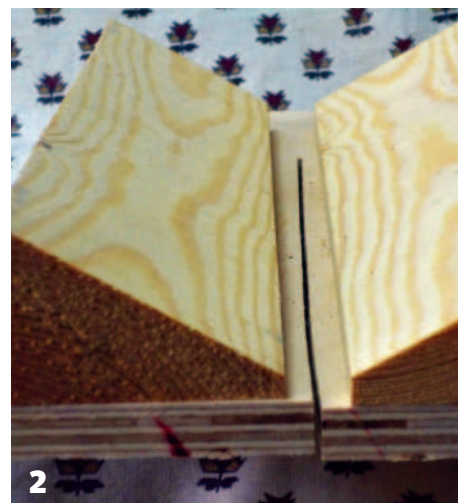
5 The next step is to hollow out the section of pod to a diameter of 45mm, which I do with a TCT-tipped Forstner bit. I bought a set of these cutters ranging from 15mm to 60mm in 5mm increments online for around £20, which I thought was a really good deal. With the section of pod mounted in the chuck turning at around 800rpm and the 45mm cutter mounted in a Jacobs chuck in the tailstock the pod cuts very well. The hollowing needs to be 45mm deep.

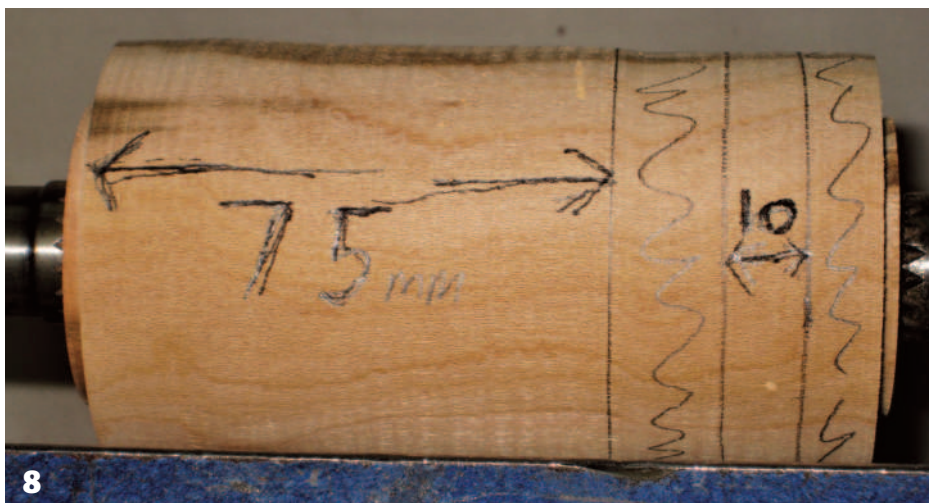
Alternatively, the hollowing can be carried out using a hollowing tool and a box scraper. When the hollowing is complete part off the box body.

6 The completed box body.

Making the lid, body insert and base

7 Mount your chosen piece of close-grained timber ready to turn the lid, base and body-insert section. Using a roughing gouge, turn the piece down to a cylinder the same diameter as the pod body. The finished piece will need to be around 100mm long.





8 When the piece has been reduced to the diameter of the pod, form a chucking point on each end. Select which end of the piece will form the lid and mount this end in the chuck. Using a parting tool, take a 15mm-long disc off the end of the piece and set aside to make the base.

9 True up the end of the piece and mark out the diameter for the interior of the box, which should be around 5mm less than the internal diameter of the pod body. Using a TCT Forstner bit or a box scraper, hollow out the centre of the box to a depth of 55mm, which will take the hollowing into the section that will form the lid. Sand down to 400 grit.

10 Turn the outside of the piece down to form a spigot that will snugly fit the inside of the pod body. Ensure the shoulder is square with the insert section and the pod body and the body insert finish flush with each other at the base. Remove this piece from the chuck and set aside.

11 Mount the pod body on the body insert.

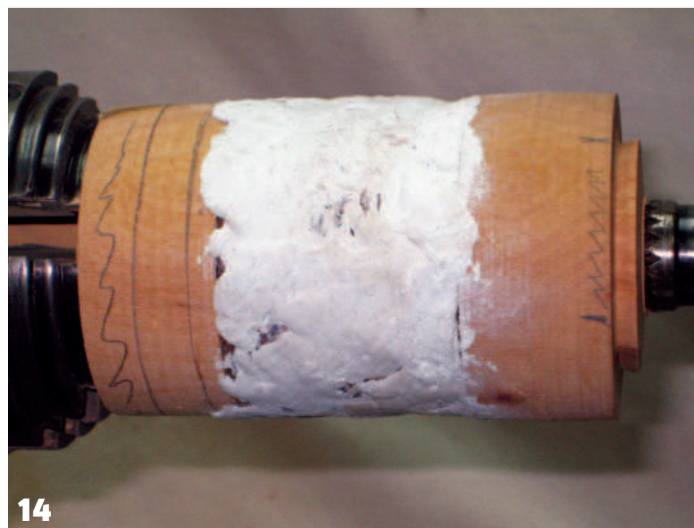
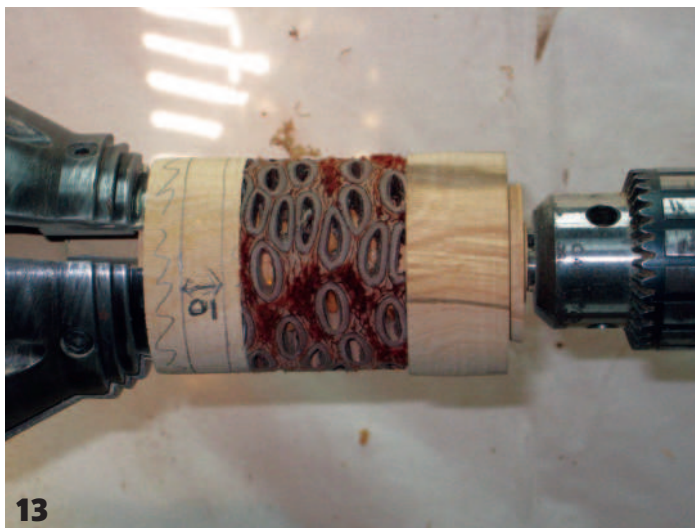
12 Mount the base piece in the chuck, clean up the face and sand down to 400 grit as this will form the bottom of the box. Form a 3mm-wide lip that will be a tight fit into the body insert.

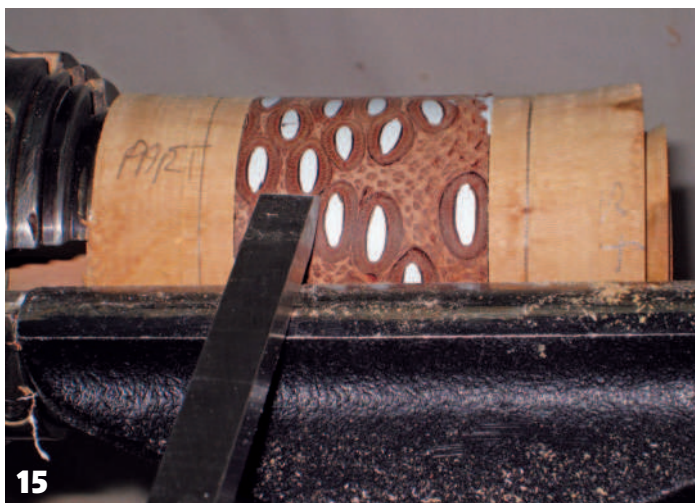
13 Glue up and assemble the three pieces to form the box and bring the tailstock up to cramp them in place while the glue sets.

Applying the Milliput putty

14 Milliput is the trade name for a two-part epoxy putty which has many uses. It is available in five colours: Standard (Yellow /Grey), Terracotta, Silver Grey, Black, and Superfine White. There are two sticks in the box and you cut an equal length off each and knead them together to form a workable putty. Using disposable gloves is a good idea but not essential.

Clean out any debris and dust in the pod holes and work the putty into all the holes and crevices. Firm pressure is needed for this and leave the putty proud of the surface to be turned down. I used the Grey putty for this project and cut 15mm lengths off the sticks initially. When I had used that I mixed up some more to finish the job. Leave the putty to cure.





15 With the base of the box mounted in the chuck and supported by a revolving centre in the tailstock, use a Bedan tool to turn away the surplus Milliput and expose the banksia pod. If there are any areas where the putty has not completely filled the crevices you can apply some more and turn away the surplus again.

The next stage is to change to a skew chisel and plane away the whole surface of the box. I left the lid flared out to allow for some shaping, this is your personal choice.

Making the lid

16 Clean up the chucking point on the lid. Leaving a section of wood approximately 5mm wide above the banksia body, cut a 6mm-wide groove 4mm deep, which will form the lip for the lid. Using a 3mm wide parting tool, part off the lid section leaving the lip intact on the body.

17 Mount the lid in the chuck, turn the inside to a suitable depth and form a rebate to fit the lip on the box body. Sand and finish the inside of the lid.

18 Reverse the lid and mount in the chuck using the jaws in expanding mode. Turn and finish the top of the lid. Take care not to remove any wood where the lid meets the body as this has already been married to the body earlier. The lid is now completed.

19 The final job is to mount the box in the chuck, either using the jaws in expansion mode or a jam chuck to turn and finish the bottom of the box. I used a revolving centre in the tailstock to support the box for the bulk of the turning and then relied on the chuck for the final finishing. Assemble the completed box and apply two coats of gloss lacquer or finish of your choice. ●



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Turning full circle

John Holloway explains how he turned to wood and the lathe



In the beginning

Since my earliest memories I've had an affinity with wood: its sensory, visual, olfactory and even audible properties. On his return from WW2, my dad built all the furniture in our house and as I grew he introduced me to the world of dovetail, mortise & tenon joints, finishing techniques, the pervading smell of sawdust and that all-important 'measure twice-cut once' principle. His was a hobby of patience, attention to detail and loving care for wood and I took that enthusiasm into secondary school in the days when woodwork lessons were a blessed relief from all things mathematical and scientific. As I matured I discovered the wonderland of woods and forests, immersing myself in their peace and solitude and the symphony of creaking branches and rustling leaves. I learnt to carve and, once married with my own family, I too made my own furniture when money was tight.

What's that got to do with woodturning? Good question. For it was not until retirement that I cast around for a practical and creative hobby. A chance conversation with a friend piqued my interest so he offered me a 'have a go trial run' in his turning shed. Another friend had a long-unused, ancient Myford bench lathe; so, although I'd never considered woodturning I bought the machine with various blunt and dangerous-looking tools and began another wood-themed journey down the road of a new adventure.

Learning turning

The first discovery was that health and safety was a very important part of turning. Boy, can these lathes spin! I bought the *A Foundation Course* 'bible' by Keith Rowley but still lacked confidence and knowledge. And then a touch of serendipity: my wife spotted an advert for a six-week beginner's course offered by a local turning club. Anxious to retain all my fingers I paid £30 for six two-hour sessions and turned up full of enthusiasm and ignorance.

The members were all middle-aged to elderly men churning out a plethora of items with seemingly consummate ease. The lathes were floor mounted, the tools sharper and the expertise invaluable but... I was turning out a basic dibber or something when Nigel sidled up and remarked, 'why are you using the gouge like that?' 'Because that's what Frank told me to do,' I replied. 'Don't listen to Frank', he shushed, 'you do it this way.'

This turned out to be a common occurrence throughout the sessions; friendly rivalry but a tad confusing as I'd been brought up on the 'one right way, many wrong ways' principle. But the course gave me confidence, a new understanding of different wood properties and the fact that a small selection of basic tools could be used in different ways – within limitations!



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN HOLLOWAY

The hardest part, and it will bring a nod of affirmation if you're reading this, was not the turning but the sharpening. How hard can it be to get the right angle and sharp edges on gouges, scrapers and parting tools? The good-old-club boys didn't use fancy jigs and complex engineering to hone their tools; experience, gained knowledge and practise were their watchwords. I needed to move on.

I built a small turning shed in our garden, purchased an Axminster bench lathe, respirator helmet and grinder and informed everyone I was now into ornamental wood shavings, stocked up with ash from a local wood, acquired other offcuts then gratefully received a subscription to *Woodturning* from the family.

And then came the problems. Nice problems but involving desire and diplomacy. *Woodturning* is like a box of delights, its pages full of wondrous implements: shiny new tools, different tools, essential tools, jigs, finishing products and machinery all screaming 'BUY ME!' I can resist anything apart from temptation, as Oscar Wilde famously remarked, but I did. 'Get the basics right first,' said my friend and he was right – but I have succumbed once or twice...

Diversifying

Diplomacy was the other issue. Beginning to churn out bowls, plates, goblets, cups, vases, fruit, fancy stuff and abstracts (my term for things that went wrong) I was left with the perennial question as to what to do with them all. When my wife started sighing as yet another bowl entered

the house and when all my friends and family had smilingly and stoically received home-turned birthday and Christmas gifts I knew I needed a new outlet. My outpourings were getting better, by no means perfect, but acceptable. The answer, of course, was grandchildren. Toys, models, tooth-fairy dispensers, trinket boxes and bedroom decorations flew from my lathe as demand increased. I gave a candle holder to a friend, which led to making gifts for the village church Christmas fair, so trees, snowmen and penguins were added to the turn list. Miraculously they sold, thus raising funds, which pleased the vicar no end.

I guess my introduction to this fascinating hobby is pretty similar to that of many other turners. Three years in I'd class myself as a reasonably intermediate beginner, still learning, improving, improvising, experimenting and gaining inspiration from all the talented contributors to *Woodturning*. My sharpening technique is much better using a homemade jig and two of our grandchildren have had a go (under strict supervision) turning gifts for their mum, so I'm delighted there's the genesis of a new generation of turners in the offing.

I enjoy turning immensely: it's creative, challenging and focused to the point where the outside world ceases to exist once the shed door shuts and the lathe begins to turn. There's nothing better than that satisfying feeling when ribbons and curls stream from the flute of a sharp gouge. I've yet to create a perfect sphere, try offset turning and introduce colour, but I'm getting there. And unbeknown, thanks to my dad, I've 'turned' full circle.

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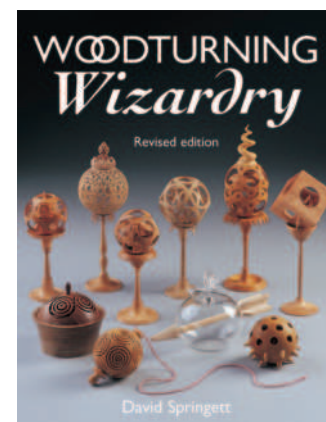
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Offset lattice lid

David Springett creates an attractive lid to transform a simple bowl or vase

Extract from *Woodturning Wizardry* by David Springett, GMC Publications, RRP £16.99, available online and from all good bookshops.



It is embarrassing how simple this lattice turning technique really is. It's just a case of turning grooves, but that is exactly what makes it so exciting. The trick is how to hold the piece as work progresses. By varying the position of the workpiece – setting it off-centre, for example – then turning more grooves, all sorts of interesting possibilities are created.

Plans & equipment

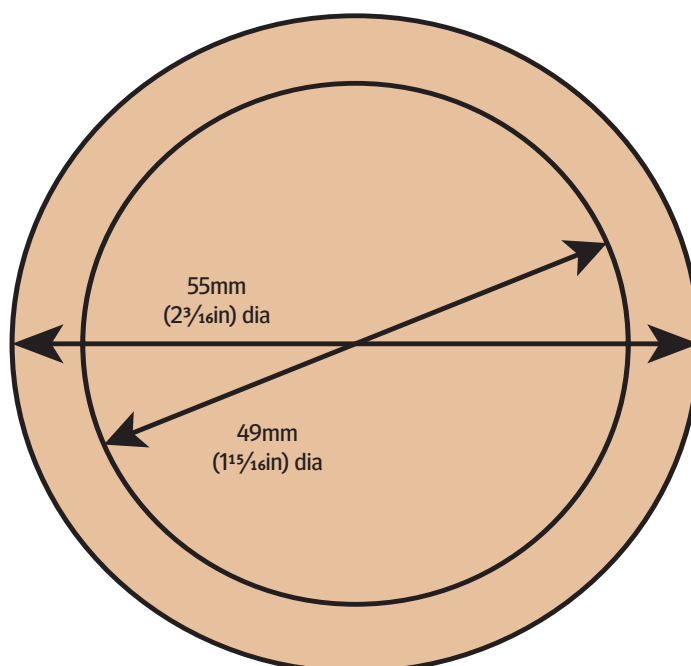
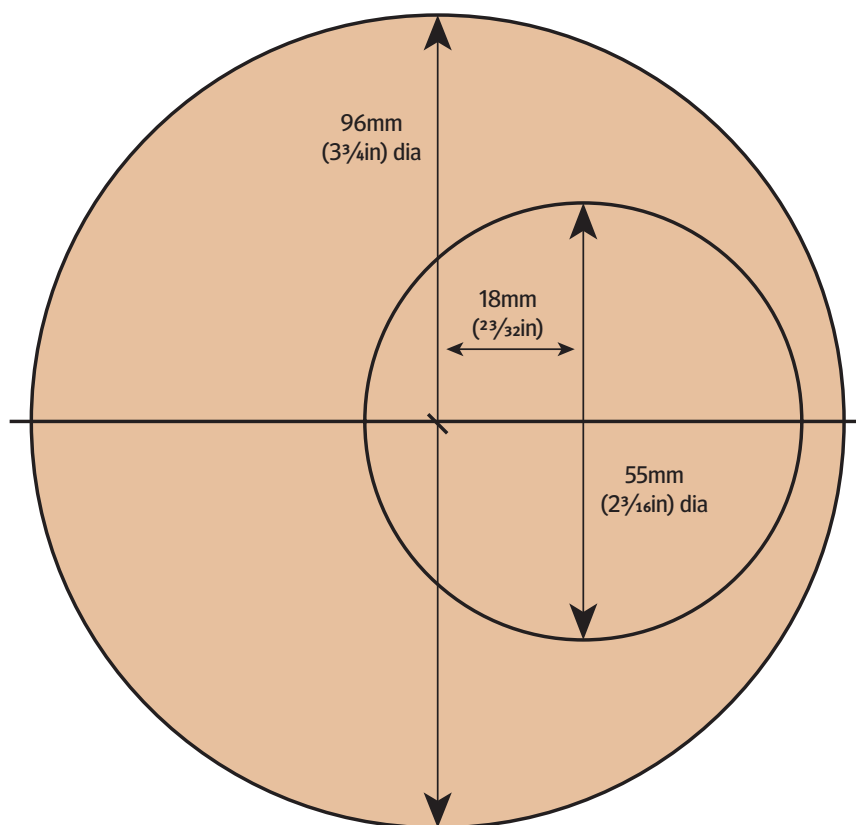
Materials

- A disc of walnut, 60mm ($2\frac{3}{8}$ in) diameter by 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) thick
- A disc of maple, 100mm (4in) diameter by 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) thick
- A softwood faceplate, 150mm (6in) diameter by 22mm ($\frac{7}{8}$ in) thick, screwed to a metal faceplate

Tools

- A microwave oven

- Shelf toolrest
- A square-end cutting tool ground from a cheap 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) woodworking chisel, with a tip 1.5mm ($\frac{1}{16}$ in) wide by about 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) long
- A similar tool with a tip 1.5mm ($\frac{1}{16}$ in) wide by about 12mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) long
- A 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) drill
- Four pan-headed screws, 12mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) no.6
- A hot-melt glue gun



Turning the walnut insert

1 Mark the centre of the 60mm (2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in) walnut disc. Switch on the hot-melt glue gun. While it is heating up, temporarily remove the softwood disc from the metal faceplate – having first made a datum mark on both components – and take both the softwood and the walnut discs to a microwave oven. Heat both together for 20 seconds on full power. Return to the workshop and screw the softwood disc back on to the metal faceplate.

Apply hot-melt glue to an area in the centre of the softwood faceplate, about equal to the diameter of the walnut disc. Press the walnut disc on to the glue and bring the tailstock forward with the revolving centre in place. Push the revolving centre into the marked centre of the walnut disc to ensure alignment, then quickly withdraw the tailstock. Place a piece of scrap wood between the revolving centre and the walnut disc and re-apply pressure from the tailstock; this will spread the pressure out more evenly whilst the glue cools. Leave the glue to cool fully.

2 When the glue has set, fit a 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) drill into the drill chuck in the tailstock. Bring it forward and bore, on centre, a hole 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) deep. Position the shelf toolrest squarely across the face of the work. Set the longer of the two square-ended tools upon the rest so that the blade cuts at lathe-centre height, and turn the walnut to a smooth disc of 55mm (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ in) diameter. On the outer edge, turn a rebate 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) wide by 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) deep.

Using a piece of card as a template, mark a series of grooves across the surface: a 1.5mm ($\frac{1}{16}$ in) ridge followed by a 2mm ($\frac{5}{16}$ in) groove, and so on.

Now take the small square-ended tool and, using typists' corrections fluid, make a mark 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) away from the tip to act as a depth gauge. With this tool, again set at lathe-centre height, turn the first groove 1.5mm ($\frac{1}{16}$ in) away from the hole drilled in the centre of the lid, to a depth of 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in), referring to the gauge mark on the tool.

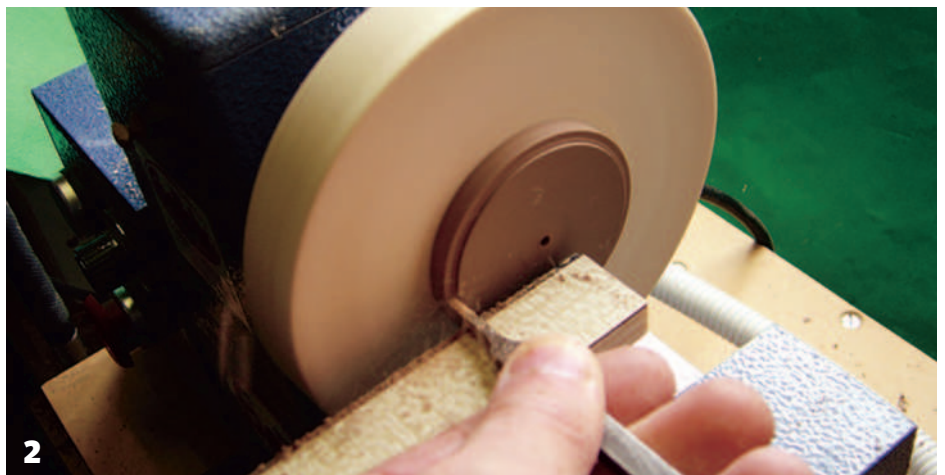
3 Continue turning grooves in the face of the walnut disc, each 1.5mm ($\frac{1}{16}$ in) away from the other, and each 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) deep, until you reach the rebate at the edge of the disc.

Top tip

Before removing the softwood faceplate, carefully mark a datum on both it and the metal faceplate so that it may be accurately replaced.

4 Sand and polish the work. To remove the disc, first unscrew the softwood faceplate from the metal faceplate. Place the softwood piece, with the attached walnut disc, in the microwave, and heat on full power for 20 seconds.

5 The disc can now be removed and the glue on the back can easily be rubbed off while still warm. Set the walnut disc to one side. Remove the glue from the softwood faceplate in the same way, and reattach it to the metal faceplate.

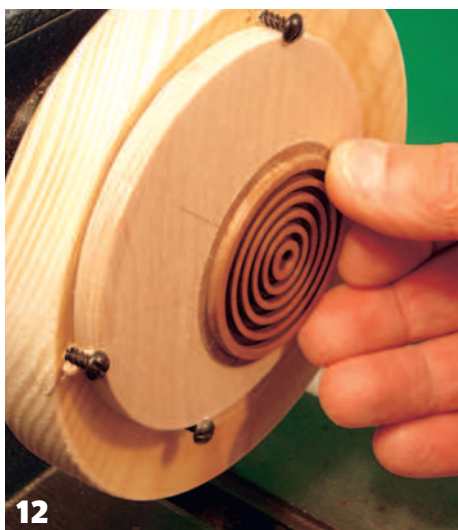
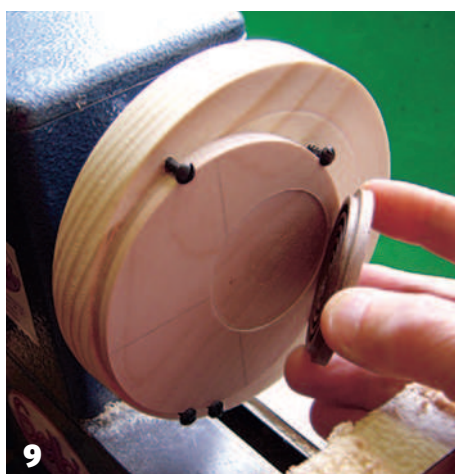
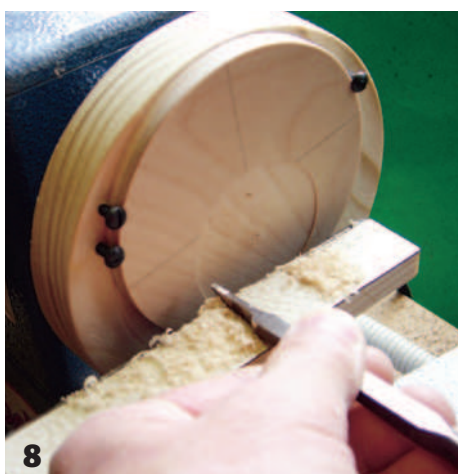


Did you know?

Why heat both surfaces?

The reason for heating both faceplate and workpiece is to prevent the hot-melt glue from chilling on contact with the cool surfaces, which might cause the glue joint to fail. Always apply the glue to the soft faceplate first, so that the bond between the glue and the faceplate will be stronger than that of the glue to the workpiece. This will allow the glue to be removed more easily from the workpiece when the time comes.





Turning the main part of the lid

6 Mark the centre of the 100mm (4in) maple disc. Hold it on the centre, pressed against the softwood faceplate by means of the revolving centre in the tailstock, and turn the outer edge to an exact 96mm (3²⁵/₃₂in) diameter with the longer of the two square-ended tools.

7 Remove the piece from the lathe and mark a pencil centre line across its face. Mark position A along this pencil line, 30mm (1³/₁₆in) from the edge of the disc. Now press the revolving centre into position A to hold the piece firmly against the softwood faceplate. Fix the four pan-headed screws around the outer edge of the disc to hold it firmly in place, and withdraw the tailstock.

8 Bring the shelf toolrest up to the work, adjusting it so that the smaller square-ended tool cuts at lathe-centre height. Rotate the work by hand to make sure that nothing catches.

9 Mark a circle of 49mm (1¹⁵/₁₆in) diameter about point A, and begin to recess this area with the longer of the two square-ended tools. Check that this recess fits the rebate on the grooved side of the walnut disc.

10 Continue turning until it is a good snug fit, then cut the opening all the way through to the softwood faceplate.

11 Now rebate the edge of the opening to a depth of 3mm (1/₈in) and a diameter of 55mm (2³/₁₆in) so that the walnut insert will be able to fit flush with the surface of the maple.

12 Test-fit the insert upside down so that it can be easily removed. Remove the maple disc and the pan-head screws from the softwood faceplate.

13 Turn the recess in the softwood faceplate, 6mm (1/₄in) deep and exactly the same diameter as the maple disc. Drill a hole right through the centre of the softwood so that the workpiece may be more easily ejected when the time comes.

▶ Cutting the concentric grooves

14 Again, place the softwood faceplate and both the maple and walnut discs in the microwave to warm them through.

Apply hot-melt glue to the rebate of the walnut disc and push it firmly into the recess in the maple disc. Then apply glue to the inside of the hollow in the softwood disc and press the maple/walnut disc into place.

15 This must all be done reasonably quickly before the glue chills. Use the tailstock to apply pressure over the whole area whilst the glue sets.

16 When the glue has set, withdraw the tailstock and, using a 3mm (1/8in) drill, make a hole through the centre of the workpiece.

17 Using a scrap of card as a template as before, mark a series of grooves across the surface: a 1.5mm (1/16) groove, and so on.

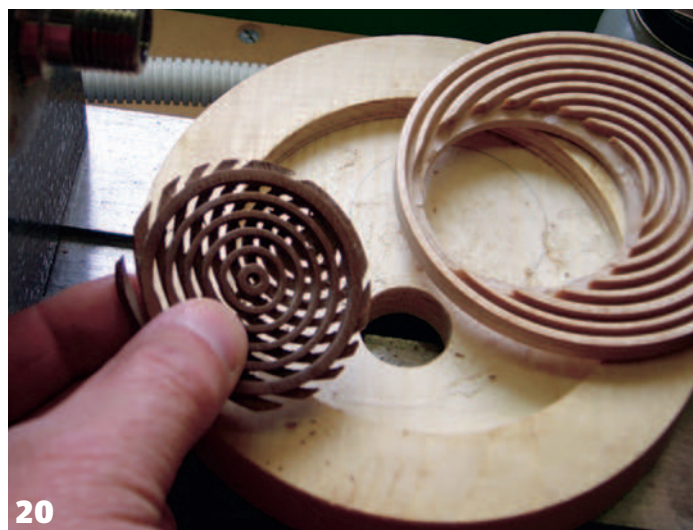
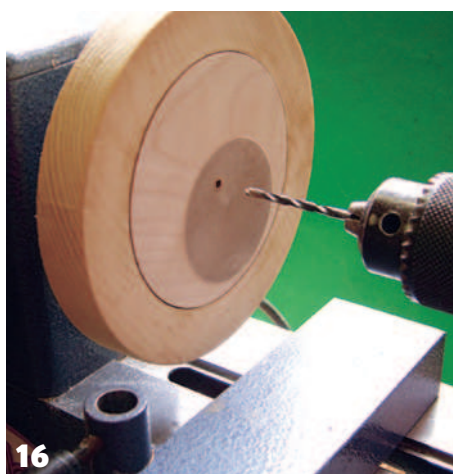
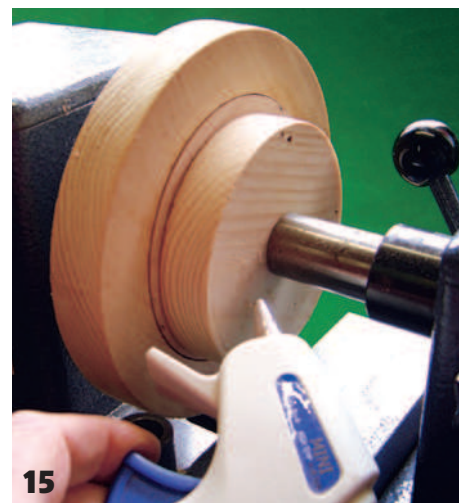
18 Using the small square-end tool, turn the grooves to a depth of 3mm (1/8in), watching the correcting-fluid depth mark.

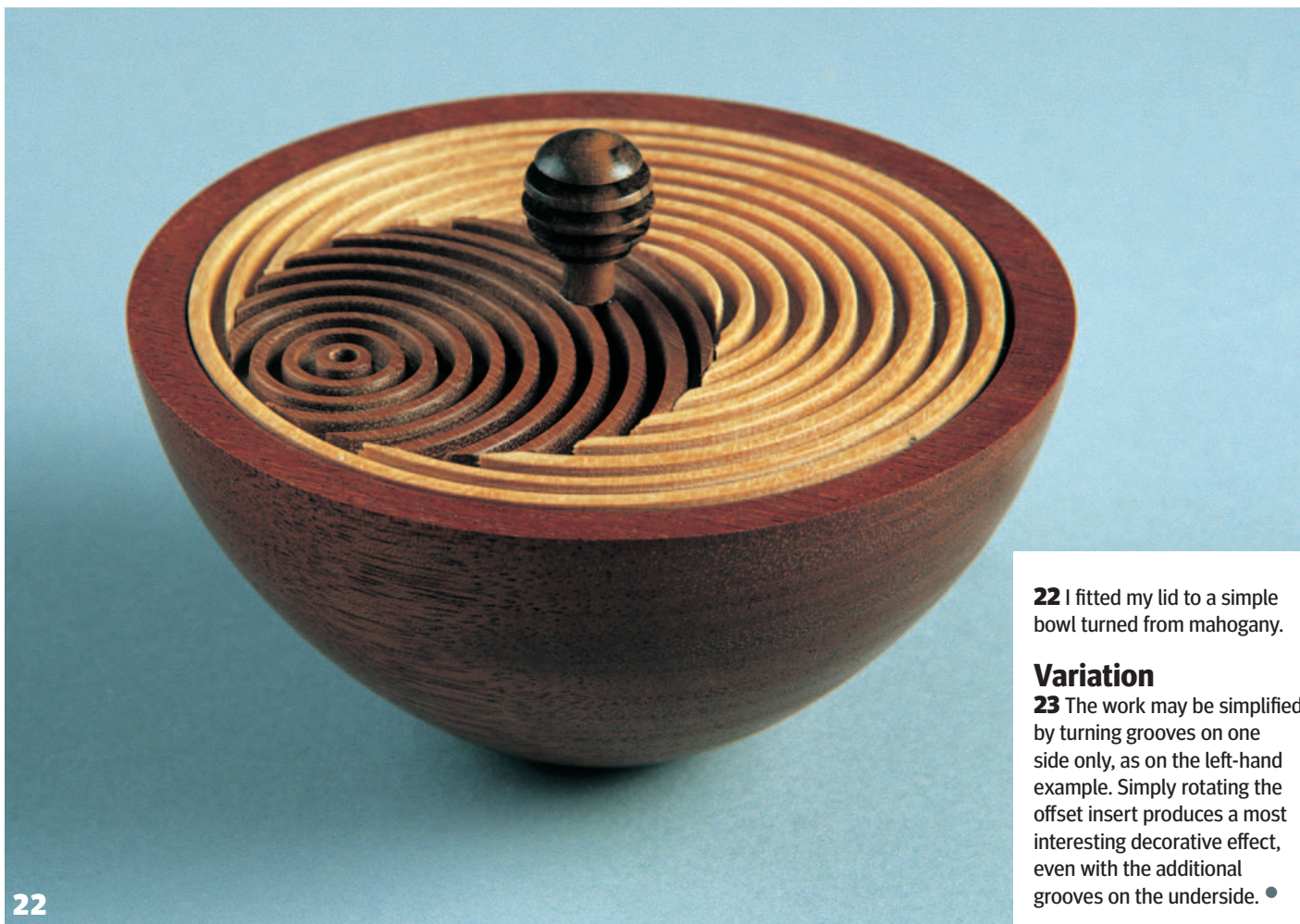
19 As the work progresses, check that the grooves are breaking through into the grooves turned in the other side of the walnut disc; deepen the grooves in this second side if necessary.

20 When the work is complete, the lid can be carefully sanded and polished before being taken to the microwave and heated on full power for 20 seconds. This will enable the parts to be separated easily.

21 Small whiskers of turned wood between the broken-out sections may be cleaned away using a needle file.

To complete the lid, rotate the pierced walnut disc and glue it back in place so that the grooves run counter to those in the maple body. Turn a small knob of your own design, carefully drill a hole to accept it and glue it into the lid.



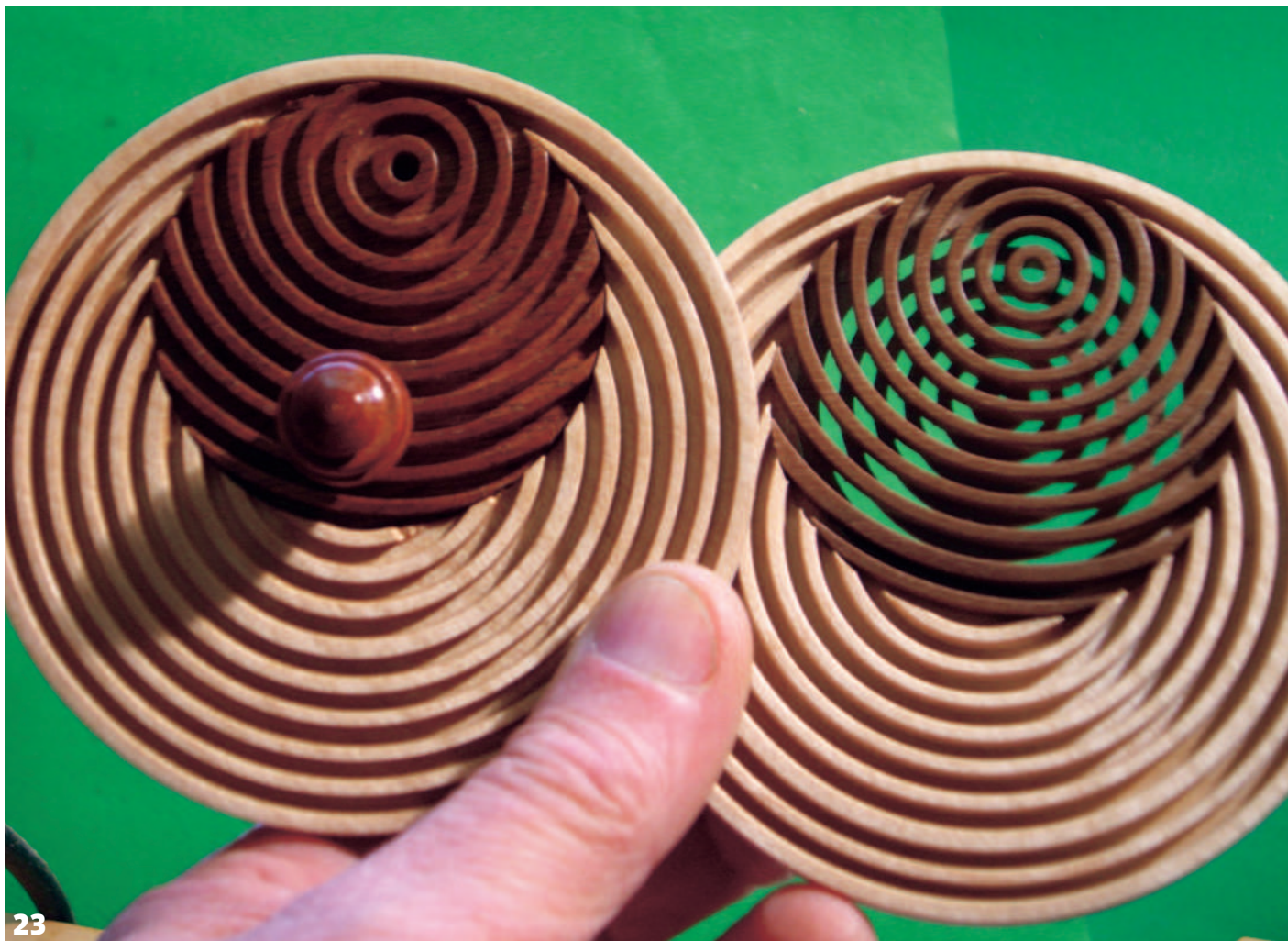


22

22 I fitted my lid to a simple bowl turned from mahogany.

Variation

23 The work may be simplified by turning grooves on one side only, as on the left-hand example. Simply rotating the offset insert produces a most interesting decorative effect, even with the additional grooves on the underside. ●



23

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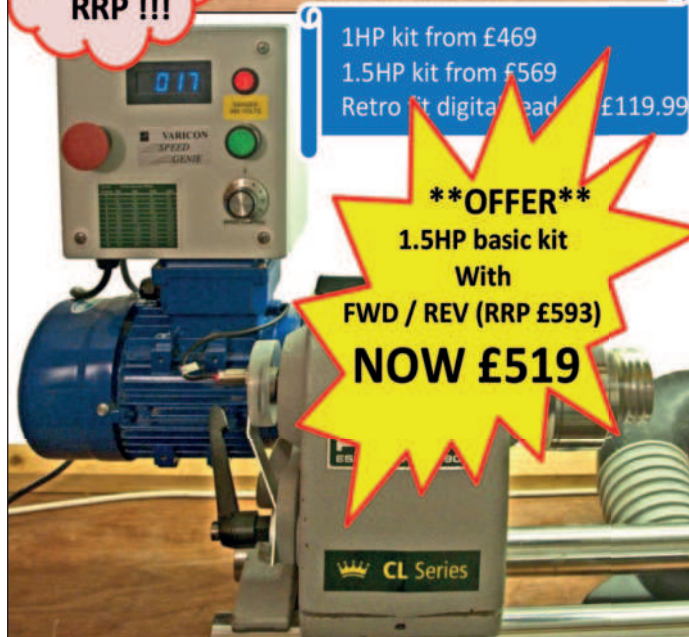
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Our next Guest Editor is Australian woodturner Andrew Potocnik

Mike Stafford discusses styles of Japanese-inspired sake carafes and cups



Turn Sue Harker's attractive sycamore yarn bowl



Les Symonds turns a deep pot with an embedded Yin and Yang symbol



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Creating beauty

In his final article on design, Pete Moncrieff-Jury suggests looking to other crafts for inspiration

In closing this series on design perhaps it is safe to say that there is little, if anything, that is new. However, what matters is how we interpret, perhaps adapt, established designs to suit our craft. One thing we must never do is assume we have reached a point where there is nothing new for us to learn. Looking back on previous styles and designs, whether from 5,000 years ago or five minutes earlier on social media, we can always find some way of bringing a new adaptation to a design to create something that is unique to ourselves. Give credit where credit is due obviously, but think differently, adapt, work out methods and shapes for yourself.

I was recently talking to someone about how I found little in the way of wooden goblets and drinking utensils in my research. They pointed me to a couple of books that opened my eyes to a whole new realm of work from days gone by. I have been making goblets for over a decade but hadn't come across these books and there are many ideas there for me to follow up. The same applies to almost any area of woodturning. But to find them we need to look outside of woodturning.

I find that woodturners tend to be insular, we see someone produce something and the next thing you see a hundred copies. Partly this is perhaps the fault of our use of social media. You can go on to a dozen different groups and find the same people producing the same things. Occasionally someone comes up with something different and it is copied within days. If we step away from our craft and look at the historical use of woodturning, research other media such as ceramics, glass, metal work, we get new ideas and start to create things that are different. In other words, we think for ourselves. I



have lost track of the number of people asking: 'How do you do that?' Fact is, someone somewhere at some time worked it out for themselves and in doing so actually designed something individual. Just borrowing someone else's idea and even their method of making it is a short cut to destroying originality. Over this series I have looked at a number of possible sources of inspiration – not so people can copy those original ideas exactly but as a source of inspiration to encourage their own ideas for adaptation and creation.

I often say that woodturners should strive to impress non-turners, not other turners, with the originality and variety of the craft. Many non-turners really don't have a clue that the craft is not just bowls, spindles and chair legs. Often, I get the feeling that design is secondary to many turners and what matters is how other turners see what we have made. The biggest factor that makes something attractive, whether it is a practical piece or a decorative item, is the design. Beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder but bad design is rarely, if ever, seen as beautiful.

If all you are interested in is making shavings, turning for the sheer pleasure of making something then that is fine – enjoy yourself. Nothing wrong with that at all. One turner I knew used to make what we rather cruelly called 'dog bowls'.

Hundreds of them, every one the same. He enjoyed himself and nothing we could say changed him.

Nothing wrong with this. If, however you aspire to make things that are different, pieces that make people go 'wow', then you need to look at actually designing things, not just making

shavings. What makes the top craftspeople stand

out is not just their skill but their eye for design, shape, form, decoration and so forth. With a bit of practice most people can learn to turn a bowl with a good finish, to make one that stands out as a thing of beauty takes a different skill set and attitude.



TOP: Medieval-style goblet ABOVE: Laburnum needle case

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